

# Community FOUNDATION NEWS

The Greater PineBelt Community Foundation

Vol. 1 No. 1

Giving Way To A Greater Community

August 2008

## PRESIDENT'S *Pen*

As a Charter Partner with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation, I want to thank you again for your support. With additional resources for our operating budget we are able to expand our services in the Pine Belt to support worthy charitable causes.

The Community Foundation has moved to our location at 1507 Hardy Street, Suite 208 thanks to John



Foundation President,  
Andy Mercier

Fairchild providing this space at no cost. We have added Eliska Schilling to the staff as our Administrative Assistant. Soon she will be taking over those responsibilities handled by Andy Leslie as treasurer. Andy, as a volunteer, has been responsible for our accounting and financial reporting for ten years. We owe Andy a special thank you for his work.

Effective in January of this year, the board approved a name change to the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. All of our literature is being updated. In addition we will be making presentations about the Foundation in the Pine Belt to include towns such as Collins, Magee, Columbia, Lumberton, Sumrall, and Petal.

I would like to thank all our board members for their work in spreading the news about the good work being done through our Foundation. Our small group meetings have been a resounding success in getting our message out. We are truly a board of volunteers and I continue to be amazed by the generosity of our board members. If you haven't participated in one of our small group meetings please contact Bill Pace. He is always eager to include our board members in presentations to the community.

Finally I want to take this opportunity to thank our Executive Director Bill Pace, Vice-President Ed Langton and Treasurer Andy Leslie for all their work. As officers they carry an extra load and I truly appreciate their commitment.

Remember we are in the cornerstone phase of our Foundation and our approach has always been to build an organization that will stand the test of time. We are definitely moving in the right direction and I personally see this organization making significant contributions to the betterment of the Pine Belt areas.

Thanks again for your prayers and support.  
Andy Mercier ▲

## YOUR OWN FOUNDATION IN EASY REACH WITH COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

For little or no cost, anyone can have the equivalent of their own Private Foundation by establishing a Donor Advised Fund in the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. This new tax and estate planning tool is available, for individuals, families, businesses, or groups who want to support their community or specific interest with charitable giving without all of the cost and red tape that a private foundation involves.

Simplicity is the key to a Donor Advised Fund. A special fund is established in the Foundation in name of the donor – individual, family, business, or organization. Gifts to the Foundation may be made in cash, appreciated stocks, real estate, or other assets. Tax benefits are received the year the gift is made, or there may be a five year carry forward.

The Foundation handles investment of the funds and manages the administrative details of the fund. The gift generates long term advantages of endowment funding. The principal from the gift is invested, not spent, and investment income is used to make awards to community not-for-profit programs and projects, as requested by the donor. Donors have the flexibility to change the recipient of their funds from year to year.

"The difference in using the Community Foundation rather than establishing your own foundation is with the Community Foundation there aren't the exorbitant cost and time consuming administrative functions and costs associated with establishing a private foundation, and the tax benefits accrue to the donor," Ed Langton, Vice-President of the Community Foundation said. "It is a fantastic way to help others, receive tax benefits and leave a legacy in perpetuity," Langton said.

An example of not-for-profit projects assisted through gifts generated by Community Foundation gifts include: endowment to support Pine Belt Family Y, Southern Pines Animal Shelter, Eloise Hopson Endowed Scholarship for English majors, Bill and Joann Kerley – Knights of Columbus endowment to support community projects, and many more.

Interested individuals, organizations, and businesses should contact the Foundation for a packet of information at: The Greater PineBelt Community Foundation, 1507 Hardy Street, Suite 208, Hattiesburg, MS 39401; Phone 601-583-6180; Fax 601-583-6188; www.hattiesburgfoundation.org; e-mail, pinebeltcf@bellsouth.net. ▲

## RECENT ACCOUNTS REVEAL DIVERSITY OF FOUNDATION

New accounts with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation reveal the diversity of Foundation service. Of the accounts managed by the Foundation, these are the most recent.

**Lamar County K-9** – to secure private funds for an additional dog with the Lamar County Sheriff's Department.

**Born Learning Trail** – an Area Development Partnership Leaders project to develop and build a trail and green space for an outdoor learning trail for Hattiesburg area youth.

