There are many community foundations across the United States that serve as philanthropic entities usually serving a particular geographic area. They often have a broad mission statement and serve as a vehicle for informed grant making using donations from people and organizations wanting to make a difference in that area. Many community foundations build endowments which allow for continued investment in a community, even when the principle donors have passed away.

As someone involved with East Tennessee Foundation in various capacities for over 12 years, I believe that it is one of the most successful community foundations in the United States. Over the last 26 years, it has awarded almost $190,000,000 in grants and received over $300,000,000 in gifts to be managed by the Foundation, and has assets totaling over $185,000,000. And equally as important, the Foundation serves 25 counties of East Tennessee, reflecting the inter-connectedness of our economies. One of the reasons people give their resources to foundations is the assurance that their funds will be well-managed. Even with the last five years' recession, ETF has a proven financial track record, with returns on our investments totaling over 8% since the first quarter of 1987. That is something that should make us smile.

As chair of ETF Board of Directors for 2012, I hope that the accomplishments of our Foundation are known as well as the academic, programmatic and other accomplishments of the University of Tennessee, another jewel in our midst. Having the people in our region realize the breadth of ETF activities and the depth of its service is of paramount importance to all of us. Knowing that there are youngsters receiving scholarships, homes being built, organizations being supported through the activities of ETF should make us all shout with pride about our very own community foundation. Please do your part and "shout" along with all of us!

Alice Mercer, ETF Board Chair

In April 2012, our Terry Holley, Senior VP for Programs and Regional Development, “officially” completed 20 years of employment at East Tennessee Foundation (ETF). We quote the word carefully, because Terry's service began several years earlier as a consultant for various ETF initiatives. She first served as the Executive Director of ETF’s Wolf Trap Foundation Fund, an artist-in-residency project for Head Start programs. She then was recruited to coordinate the Neighborhoods Small Grants Program, which had been funded through a national grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. And then she became a full-time

Continued on page 2
In response to overwhelming needs in our region, we created the “Neighbor to Neighbor Disaster Relief Fund” of East Tennessee Foundation in May of 2011. The first grants were made to the local Red Cross Program in Cocke County. At that time many homes, the Cocke County High School and other community buildings were destroyed by tornadoes that seemed to spawn quickly and with devastating results. Our goal was to provide prompt, cost effective services to communities and families in need. And with donors’ help, we were able to be on site immediately to help with emergency housing, food, and clothing for several families that had nowhere else to turn.

In March of 2112, tornadoes once again roared through our region leaving a trail of destruction, but fortunately no lives were lost. This time Monroe County was the hardest hit in East Tennessee Foundation’s service area. More specifically, Tellico Plains reported 25-30 families who had lost everything including their homes. East Tennessee Foundation reached out to families in Tellico Plains and, working with the local chapter of the American Red Cross, found that a grant in the amount of $4,000 would enable emergency relief to each family ensuring a safe place to stay, food, clothing and personal incidentals.

With a $4,000 grant in mind, ETF turned to its Neighbor to Neighbor Fund to provide the needed resources. Following the expenditures in Cocke County, adequate funds were no longer available to meet the immediate needs in Tellico Plains.

Fortunately, Monroe County has an Affiliate Fund of East Tennessee Foundation, the John D. Grubb and Louise G. Sumner Fund for Monroe County. With a little quick leg work and communication with the local Advisory Board of the Fund, a $4,000 grant was made immediately to help each and every family with basic emergency assistance through a grant to the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

We bring this to your attention again as we continue our efforts to raise funds for our Neighbor to Neighbor Disaster Relief Fund. Our 25 years of experience have enabled us to build longstanding relationships and networks with local nonprofits that know best how to respond when disaster strikes in their own communities.

Be a caring neighbor. Giving is easy for all who want to join our effort. You can make a gift online, recommend a grant from your donor advised fund, or send a monetary contribution made payable to the Neighbor to Neighbor Disaster Relief Fund of East Tennessee Foundation. A gift of any size can help.
New Staff Position

Deborah Phillips
ETF Administrative Assistant

Deborah Phillips has recently joined the ETF staff as Administrative Assistant. Deborah was born in Albany, New York, and received her Bachelor of Arts in English from the State University of New York, Albany. She later attended Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, and received her Master of Education in Teaching from Schreiner University, Kerrville, Texas.

