

## **GSM Memorial Scholarship Fund Seeks Full Funding in 2012**

Established as part of the Ferry County Health Foundation, The Graham S. McConnell Memorial Scholarship Fund (GSM Scholarship) is just one piece to the complex puzzle of community medical support in Ferry County.

The initial goal for the GSM Scholarship Fund is to collect \$15,000. Since its inception one year ago, \$10,186 has been raised. To begin awarding scholarships in 2013, the McConnell Family and the Ferry County Health Foundation need the community support to raise the difference this year.

The mission of the GSM Scholarship Fund is to inspire others to reach their dreams by seeking to financially assist people interested in serving Ferry County in the health care industry. The emphasis of the scholarship fund is for continuing education requirements or new accreditation for current hospital district employees. As the fund grows, it is hopeful that others in the community would benefit.

The McConnell Family has been a major contributor in establishing the scholarship fund and is committed to the legacy Graham S. McConnell (“Doc”) started when he came to Republic in 1948.

As an example of this legacy, consider the story of a young man named Tom Schlegel, whom Doc met when he arrived in Republic. Tom flew B-24 4-engine Bombers out of North Africa, bombing all the fields in Romania and survived to tell about it. After the war, Tom wanted to go to medical school but didn’t have the necessary prerequisites to be admitted. Doc contacted Dr. Eastlick, who he knew when he worked as the student health physician at WSU. After meeting with Tom, Dr. Eastlick agreed to make an exception to the prerequisites because Tom had great skills and Army Medical Corps experience. Tom was admitted to the Pre-Med program. The plan was that in 6 years, Tom would return to Republic and practice medicine with Doc.

In 1952, Tom was accepted at the University of Washington Medical School and was about to graduate from the Pre-Med Program at WSU when he died of a sudden heart attack. Tom’s passing was a tragedy of a life too short and the end of a dream. Dr. Eastlick wrote in a letter to

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Doc regarding Tom's passing that Tom had been the finest student they had ever had. Tom was pursuing his dream with the support of his wife and two children.

As the Ferry County Health Foundation Gala event is coming up on September 15<sup>th</sup> please consider making donations to the scholarship fund in "memory" of other individuals who have touched our lives.

In addition to cash contributions, specifically for the GSM Scholarship Fund, contributions in kind can be made to the silent auction.

The McConnell family wishes to thank the community for their support of Doc's legacy to fund dreams, aptitudes, and commitments to the medical field.