



Valley Queen

Charitable Foundation

2022 Annual Report



Making Milbank a great place to live, work, & play

Celebrating a Year of Growth and Expansion!



Doug Wilke
Foundation Chair

Every year, about this time, I am excited to review the impact the Valley Queen Charitable Foundation has had on Milbank and the surrounding communities. As we continue to grow, we recognize that our influence expands with each new employee that joins Valley Queen. That expansion was never more evident than in 2022. The foundation contributed to more than 75+ organizations and partnered with many individuals and groups to improve life and leisure for our neighbors, invest in future leaders and innovators, and foster a culture of giving among many generous and talented volunteers.

Thank you to our board members, volunteers, and community leaders who worked to make last year's projects a reality. This report is a tribute to your efforts, and I hope a source of pride for all who have made this work possible.

Our FOUNDATION

We were established in 2017 by Valley Queen Cheese as a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

The Charitable Foundation strives to advance positive change by supporting organizations and initiatives that have community, educational, industry or humanitarian focus.

Our PHILOSOPHY

In addition to improving our local communities, the Foundation:

- Supports secondary and undergraduate level education
- Contributes to the success of dairy industry organizations
- Assists those in need due to financial hardship or unexpected challenges when help is needed most.

Our DIRECTORS

Doug Wilke
Chair

Ken Karels
Vice Chair

Mike Misterek
Secretary/Treasurer

Kristin Tanner
Director

Trudi Robel
Director

Brad Snaza
Director

Bryan Johnson
Director

\$250,000 Invested in Community Splash Park

The Valley Queen Charitable Foundation partnered with the Flynn Estate to bring a \$450,000 Splash Park to Milbank.

The splash park, which will be located in Hurley Park (on Jefferson Drive in Milbank) will be a free, family friendly summertime attraction for the community.

The idea for this project came from members of the Valley Queen Impact Team, an employee group focused on community service, employee recognition, and teamwork efforts. Impact Team members Eric Pulling, Amanda Thronson and Ashley Frerichs worked with the vendor, established parameters for the project and pitched the idea to the Foundation Board and the City of Milbank.



“It’s so exciting to play a role in bringing this great amenity to our community,” said Amanda Thronson. “We’ve found a great location within a safe walking distance from schools that has facilities already onsite and plenty of sunshine for families to enjoy a fun and refreshing trip to the splash pad.”

The Splash park is scheduled to open in 2023!

Junior Achievement Volunteers Go Back to School



Six Valley Queen employees volunteered their time this year with 8 different classes to facilitate Junior Achievement curriculum programs in elementary, middle, and high school classrooms.

The Charitable Foundation remains a strong supporter of JA programming, contributing \$9,000 in 2022 alone.

This year's JA Volunteers from Valley Queen were: Karissa Karels, Brian Sandvig, Cydney Hunt, Mindy Rogers, Jimmie Seehafer and Heather Zinter.

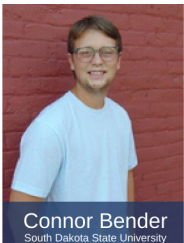
Foundation Supports the Whetstone Creek Golf Course

The Valley Queen Charitable Foundation has a well-established and valued relationship with Whetstone Creek Golf Course (WCGC). When the golf course became available in 2019, the Foundation was the lead contributor in helping to purchase the course from the previous owner, Randy Patnoe. The continued generous gifts from the VQ Foundation have allowed WCGC to update infrastructure and assets in the first four years of existence. WCGC installed new irrigation on nine holes of the course, updated the entire existing system with new pumps and automation, and has also been able to update equipment for maintaining the golf course. These investments have been pivotal in bringing the golf course into a much-improved condition and caring for it accordingly. Most recently, thanks to a \$200,000 donation from the foundation, WCGC has embarked on building a new maintenance shed. This shed will allow the crew to store the course equipment properly and have the required space for maintaining and repairing equipment throughout the season.

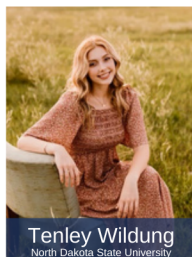
"Whetstone Creek Golf Course would probably not exist today as a Public Non-Profit golf course without the relationship with the VQ Foundation. It for sure would not exist in the condition and experience it provides today without the generosity and support from the VQ Foundation," Said Tom Schuneman, President of the WCGC Board. "The experience and playability of the course has attracted a wide range of new golfers, young golfers, group events, and families. We have also seen an increase of out-of-town guests that are coming to Milbank to enjoy the course. The increased membership and guests playing today has just about doubled our annual revenue, which we hope to accomplish in 2023. We cannot thank the VQ Foundation enough in helping to support WCGC."



Funding Future Leaders \$36,000 in scholarships awarded in 2022



We know the future of our community and industry depend upon the cultivation of strong leaders. That's why we are proud to support scholarships for high school seniors and students in undergraduate and technical programs in South Dakota and Minnesota.



The Foundation supports scholarships at Milbank High School, the dairy manufacturing and production program at South Dakota State University, Lake Area Technical College, the CDL program at Alexandria Technical & Community College and business/finance programs at University of South Dakota.