Her past work experience includes: secretary, administrative assistant, Director of Christian Education, elementary school teacher, Hunger Action Enabler for the Presbytery of East Tennessee and, most recently, Special Events Coordinator for Knoxville’s Fish Hospitality Pantries.

Deborah and her husband, Dr. Buran Phillips, have three sons – Chris (20) a Junior at Centre College, Sam (15) a Sophomore at Bearden High School, and Jake (6) a first grader at West Hills Elementary School. She enjoys singing, song writing, and swimming in her leisure time.

WOMEN’S FUND

Identifying Critical Barriers

The Women’s Fund of East Tennessee extends a heartfelt thank you to Lane Hays for opening her home and gardens to our Advisory Board and friends. We appreciate Lisa Duncan, Executive Director of the Dogwood Arts Festival, sharing this opportunity with our group and creating delicious refreshments for us to enjoy on a lovely spring evening. Following a stroll through Lane’s enchanting rose gardens, the group gathered for a brief update about the Women’s Fund.

Our Women’s Fund Research and Grants committee led by chairwoman Marty Begalla and ETF staff member Terry Holley has embarked on an intense research process to identify the critical barriers facing low-income women and girls in our region. Pairs of volunteers have been interviewing service providers, business leaders and volunteers in our 25 counties. The research will be compiled at ETSU, and in the fall, we will begin to discuss what barriers we can help remove by partnering with the nonprofits that have the ability to create change. In 2013, the Women’s Fund will award our first grants totaling $75,000.

We are still growing. Our goal is to endow $10 million in 10 years. There are several levels of opportunity to join our donor group. When we pool our resources together, we have a greater opportunity to help transform the lives of low-income women and girls. If you would like to hear more about joining our philanthropic community, please contact Mary Ellen Brewington at mebrewington@cherokeedistributing.com.

Mary Ellen Brewington,
Women’s Fund Advisory Board Chair
Maryville City Schools Endowment

WE WANT TO BE THE BEST

Fostering knowledge and potential have been of great importance in Maryville, Tennessee, since its beginnings. Maryville students have consistently demonstrated excellence in state test scores, contests, and classroom achievement, as well as athletics. And, when people care deeply about something they value, they want it to continue and be there for their children, their grandchildren, and in perpetuity. To insure that Maryville’s outstanding learning programs endure, the Maryville City Schools Foundation (MCSF) established an endowment fund at East Tennessee Foundation (ETF) to support the Maryville City Schools. Chartered in 1991, Maryville City Schools Foundation’s mission is to seek financial grants and donations of treasure, time, and talent from the community, to create a vital link between the private sector and the Maryville City School system. MCSF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit separately incorporated and has a very good working relationship with the school system. A two person part-time staff supports an 18-member board that governs the Foundation and includes four nonvoting ex-officio members (director of schools, school board member, and two teacher representatives). “We’re about raising money, being frugal with expenses, and trying to put as much as we can back into the school system. We’re a top-ranked school system, we want to stay there and we want to be a top-ranked system, not just in the state, but in the Southeast and nationally. We want our schools to be the best!” said Barbara Jenkins, MCSF Executive Director.

The Starlight Awards Gala, the Foundation’s major fundraiser, was started nine years ago to commend distinguished alumni from Maryville High School as well as community education partners. The dinner and auction event is held at the Clayton Center for the Arts and the evening includes awards recognizing distinguished alumni, distinguished service award, outstanding young alumni, community partnership, and family partnership.

In 2007, Lockheed Martin donated $1 million to Maryville City Schools Foundation to support the annual Lamar Alexander Scholarships that are awarded to five graduating seniors, selected by the highest faculty vote from the Maryville Scholars’ program at Maryville High School. Currently, $43,000 is being awarded from the endowment annually in scholarship funds – a $25,000 grant to the student with the highest faculty vote, a $15,000 grant to the student with the second highest vote, and three $1,000 grants in honor of their nomination.

In April 2009, MCSF, in association with the Maryville City Schools administration, School Board, City of Maryville, parents, and the community with a lead gift from Clayton Homes, launched the 21st Century Classroom Partnership. The partnership supports interactive technology for Maryville City School students. Over the past three years, MCSF has invested over $300,000 for classroom technology upgrades and overall the partnership stakeholders have invested over $1 million.

