

Helping dreams come true

Community Foundation of Susquehanna County

Newsletter Spring 2004

What We Do...

The Community Foundation provides local turnkey philanthropic leadership for people wishing to accomplish self-directed charitable results of great importance. We help donors' dreams come true by providing advice, program information, ideas, professional support and personalized assistance. Since we are an independent, locally controlled, not-for-profit corporation with many talented volunteers, we can do this cost effectively.

Donors determine "what matters," retain control of how their money is used, and direct their legacy every step of the way. We add the framework, energy and continuity for work that would otherwise be difficult to accomplish alone. This newsletter will provide quarterly reports of Foundation donors realizing their dreams.

New donors are welcome to contribute any amount to an existing Foundation fund, or to begin a fund of their own.



Community Foundation headquarters, Montrose, PA

Dollars for Scholars

The Foundation's major new initiative for 2004 is the Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) scholarship program. It allows donors to apply for significant tax credits when they make a contribution to EITC. The program provides needs based tuition and fees to K through 12 children who attend accredited private or public schools within Pennsylvania. Applicant family income is limited to \$50,000.

People's National Bank (PNB) kicked off the program with a \$100,000 pledge to be donated over two years. There has been tremendous public response to the Foundation's first ads,

resulting in a waiting list of worthy families in need of more donors to follow PNB's lead.

Joe Burke explains, "Parents get to decide what schools best meet the needs of their children, thousands of dollars get pumped back into our community, PNB and other donors get tax credits for a portion of their donation, and the Community Foundation receives an administrative fee allowing us to build our scholarship program." The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development is the Foundation's partner in this effort.

**Community Foundation
of Susquehanna County**

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“The smallest deed is better than the grandest intention.”

Larry Eisenburg

Meet the Staff

The Foundation's newest staff member is Ruth Donnelly. She is from New Milford and is a Marywood graduate in accounting. Ruth is a certified tax preparer and worked for five years in IBM's accounting department plus a year at a private accounting firm. She most enjoys working directly helping people and says, "I think this is the perfect job for me."

Ruth's grandmother, Ruth Cramer, was on the Blue Ridge School Board and her

husband Matthew is a history teacher. She has done missionary work in the Dominican Republic, provided income tax help for local seniors, and works with the ecumenical vacation Bible school for four New Milford churches.

Ruth has a three year old and a thirteen year old daughter and a four year old son. She will be organizing and implementing the EITC Scholarship Program which includes interviewing candidate families.



“Charity begins at home, but should not end there”

Thomas Fuller

Katie's Choice

“Think of the family as a hanging mobile...we have all had to find a rebalance because a piece is missing,” explains Hedi Randall. The Randalls were reeling just so after the death of Jonathan Craig Randall, age 42, in the September 11th attack.

They have chosen to quiet their turmoil by looking to the future. “We have established an endowment Memorial Fund in Jonathan's memory and we want Katie (Jonathan's daughter) to continue to pick the recipient each year.” This year Katie's first choice was the Endless Mountains Theatre Co; last year she chose to give scholarships to Ed Lonzinski Theatre Camp. “It will keep Katie involved in a place that her dad loved....



She's a city girl, but like her dad – she loves coming to the country.”

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Funds Soar with Market

The Foundation's 25 funds grew handsomely in 2003 under The Vanguard Group management. The Community Foundation portfolio is a conservative balance of 65% stocks and 35% bonds designed to produce a 10% average return over a ten year period. This year's results more than doubled that average. Such growth pays the Foundation's 1% charge, allows a 5% grant distribution, and the remainder is a hedge against inflation.

Vanguard consistently receives highest recommendations from Kiplinger's and other market watchers for several reasons. They treat customers fairly, charge low fees and exhibit a willingness to shut funds before they become too large. Kiplinger's detailed ethical standards questionnaire determined Vanguard not only to “still look clean” but to have been working actively for years to combat trading abuses.

“Success in life should be determined by contributions, not accumulations.”

Arthur F. Lenehan

Hoop Dreams Scholarship

The second annual Julia Frystak Basketball Tournament this year drew over 500 people with 90 student and adult teams participating to honor Julia's memory. Family and friends of the Dimock 13 year old who died tragically in August 2002 established a Community Foundation scholarship fund in her name. Each year the memorial 'three on three' matches are run in November with the goal of building the fund.

Area merchants donated food, photos, T-shirts, and businesses and professionals contributed trophy costs for the games. "The level of cooperation was tremendous," confirms Coach Sean Brown. Mayor Tom Lamont, District Attorney Jason Legg and his 'Probation Pals' and school board member, J.B. Blacheck were among community notables participating. Julia's friends were the major organizers, vowing to "do our best for our best friend!"

Julia was both a Montrose high honors student and a gifted athlete. Seniors who excel in academics and athletics are selected to receive the scholarships.



War Rages 'On the Green'

The final battle of this county's Civil War veterans may be against the ravages of time and Pennsylvania winters. The Civil War Monument Committee has raised over \$70,000 in grants and donations to restore and preserve the stately 1876 memorial On the Green for future generations.

Its granite sculpture atop an inscribed sandstone base with cast iron canons has lacked regular maintenance and is deteriorating. The Committee is determined to assure the monument's ongoing survival by establishing an endowment fund which they intend to build over time so that enough income is generated to cover future maintenance.



Brunner Fund Honors Pioneer

"Looking to the future and the challenges we face, we're reminded to never forget our past."

With these words Foundation President and CEO Joe Burke announced in December 2003 that income from the endowed Norman Brunner Memorial Fund would be distributed to charities throughout the county along with each year's annual United Way campaign proceeds.

Norman Brunner was the practical visionary who founded of the Susquehanna County Charities Distribution Fund way back in December of 1961. That fund is now the United Way of Susquehanna County. Brunner's purpose was to capture a portion of the charitable dollars being donated by county residents. Since its inception, the Charities Distribution Fund has distributed over \$1.5 million throughout the county.

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“Philanthropy lies at the heart of human greatness”
 J. Patrick Ryan

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Philanthropic ‘Big Bang’

The philanthropic spark that established the county seat in Montrose in July 1811 was a gift of real estate. Bartlet and Agnes Hinds and Isaac and Susannah Post donated the Montrose public square for the erection of the first county buildings. Their gift inspired others who made the cash donations needed to construct the first courthouse, “diminutive in size and appearance” compared with our current courthouse, but Emily Blackman assures us it was “then considered quite a magnificent edifice – an ornament to this region of the State.”

