

Community FOUNDATION NEWS

The Greater PineBelt Community Foundation

Vol. 1 No. 2

Giving Way To A Greater Community

December 2008

PRESIDENT'S *Pen*

Southern Hospitality

As we look at the oncoming economic slowdown it would not be unusual to expect giving to also slow down.

However our community has historically continued to give during tough times.

In fact "Southern hospitality" has a new meaning in Mississippi a recent report indicates.

Mississippi ranks dead last in the "having index" for the Catalogue for Philanthropy guide to charitable giving in the U.S. But when it comes to the percentage of income donated by residents in the state, Mississippi ranks No. 1 in the "generosity index."

According to the philanthropy guide, people in Mississippi gave a greater percentage of their income to churches and charities than in any other state in the country.

"It is important that you folks in the South have set a good example for the rest of us. Everyone knows you are generous. What you are showing is that people in the rest of the country can afford to give more, because you are doing it. You folks are much more community minded," says George McCully, president of the Catalogue for Philanthropy.

McCully said he believes that Mississippi could improve its charitable giving even further if more people could be encouraged to itemize taxes and get tax advantages from charitable giving.

That is where the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation can help. It is our responsibility to educate the Pine Belt area about the options we offer as a Community Foundation. Our fastest growing type of fund "The Donor-Advised Fund" is the perfect way to meet the needs of the philanthropist while filling the needs of our community. Our most recent donor, Mr. Robert Jackson, Sr., has recognized the benefits from setting up one of these funds. (see article at right)

Our current economic environment may slow our giving growth rate down but I fully anticipate charitable giving to continue to grow, because our non-profit community and those who benefit directly from the programs and services offered by that community are counting on us. It is our responsibility to be there for them in tough times. And after all, giving is part of the culture of the South. It's who we are... ▲



Foundation President, Andy Mercier

JACKSON FAMILY ESTABLISHES DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Robert Jackson, Sr. and his wife Sandy have recently established a Donor-Advised Fund with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. *Foundation News* (FN) caught up with Robert (RJ) with a few questions about why he and Sandy took this route to manage their charitable giving.

FN: Why are you actively involved with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation?

RJ: I was fortunate enough to be elected on the original Board, as I recall. I have seen the good that the organization can accomplish and I am extremely interested in seeing it grow larger to help a greater number of people. We really ought to increase the endowment to \$25,000,000 in the near future and when that is accomplished, we ought to try for \$50,000,000.

FN: Why did you and Sandy decide to set up a Donor-Advised Fund?

RJ: We decided to set up the fund to try and accumulate a larger endowment. We plan to add to it in our lifetime and also by Last Will and Testament. I was also hoping that if I set up a Donor-Advised Fund, other people would follow suit. I intend for the earnings from my fund to either be used for administration expenses of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation or disbursed as the Board may direct.

FN: What advice would you give to those who may be interested in having their own private foundation with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation?

RJ: I would tell others that a Donor-Advised Fund is the perfect way to assist any charitable cause. The cost to the donor is only a one percent administrative fee, as opposed to the cost of establishing their own private foundation. The costs, including attorneys, accountant's fees, etc., as well as the delay in getting the foundation approved through the Internal Revenue Service is not as attractive as having the fund established immediately with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. All the donor needs is the desire to assist any charitable cause.

Robert and Sandy both grew up in Hattiesburg. They both attended the First Presbyterian Church of Hattiesburg, PCA, and graduated from Hattiesburg High School the same year. He and Sandy wanted to 'go away to college' and headed for Ole Miss, where they both graduated in 1964. Robert holds an MBA from The University of Southern Mississippi and a Juris Doctor degree from the Ole Miss Law School.

Robert has practiced law in Hattiesburg since 1968. His areas of specialty include tax, especially estate and gift taxation, wills, trusts, estates, business law, corporate law and entity formation.

The Jackson's have four children and fourteen grandchildren. ▲



Bill Pace, center, Executive Director of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation, looks on as Sandy and Robert Jackson, Sr. sign agreements to establish a Donor-Advised Fund with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. (Robinson Photography)

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- Director's Report
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REFLECTING ON THE PAST, A LOOK AHEAD



Executive Director, Bill Pace

In July of this year, I completed two years as the Executive Director of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. I would be remiss if I did not recognize the wisdom and vision of the community leaders who established the Foundation! Their foresight has created an incredible resource for our present and future generations that will help the Pine Belt be an even better place to live. We are particularly grateful for the financial support of our partners who give so generously and with only a promise of what our Community Foundation might become. Their investment has already produced results not imagined only a few short years ago.