Current/recent areas of funding include a $100,000 grant from the MCSF fund at East Tennessee Foundation for the new Coulter Grove Intermediate School in support of the library and science labs. MCSF also supports the continuation of funding the 21st Century Classroom with Promethean Interactive Boards, E-readers, and iPod Touches for classrooms, supports STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) robotics and biodiesel programs, and provides new and replacement musical instruments as needed in schools.

When MCSF founding board members established the organization endowment at East Tennessee Foundation, they demonstrated an understanding of the merits of endowment and the financial stability and sustainability it provides: regular income, emergency funds, funds for future opportunities, funds to meet the needs of future generations, opportunities for donors to have a lasting impact, and a strengthening of donor confidence. This endowment will help to sustain for generations to come the fostering of knowledge and potential so greatly valued in the Maryville community.
East Tennessee Foundation

Union County Community Foundation Award

Historic Oak Grove School Receives $4,000 Grant

The sky was a brilliant blue and the thermometer was steadily climbing as the Union County Community Foundation, an Affiliate Fund of East Tennessee Foundation (ETF), presented a $4,000 check to Preservation Union County (PUC). The grant award was made in partnership with Union County Mayor Mike Williams and the Union County Commission. Funds are to be used to develop a walking trail and provide signage for the historic Oak Grove School located in Sharp’s Chapel.

Oak Grove School is one of only 30 remaining Rosenwald Schools in the State of Tennessee built between 1917 and 1929. The two-room school house design was made available throughout the South with funds from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation. The “Rosenwald Schools” were built to provide schools for African-American children during the years of segregation. Each school was cooperatively built with assistance from the local communities as well as donations of land and labor which were matched by financial contributions from the Rosenwald Foundation.

In addition to the brief awards ceremony, community volunteers, staff and volunteers from Knox Heritage and its East Tennessee Preservation Alliance program, along with Union County Community Foundation Advisory Board Members and ETF’s Terry Holley, spent the remainder of the day scraping old paint, knocking down wasps’ nests, swapping stories, and putting an initial coat of paint on the weathered school building. The building had served a variety of purposes until the early 1960’s. Clearly the redwood lumber used for its construction had contributed to the longevity of the building despite the fact that it sat empty for years.

Volunteers gathered quickly when lunch time brought an array of homemade delights including “kraut dumplings” and “history telling” by the community members who had attended Oak Grove School in the late 1920’s and 30’s. They were clearly proud of their school, their education, their community, and their childhood stories. “We loved our school,” one elderly gentleman said “and we are sure proud of your help.”

What’s next for the refurbished historic school? When restored, the school will once again become a hub for community activity and serve as the home of Preservation Union County. Other plans are being discussed for a variety of uses from a library to a center for GED classes. The other hope, of course, is a desire to increase tourism in the area which boasts a pivotal Native American History, easy access to Norris Lake and the 24,444 acre Chuck Swain Wildlife Management Area, where bank fishing, horseback riding and other outdoor sports abound.

Preservation Union County is an all volunteer nonprofit organization that is affiliated with East Tennessee Preservation Alliance, a program of Knox Heritage, Inc. In addition to restoration efforts under way at the Oak Grove School, Preservation Union County has assisted with applications for the National Register of Historic Sites for the Hamilton-Tolliver Complex (farm and buildings) on Kettle Hollow Road and the Hamilton-Lay Store Building on Walker’s Ford Road. A marker was also procured for Horace Maynard which was placed on Main Street in Maynardville near the Courthouse. Preservation Union County is currently working with the Union County Cemetery Association with several historic cemetery sites. PUC is available to assist all people who are interested and need help with the preservation of Union County’s history and historic sites.

Union County Community Foundation was established as a project of Leadership Union County, the Class of 2010. As community leaders and visionaries, the Class of 2010 made a lasting commitment to the people of Union County by developing a resource to achieve community goals and promote Union County. The Union County Community Foundation is a permanent endowment that has been created to support opportunities to advance and improve the quality of life of the residents of Union County. Volunteers and contributions are not only welcomed but encouraged. For more information or to make a contribution, contact Terry Holley, Sr. VP for Programs and Regional Development at 865-524-1223, toll free 877-524-1223 or by e-mail: tholley@etf.org.
Johnson County Community Foundation Grants

Johnson County Community Foundation was established through the work of the Johnson County community committee and generous gifts of time, vision and resources. This group of Johnson County residents was committed to strengthening communities and improving the quality of life in Johnson County.