**Homes of Hope for Children** – children's home ministry providing long term care for children in need.

**Bridging the Gap Through Inclusive Play** – an Area Development Partnership Leaders project to remove barriers and promote self-esteem throughout the Hattiesburg Elementary School system by providing universally accessible playground equipment for all children, focusing on the Thames Elementary Campus.

**Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association** – assist in the operation of the Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association, and the redevelopment in Downtown Hattiesburg. ▲

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## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

# FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO MAKE GREAT STRIDES IN 10TH YEAR



Executive Director,  
Bill Pace

Managed by a 24 member Board of Directors, the Foundation makes great strides to understand the local issues, opportunities, and resources that shape the communities the Foundation serves. The Board, along with the Foundation staff monitors all areas of community need, including human services, city and neighborhood development, education, the environment, healthcare and the arts.

Committees, chaired by Board members, work diligently to stay abreast of needs, and guide the management of the Foundation accordingly. The investment management committee under the leadership of Dr. Aubrey Lucas continues to meet on a regular basis to review performance and when necessary make necessary adjustments.

Over the next few months, members of our Board of Directors will be hosting receptions to inform potential donors about establishing an endowment fund to support their charitable interests. The donor advised fund allows a family to have their own private foundation in the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation without the major expenses required to set up their own private foundation. For more information contact the Community Foundation.

The Charter Partners program exceeded its goal of 50, going to 56. Now the next partner's level is **Partners 44** – a program to bring the partners program to an even 100. This program helps provide day-to-day operating expenses for the Foundation.

The new Foundation office is directly across the street from Temple Baptist Church (East) on Hardy Street. Our staff would welcome your visit in Suite 208. For your information our new phone number is (601) 583-6180. Our fax number is (601) 583-6188. Our mailing address is Greater PineBelt Community Foundation, 1507 Hardy Street, Suite 208, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401. ▲

## PARTNERS 44 TAKES FOUNDATION SUPPORT TO NEW LEVEL

In the fall of 2007, the Board of Directors of The Greater PineBelt Community Foundation established a new prestigious giving opportunity of "Partners." This giving level was established in order to meet the annual needs of the Foundation's day-to-day operating budget. The Board set the first 50 Partners to be known as Charter Partners. The effort was so successful, 56 Partners were enrolled.

Now the Foundation wants to build on this by a continued Partners effort named Partners 44. When this campaign is completed, the Foundation will have 100 Partners, 56 Charter Partners and 44 new Partners through the *Partners 44* program.

The productivity of the Partners program is already evident. The Foundation has been able to secure new office space, and hire an administrative assistant. With the additional Partners, the Foundation will be able to reach out to communities throughout the PineBelt and begin the search to employ a full-time director. ▲



Executive Committee of Board of Directors conducts Foundation business. (l-r) Ed Langton, vice-president, Lou Ann Poynter, Bill Pace, executive director, Andy Leslie, treasurer, and Hayden Mitchell. (Not Pictured: Andy Mercier and Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas)

## DONOR FUNDS CRITICAL FOR BUSY ANIMAL SHELTER

by Kathy Gilmore

The Southern Pines Animal Shelter had a good year in 2007. This was due in large part to donations from friends and supporters, throughout the Hattiesburg and Pine Belt area. The Shelter is especially grateful for continuous donations, and especially appreciates donations of food, blankets, towels, newspapers, toys, money or time.

The Shelter functions as an open-admission Shelter meaning that no animal is ever turned away for any reason. The staff continues to remind the Pine Belt community that animal overpopulation is a reality and the necessity to help keep overpopulation under control by spaying or neutering pets, is a very real need. The Southern Pines Animal Shelter is a non-profit organization.

"The past ten years of working for the Shelter has been meaningful," said Virginia Cheatham, Shelter Director. "Every donation counts and it shows that our job here is valuable," she said.

According to Cheatham, highlights for 2007 was the election of Wayne Parceled, President of the Humane Society. Sheila Simpson donated her time and talent for art by creating a colorful mural outside the Shelter. Also, the Shelter gained a new van and Web site in 2007. Services of the Shelter stretched far and wide with the placement of animals as far as Vancouver, New York City, and the Hamptons.