Manager-Directed Contributions

Twice each year, each Valley Queen department manager selects a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to receive a \$1,500 donation on their behalf from the Valley Queen Charitable Foundation. Managers then present the checks to their organizations of choice.

In 2022, \$48,000 was distributed to a wide array of causes and organizations through manager-directed contributions.

75+ organizations benefitted from more than \$300,000 in contributions this year.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
 AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
 AMERICA'S MIGHTY WARRIORS
 BACKYARD BULLDOGS CHILD CARE
 BARRON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 BEACON CENTER
 BIG STONE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL
 BIG STONE COUNTY ANIMAL RESCUE
 BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF WATERTOWN
 BULLDOG BOOSTER CLUB
 CENTRAL PLAINS DAIRY FOUNDATION
 CHAUTAUQUA COMMUNITY CONCERT ASSOCIATION
 CHILD'S VOICE- SANFORD MEDICAL CENTER
 CITY OF MILBANK-HEART OF MILBANK RECREATION GIFT FUND
 CORONA FIRE DEPARTMENT
 DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
 EAST CENTRAL CASA PROGRAM
 EMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH - PRESCHOOL
 ESSENTIA HEALTH FOUNDATION
 FAMILY VISITATION CENTER
 GRANT COUNTY 4-H
 GRANT COUNTY 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS
 GRANT COUNTY CHILD PROTECTION TEAM
 GRANT COUNTY COMBINED APPEAL
 GRANT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
 GROUND WORKS- SD AG IN THE CLASSROOM
 IT ONLY TAKES A SPARK CANCERWALK
 JOY RANCH OF SOUTH DAKOTA
 JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF SD
 LAKE AREA TECH FOUNDATION
 LEADERSHIP SOUTH DAKOTA
 LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH
 MAIN STREET INDUSTRIES
 MAKE A WISH OF SD-Region 4
 MCCROSSAN BOYS RANCH
 MHS EDUCATION FOUNDATION-LEANN KUPER SCHOLARSHIP
 MIDWEST HONOR FLIGHT
 MILBANK AREA HOSPITAL AVERA
 MILBANK BALL DIAMOND ASSOCIATION

MILBANK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION- GOLF COURSE
 MILBANK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION-YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE
 MILBANK FFA (MILBANK SCHOOL)
 MILBANK FIRE DEPARTMENT (CITY OF MILBANK)
 MILBANK HIGH SCHOOL - OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS
 MILBANK HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION FOUNDATION
 MILBANK HIGH SCHOOL TRAP SHOOTING TEAM (MILBANK SCHOOL)
 MILBANK SCHOOL DISTRICT 25-4
 NATIONAL DAIRY SHRINE - CDPEC FUND
 ND DELTA UPSILON EDUCATION FOUNDATION
 ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN
 PARENTS PROMOTING EDUCATION (KOCH SCHOOL)
 PRAIRIE FIVE/BIG STONE FOOD SHELF
 READ MINISTRIES
 ROBERTS COUNTY 4-H/SHOOTING SPORTS
 ROCK RANCH
 RONALD MC DONALD HOUSE CHARITIES OF MN
 RONALD MC DONALD HOUSE CHARITIES OF SD
 SALVATION ARMY
 SD AMERICAN LEGION FOUNDATION
 SD DIABETES COALITION
 SD JUNIOR HOLSTEIN ASSOCIATION
 SDSU FOUNDATION (Scholarships)
 SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE INC.
 SOUTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL & RURAL LEADERSHIP
 SOUTH DAKOTA AGRICULTURAL FOUNDATION
 SOUTH DAKOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 SPECIAL OLYMPICS SOUTH DAKOTA
 ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL
 ST. LAWRENCE PARISH OF GRANT COUNTY - SCHOOL
 THE ABBEY OF THE HILLS
 THE FATTED CALF
 THE TIMOTHY INITIATIVE, INC.
 TOWN OF REVILLO
 UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN RIVER FALLS FOUNDATION
 VEBLEN CLUB
 WILMOT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

31st Annual Cheeseburger Day

Cheeseburgers were in high demand during the 31st annual Valley Queen Cheeseburger Day on Thursday, June 30, at Lake Farley Park. Valley Queen's staff, volunteers, Milbank FFA youth members, and the South Dakota Junior Holstein Association worked together to serve more than 2,500 cheeseburgers during the event. All proceeds from the event benefit the Milbank FFA and South Dakota Junior Holstein Association.



This year's event featured Senator John Thune as a special guest. Thune spoke about the importance of the dairy industry and then recognized two local dairies for their longstanding contribution to the South Dakota Dairy Industry. He also presented a golden cheeseburger trophy commemorating Jerry Janisch's role in Cheeseburger Day. As the ag instructor and advisor for the Milbank FFA, Jerry Janisch has been integral to Valley Queen's Cheeseburger Day event for nearly all of its 31 years. Having retired from his teaching position, Janisch was able to relax and enjoy this year's event.



Need to get in touch?

Contact us at foundation@vqcheese.com

Valley Queen

Charitable Foundation

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