Friends of the Library of Johnson County
Nationally known author and consultant Catherine Jones Kuhns will provide mathematics training for K-6 Johnson County teachers, parents and homeschool students.

Heritage Hall
Fiscal Sponsor for Johnson County Young Artists
Students will participate in a week-long summer camp which will provide them with hands-on theatrical experiences.

Johnson County High School
Former University of Tennessee football player, author and speaker Inky Johnson will conduct inspirational and motivational assemblies for students at Johnson County High and Middle Schools.

Town of Mountain City
Mountain City Parks and Recreation will assist in the planting of 20 trees along Main Street, to replace those removed years ago.

Town of Mountain City
The immediate needs of local cancer patients will be met by Johnson County/Mountain City Community Center and the Johnson County Cancer Support Group.

Johnson County Growth Scholarship Fund will support the tuition for a graduating senior or non-traditional student living in Johnson County who will attend a college of the student’s choice or a trade school.

Total Funding Awarded: $8,100

Inky Johnson, speaker at Johnson County High School
Friends of the Library of Johnson County
Mountain City Main Street Tree Planting
Heritage Hall sponsors young artists
I have answered the bell to get up and go to work approximately 11,000 times in my life. That’s enough. I have decided to retire at the end of June. In announcing this decision to you, I want to let you know some of the things I am not doing and some of the things I am doing.

I am not retiring due to a mutually agreed upon decision. This is a unilateral decision I have made based on many factors, not the least of which is age! I would like to think that I still have my “A” game as far as work is concerned, and that I am still making a meaningful contribution to the mission of ETF. I’ll be quick to admit, however, that my “A” game is equivalent to some other people’s “B” or “C” game, and my successor will bring a welcome infusion of new energy and fresh ideas.

I am not leaving ETF in the lurch, not by any stretch of the imagination. East Tennessee Foundation has emerged from the worst years of our economic downturn in better financial health and with more assets than ever before. We have a new supporting organization, Trinity Health Foundation, which has an exciting future as it partners with ETF in carrying out its bold mission for meeting healthcare needs in our region. We have an engaged board and an experienced staff, so experienced, in fact, that my nine-year tenure ranks me no higher than eighth on the seniority list! And I am confident that my successor will hit the ground running without missing a step.

I am not second-guessing the timing of this decision. Our grandchildren are moving into and through their teen years, which means they are participating in school activities and sports events that my wife and I want to attend. I am going to bend over backwards to coordinate a smooth transition between my successor and me. I am going to do some long-delayed traveling with my wife. I am going to make our yard presentable. I am going to get more involved with meaningful ministries at our church. I am going to start a more strenuous exercise program. I am going to renew relationships that have been neglected far too long. I am going to take an occasional afternoon nap. I am going to do more reading, a whole lot more reading. And some day within the next twenty years, I am going to shoot my age on the golf course!

Although my working life may be largely defined by three decades in the banking industry, God was awfully good to me in allowing me the unspeakable pleasure of spending most of the last decade at East Tennessee Foundation. Our past and present board members, fundholders, and grantee organizations amaze me on a daily basis with their determination to improve the quality of life and correct society’s ills through the powerful tool of philanthropy. My fellow workers on the ETF staff are perfectly suited for their roles, and they “get it” with regard to the importance of the work being done here.

Retirement can be viewed as getting away from something or moving toward something. Mine is definitely the latter. I have lived within the confines of the work week and the tyranny of limited vacation days for forty-six years. Right now I can only imagine the joy of being in control of my own time, and I can’t wait to start living it. Thank you for your support of East Tennessee Foundation, and thank you for your generous heart. Truly East Tennessee is the best place on earth to live!
Has your contact information changed?
If so, please let us know so we can keep in touch.

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East Tennessee Foundation respects, celebrates, and encourages diversity that positively contributes to our healthy and caring community.

2012 ETF Board of Directors

LEFT to RIGHT: Front row - Pat Postma, John Geppi, Alice Mercer, Rick Fox, Patsy Carson, Bill Pugh, Kay Clayton, Howard Blum, Bobbie Congleton Back row - Keith Burroughs, David Jones, David Martin, Frank Rothermel, Jeff Chapman, Mitch Steenrod, Marty Begalla, Keith Goodwin, Cynthia Burnley, Fred Womack, John Worden

East Tennessee Foundation is a public, nonprofit, community foundation created for the purpose of building charitable resources to make communities stronger and lives better through thoughtful giving.

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