The Foundation has been blessed with its leadership. Past presidents include Paul Laughlin, Bill Oliver, Gwen James, Dr. Aubrey Lucas, and Lou Ann Poynter. Our current president, Andy Mercier, was one of the original founders of the Foundation. He has led the Community Foundation over the past two years as it has moved forward in supporting charitable causes in the Pine Belt.

Our board of directors will expand from 24 to 30 elected members beginning in 2009. Ed Langton will become president in 2009. His energy, wisdom, creativity and commitment will benefit the Foundation in growth.

I also would be remiss if I did not thank Bud Kirkpatrick for his volunteer work as editor of our newsletter and other work with the electronic and print media.

Additionally a very special thank you to Andy Leslie for over 10 years as treasurer of the Foundation. In addition to his regular duties at Trustmark National Bank, he has managed our investment and financial affairs.

So where do we go from here? Our first priority is to add new permanent funds (donor-advised funds). We will continue to inform the Pine Belt community about the services of the Foundation.

Finally, an effort will be made to secure new partners. ▲

ELISKA SCHILLING JOINS FOUNDATION AS ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Foundation Executive Director, Bill Pace, cites one of his major accomplishments is bringing Eliska Schilling on board as his administrative assistant. "Her work ethic is outstanding as well as her organizational and interpersonal skills. We are fortunate to have her working with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation," Pace said.

Eliska comes to the Community Foundation following work in education, legal and health care firms, prior to spending 10 years as Administrative Assistant with Hudson's in Ellisville, MS.

She is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University earning a BS in Education, with emphasis in biology and chemistry. She has also enrolled at The University of Southern Mississippi in accounting.

Eliska talks about her work at the Foundation, "I enjoy seeing the 'giving way' in action and the fruits of the many gifts. It is humbling to be the one to send the thank you receipt letters to the generous givers in the community."

She is involved in numerous activities in the Hattiesburg area, with special interest in church, quilting, reading, and movies.

Eliska and her husband Alvin are active in St. Thomas Catholic Church and Catholic Social Services. ▲



Eliska Schilling, Administrative Assistant

CHILDREN AND YOUTH BENEFICIARY OF KATRISHIN ENDOWMENT IN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

By ROBYN JACKSON

When Alex Katrishin Jr. was a young man struggling to survive in the 1940s, he took up residence in a California YMCA. Injuries he had sustained in an explosion during the waning days of World War II had left him unable to find typical employment, so he became a street vendor. His frugal lifestyle and personal discipline enabled him to save and invest a small amount of money each month, and eventually it grew into a small fortune.

Shortly before Katrishin died on June 13, 2000, he left the bulk of his estate – well over \$1 million – to the Family Y of Southeast Mississippi, in an endowed account with the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. Each year, the Hattiesburg Family Y receives a check from the Foundation. Since 2000, it has received \$318,137 from the fund.

"He wanted it to do good over a long period of time," said Paul Laughlin, first vice president and trust officer of Trustmark National Bank, who helped Katrishin with his estate planning. "He wanted his money used locally and was not confident it would be if he gave it to a Foundation in the Northeast."

Laughlin, who also helped Hattiesburg washerwoman and University of Southern Mississippi philanthropist Oseola McCarty plan her estate, said the money from Katrishin's estate is invested in the stock market, and the Y receives the interest from the investments.

"The money is 'extremely important' for the Y, and is used for youth programs," said Barbara Hannon, director of association development for the Family Y, a United Way agency. "We would not be able to touch as many without it."

Hannon said the money enables the Y to do everything from buy clothing for children whose families have lost their homes in fires to provide scholarships so children can attend after-school programs at the Y, including swimming lessons.

"When they come to the Y, it's the safest place (some of the children) have been all day, besides school," Hannon said, adding that the Y is licensed to provide day care for 240 children and preschool for 100 at its three facilities in Hattiesburg and Petal. The money also enables the Y to adopt needy families at Christmas.