During 2008, the Shelter has completed many projects, including construction on air conditioners and ceilings, and new paintings on the dog runs. The staff is now working on replacing the gates on the runs.

"When cats and kittens are placed, they are already spayed or neutered, microchipped, dewormed and vaccinated," Cheatham said. Cats and kittens are available at PetSmart, and dogs and puppies are available on Saturdays only.

Funding for the Shelter is supplemented by revenue from an endowment placed with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. "The Richard C. Vreeland Endowment in the Community Foundation was established by Dr. Vreeland so that a portion of the interest generated from the endowment each year goes to the Shelter to support the operating budget," Andy Leslie, Foundation Board member and vice-president of investments for Trustmark Wealth Management said. "The Foundation serves as the local agent for endowments and other funds, and administers the funds according to the donor's directions," he said.

Through the Foundation donations to the Shelter are tax-deductible, and may be made to: Greater PineBelt Community Foundation and designated for the Southern Pines Animal Shelter, and mailed to: 1507 Hardy Street, Suite 208, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401.

Their Web site can be found at [www.SouthernPinesAnimalShelter.org](http://www.SouthernPinesAnimalShelter.org). Kathy Gilmore is a USM Public Relations intern. ▲

# BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

## EDWARD "ED" J. LANGTON *Vice-President, President Elect*

### Personal Profile

Ed Langton has had a multifaceted career in banking and mortgage lending, automotive sales and leasing, real estate development and investment and magazine publishing.

He is a graduate of Long Beach High School, Long Beach, Mississippi, and a graduate of The University of Southern Mississippi with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. He served in the United States Army as a First Lieutenant. He is Chairman of the Board and CEO for Grand Bank of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Ed is also the Founder and Chairman of IF-I Foundation, a non-profit charitable foundation. He is a member of Temple Baptist Church, Hattiesburg.

Ed has served as President of the USM Foundation. He is a Life Member of the USM Alumni Association, and has served as an Officer and President of the Association. He was inducted into the USM Alumni Association Hall of Fame in 2001.

He serves as Director of the Pine Burr Area Boy Scouts of America Executive Board and past Chairman of the Pine Burr Area Friends of Scouting Campaign and has served in various other capacities.

Ed has received numerous honors and awards including: Being selected as an Olympic Torchbearers for the 1996 Olympics, selected by the Hattiesburg Rotary Club as the 1997 Non-Rotarian Paul Harris Fellow Award recipient, and he received the prestigious "Silver Beaver Award" by the Pine Burr Area Council of Boy Scouts of America, February 25, 2000.

### The Foundation

One of the exciting benefits of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation is the opportunity for individuals, families, and businesses to form a Private Foundation. Community minded charitable givers have no idea what a simple process it is to establish their own account with the Community Foundation that is much like having their own Private Foundation.



The difference is that there aren't the exorbitant cost and time consuming administration associated with having a Private Foundation...but all the tax benefits, etc. are theirs! It's a fantastic way to help others, receive tax benefits and leave a legacy in perpetuity! ▲

## ANDY LESLIE *Treasurer*

### Personal Profile

Andy Leslie has been part of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation since the beginning. He was a member of the 1997 Leaders For A New Century Class, sponsored by the Area Development Partnership, whose project it was to establish a community foundation. Andy currently serves as treasurer.

He is a 1984 graduate of The University of Southern Mississippi. Following a stint away from Hattiesburg, he returned in 1996. Andy is married to Michelle Leslie, they have two daughters, Lauren-Marie 20, and Samantha, 17.

Andy is a Financial Planner with Trustmark National Bank, a position he has held for 17 years.

### The Foundation

If ever there was a situation that was "win, win," it is that which is afforded by a Community Foundation. Donors win because of the tax advantages, flexibility, and retained benefit direction of gifts offered by a Community Foundation. The recipient organization wins because Community Foundations provide the resources to which they can build long-term endowed based funds.

Additionally the people serviced by those organizations win, because more dollars go directly into service programs, and finally the community itself wins, because of an increase in the overall quality of life.