"We make sure all of that money goes to the children," Hannon said. "The philosophy of the Y is that no one is turned away because of inability to pay. The needs in this community are so great. There are so many single-parent families or families where both parents are working and the kids need a place to go."

"The downturn in the U.S. economy in 2008 has also affected Hattiesburg-area families," Hannon said. "The demand is increasingly great each year," she said.

Katrishin, who originally came to Hattiesburg to study at what is now The University of Southern Mississippi, suffered from epilepsy and had chronic seizures following his World War II injuries, making it impossible



Dan Hendley, (left) Director of the Pine Belt Family Y receives a check from Andy Mercier, President of the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation. The Family Y receives annual funds from the Foundation, from an endowment dedicated to the Family Y.

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BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

ANDY MERCIER *President*

Personal Profile

A native Mississippian, Andy Mercier is the President of Merchants Foodservice headquartered in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Andy received his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Accounting from The University of Southern Mississippi. Upon graduation in 1984 he worked for KPMG Peat Marwick, an International CPA firm headquartered in Montvale, New Jersey. He joined Merchants Foodservice in 1993 as Controller and after serving in several other positions he was promoted to President/CEO in January 2005. Merchants Foodservice is a broadline foodservice distributor, headquartered in Hattiesburg, Mississippi with 500 employees throughout the southeast.

Andy is married to Stace Mercier, who is also a CPA. They have two children, Ann Marie, age 17 and Betsy, age 14. The children attend Sacred Heart School and they are members of Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

His professional affiliations include: American Institute of Certified Public Accounting and the International Food Distribution Association where he serves on the Government Relations Committee and the Food Safety and Security Committee. He also serves on the board of the Mississippi Hospitality and Restaurant Association and the Greater PineBelt Community Foundation.

The Foundation

We have to 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. ▲



HAYDEN MITCHELL *Foundation Secretary, Executive Committee, Member of Nominating Committee*

Personal Profile

Hayden Mitchell is a native of Greenville, MS but is proud to call Hattiesburg home for the last twenty years.

He is an honor graduate of both Greenville High School and Delta State University with a BBA in banking and finance. Hayden has over thirty four years banking experience and is currently South Region President for The Citizens National Bank of Meridian.

Also, from 1990-1993 he worked as executive director of the United Way of Southeast MS. He continues to serve in various volunteer positions with the United Way, including a member of the Board of Directors.

Hayden also serves in various volunteer capacities including the USM Dubard School for Language Disorders, the Pine Burr Area Boy Scouts, and the board for Housing Alternatives.

He is a member of the ADP, and the Rotary Club of Hattiesburg, where he is a Paul Harris Fellow, and a past board member of a number of other area organizations.

He and his wife, Janet are members of Temple Baptist Church and have two children, Grant, age 15, and Meredith, age 10.

The Foundation

We all need to give back to our community and strive to make our community stronger and a better place in which to live and work – for ourselves, our friends, our families and for the generations to come.

The Greater PineBelt Community Foundation is an excellent organization to help individuals, families or businesses fund various causes or charitable organizations or perhaps leave a lasting legacy. ▲



SEVEN MEMBERS DEPART FOUNDATION BOARD

The Foundation Board will say farewell to seven members whose terms will be ending with the current fiscal year. Board member terms range from two to three years, depending on the membership level. The departing members and their committee assignments are as follows. ▲



Bobby Ray Bolton
Marketing and Public Relations



Sam Buchanan
Finance



Dave Bush
Development



Iris Easterling
Finance



Dan Kibodeaux
Development



Hayden Mitchell
*Foundation Secretary
Executive Committee
Nominating*



Bob Pierce
*Marketing and
Public Relations*

KATRISHIN

(continued from page 2)

for him to hold down a normal job, Laughlin said. Because of the stigma surrounding epilepsy – even a form brought on by an injury – Katrishin decided not to marry.

“He broke up with his girlfriend and went to California,” Laughlin said. “He was a street salesman. What he did, I’m told, was he lived in the YMCA, very frugally. He took the money he made and invested it in the stock market. By the time he died, I’d estimate his estate was worth \$2 million.”

More than 30 years later, when they were both in their 60s, Katrishin was reunited with his college sweetheart, Miriam, who was now a widow, and they married, settling in Hattiesburg. They had several happy years together before her death in 1997.