The Leslie's are members of First Baptist Church. ▲



## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS BENEFIT EMPLOYEE CHILDREN

by Kathy Gilmore

Tatum Development Corporation Annual Scholarships have been awarded to 240 students and spouses throughout the southern and southeastern region of the United States, during the past six years. Scholarships are awarded every May to help fund college expenses.

Recipients of these scholarships are dependents of employees of the Tatum Development Corporation. Merchants Foodservice located in Hattiesburg is owned by the corporation and family members of Merchants Foodservice reap the benefits of being employees of such a charitable corporation.

"These \$1,000 scholarships have been sent to many colleges and universities such as Tougaloo University, The University of Southern Mississippi, Ole Miss, Louisiana State University, Millsaps College, University of

Alabama, Sanford University, Mississippi State University and even as far as California," said Andy Mercier, president of Merchants Foodservice. "The student must be full-time as well as maintain a grade point average of 2.5," he said.

"I am pleased to be part of a corporation that recognizes the lasting benefits of an education. We also believe these scholarships influence the recipient in the gift of giving in hopes of them becoming charitable donors in the future," said Mercier.

The Tatum Development Corporation Annual Scholarship fund is managed by the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. Funds are deposited with the Foundation and are used for the scholarships. Scholarship applications are made to the Foundation, and awarded by a Tatum Development Corporation committee.

A recipient of the scholarship, Brandi Ellzey, said that the scholarship will help her with dorm and textbook fees.

Bridget Lovette, a Merchants' employee said, "I am delighted to work for a company that cares about the pursuit of a higher education and the future of bright minds." Lovette has been an employee of Merchants Foodservice for 22 years. Her daughter, Brinkley, graduated valedictorian at Northeast Jones High School and is a recipient of a Tatum Development Corporation Annual Scholarship. Lovette said that her daughter is a biology and chemistry major and currently holds a 4.0 grade point average at Jones Junior College.

"My daughter plans to further her education in the D.O. school at William Carey University," said Lovette.

Kathy Gilmore is a USM Public Relations intern. ▲

# GREATER PINEBELT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Mr. Andy Mercier**  
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Pope and Pope

**Mrs. Lou Ann Poynter**  
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*Director*  
Department of Human  
Services

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**Dr. Christy Thornton**  
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# DYSLEXIA SCHOOL FOCUSES ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS

With a deep desire to serve children, especially those with characteristics of dyslexia, Cena Holifield and Dr. Trudy Abel opened The Dynamic Dyslexia Design and 3-D School in Petal, MS. "The primary objective is to strengthen children with dyslexia by giving them the information they need to understand their learning difference and achieve maximum academic success."

"We will accomplish this through providing services that include; an evaluation center, a two year, full-day school, daily dyslexia therapy, research based curriculum, speech and language therapy, parent support, and community outreach," Cena Holifield, director of the school said.

According to Abel, who will head the 3-D Evaluation Center, early intervention is critical. "Dyslexic students are bright, creative individuals who desperately want to learn but have difficulty with reading, spelling, and writing," Abel said.

Due to the high cognitive ability for dyslexia students, some students compensate for their difficulties in the early years...but as the reading and writing demands become more complex...their self-esteem and academic progress decreases. The 3-D School accepts students entering the 1st-3rd grades.

The School is designed specifically for the young dyslexic student and the curriculum is based on current research finding. "We offer intensive reading remediation using the proven Orton-Gillingham based method adopted by the Mississippi College Dyslexia Training Program, which is accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Educational Council," Holifield said.

Dyslexia therapy is instructed by trained MC Dyslexia Therapists and conducted for one hour daily in a maximum class size of six students. The maximum regular classroom size of 12 students enables the staff to know each child's special needs and provide the individual attention they require.

The Dynamic Dyslexia Design (The 3-D School and Evaluation Center) has a fund account with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation to support their operating budget. Contributions, which are tax deductible, can be made payable to the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation designated for the School. The School director will be notified as to who made the contribution. Donors will receive a receipt from the Foundation. The Foundation address is 1507 Hardy Street, Suite 208, Hattiesburg, MS 39401. ▲

## CONTACT THE FOUNDATION

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