“Mr. Katrishin was a great friend to the Y,” Hannon said, recalling that even after his wife’s death, his driver would take Katrishin to the Y so he could exercise in the pool and visit with his friends.

The Family Y named its facility on Veterans Memorial Drive after Alex and Miriam Katrishin in gratitude for their donation. ▲

PARTNERS SUPPORT IS VALUABLE TO FOUNDATION

In the fall of 2007, the Board of Directors of the Foundation established a new prestigious giving opportunity of "Partners." This giving level was established to meet the annual needs of the Foundation's day-to-day operating budget.

The productivity of the Partners Program is already evident with the securing of new and larger office space, and the employment of an administrative assistant.

Current Partners are as follows:

*Albert and Associates
Architects, PA.*

*Dr. Ted and Barbara Alexander
Anderson Retail, Inc.*

AT&T – Mississippi

BancorpSouth

Dr. Ben & Kathy Carmichael

Stanley Carpenter

Chain Companies

Citizens National Bank

Iris Easterling

*John Fairchild, Fairchild
Management, LLC*

Finlo Construction Company, Inc.

Forrest General Hospital

The Godwin Family

"Skippy" Haik

William and Melissa Hanberry

Hancock Bank

Hattiesburg Clinic

*Hattiesburg Coca-Cola Bottling
Company*

*Heritage Banking Group of
South Mississippi*

*Hood Companies, Warren and
Carolyn Hood, Jr.*

Horne LLP

Sandy and Robert M. Jackson, Sr.

Gwen James

Dr. Jamie Jimenez

*Dr. Tom and Mrs. Sandra King,
William Carey University*

Bud and Virginia Kirkpatrick

*Grand Bank, Edward J. "Ed"
and Lynda Langton*

Paul and Cheryl Laughlin

John W. Lee, Jr.

Andy and Michelle Leslie

Robert and Margaret Lochhead

London and Stetelman

Aubrey and Ella Lucas

Andy and Stace Mercier

Mississippi Power Foundation

Montague, Pittman & Varnado

Bryan Nelson, PA

Nicholson & Company, PLLC

Owens Business Machines

Bill and Sue Pace

Bob and Kristi Pierce

Lou Ann and Louis Poynter

Regions Bank

Susan and Greg Rutland

Ryan Chevrolet

Marvin Shemper

Wanda Simpson

Southern Wood Preserving

SouthGroup Insurance Services

Stewart Sneed Hewes

Tatum Development Corporation

*Dr. Fred and Mrs. Mary
Margaret Tatum*

Drs. Christy and Jon Thornton

Trustmark National Bank

*The University of Southern
Mississippi*

Chris and Holly Wilson

*Wise, Carter, Child & Caraway,
P.A.*

Wright CPA Group, PLLC

James N. Yelverton

NEW ACCOUNTS INDICATE PINEBELT INVOLVEMENT

The most recent new accounts reflect the geographic spread of the Foundation with two new accounts in the Petal area. Also the two new accounts bearing the names of individuals are donor-advised funds. In this type fund the donor or their representative invest in the Foundation and annually advise the Foundation where they wish the interest from their investment to be placed.

NEWS ACCOUNTS ARE:

Born Learning Trail – To develop and build a trail and green space for an Outdoor Learning Trail for Hattiesburg Area Youth.

Partners for a Healthier Petal – Partners for a Healthier Petal will sponsor its first event, Biggest Loser, Petal Edition. This event will address healthy weight loss and nutrition through exercise. All monies earned will be given to Petal's K-6th grade physical education programs.

Dynamic Dyslexia Design (The 3-D School) – To provide a safe haven for learning and special instruction for students with dyslexia, as well as evaluation service.

Bridging The Gap Through Inclusive Play – To remove barriers and promote self-esteem throughout the Hattiesburg Elementary School System by providing universally accessible playground equipment to all children, focusing on the Thames Elementary campus. Also, to promote equality by implementing a City Play Day to help integrate the lives of all children regardless of ability.

Sandy and Robert Jackson, Sr. Fund – Funds distributed to various non-profits at the discretion of the donor.

Ben M. Stevens, Jr. Memorial Fund – Funds distributed to various non-profits at the discretion of the donor.

Lamar County K-9 Fund – To purchase a service K-9 for the Lamar County Sheriff's Department. ▲

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Permit No. 71