



**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**  
OF GASTON COUNTY, INC.

*...Building a Solid Foundation for Gaston County*



Capt. Earl Morse, Flight of Honor was the guest speaker for the Sims Dinner



**Inside this issue**

**Allen H. Sims Award**

**Next Generation**

**Run for the Money**

**Teens Changing Gaston County**

**Featured Donor**

**8% Interest**

# MAKING CONNECTIONS

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Fall/Winter 2010

## Mr. Ralph S. Robinson, Jr. Receives the Community Foundation's 2010 Annual Allen H. Sims Award



Members of the Robinson Family

The Community Foundation of Gaston County, Inc. hosted the twenty-first annual Allen H. Sims Dinner Thursday night at Gaston County Club. The dinner is named for Allen H. Sims and the award by the same name is given to someone who exemplifies the selfless act of seeing a need and finding a solution, of caring for a community and making a difference. Allen Sims himself was a philanthropist. He and his wife, Anne, are credited with leaving the largest unrestricted gift managed by the Community Foundation.

Honored with the Sims Award this year was Ralph S. Robinson, Jr.. A native of Gastonia, Ralph Robinson, Jr. is the son of Charlotte and Ralph Robinson, Sr. He is married to the former Sally McConnell of Gastonia and they are blessed with three children, Russell, Leigh, and Greg and six grandchildren. After attending local schools he attended Woodberry Forest School and upon graduation went to Davidson College for one year and then transferred to UNC-Chapel Hill.

In 1957 he joined the family textile cotton mill operations where he had worked since he was 16 years old. In the mid 70's the cotton mill was sold to J.P. Stevens and Company. The corporation itself, Robinson Mills, became a personal holding company and operates today with diversified stock and real estate holdings.

Being active in First Presbyterian Church has been a constant for Ralph. He has served as a deacon and elder. Many committees and special projects have benefited from his involvement. He especially loves music and has focused on supporting the music program of the church.

Ralph has devoted many years actively serving the community in Gaston County. He has provided leadership for many organizations. Ralph is the Past President of Gaston Community Concert Association, Gaston Chamber of Commerce, Gaston County YMCA, Gastonia Rotary Club, and Gastonia City Club. He was a past Director on the Board of First Union National Bank in Gastonia. He also served as Campaign Chairman and Past President of Gaston County United Way. Ralph is the Founding Co-Chairman of Family Counseling Service. He has served as past Trustee to St. Andrews Presbyterian College and Past Trustee to Gaston County Museum of Art & History. His involvement with the Community Foundation spans a total of 12 years of Board service including serving as President in 1996. Ralph is also a member of the Legacy Society.

Following in the footsteps (continued on page 3)

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF GASTON COUNTY, INC.



Visit our website [www.cfgaston.org](http://www.cfgaston.org)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH THE NEXT GENERATION?



The Next Generation Fund, a group of young community leaders whose goal is to promote philanthropy to enrich the lives of children and families in Gaston County. Donations to the fund become part of an unrestricted endowment. A portion of the investment return is used for grant making. The principal is preserved and the fund will grow through gifts and investment appreciation.



Johan Newcombe & Henry Whitesides

The Next Generation held its 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Ugly Sweater Party at the home of Christa and Charles Heilig in February. Guests enjoyed chili with all the fixings while being careful not to spill any on their ugly sweaters. The steering committee announced that the fund would provide seed money to furnish and decorate a child's bedroom in the 20th anniversary home being built by Habitat for Humanity in honor of Johan Newcombe. Guests made generous contributions towards the furnishings during the event.

In May, Next Generation volunteers and their children readied a bedroom and bathroom at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary home for its new teenage occupant. Jennifer Newcombe led the paint crew, Steven Long did the heavy lifting and Caroline Efird lent her expertise as a designer to bring the room together.

The Next Generation Fund had a strong presence at Run for the Money 8. Members served on the Run steering committee and volunteered to help make the Run successful.



Members of Newcombe & Harris Family

---

## LOCAL YOUTH PROGRAM GAINS NATIONAL ATTENTION

Teens Changing Gaston County (TCGC) is a youth philanthropy initiative supported by the Gaston County Family YMCA and Alliance for Children and Youth with funding from the **Community Foundation of Gaston County**. Under the direction of Loy Adkins, YMCA Association Teen Director, the program is thriving and providing an opportunity for Gaston County teens to learn more about philanthropy and the impact that is possible when working together on a united goal. Loy has seen the enthusiasm and hard work that has gone into making the program a success. Youth who are leading programs across Gaston County have written grant requests to the TCGC Board with impressive project ideas that have left an impact in the community. Reviewing the submitted grant applications and learning about the selection process is a very educational process for all members of TCGC.

One successful project that TCGC helped fund was a program to teach youth to swim. The program was so successful the first year, that the teen implementing the program recruited underclassmen to continue the program after he graduated from high school and the project received funding from TCGC for a second year. This project is just one example of the legacy that teens are able to leave behind with help from TCGC. College applications and interviews noting TCGC involvement have yielded high stakes in terms of scholarship rewards to members of TCGC. TCGC is a program where teens can work together and generate outstanding results for themselves and Gaston County.

The tremendous success of TCGC has not gone unnoticed by the National YMCA. In April of 2011 there will be a convention in Anaheim, CA. for the North American YMCA Development Organization (NAYDO). The TCGC program will be presented as a best practice. It was chosen to be showcased because of its success and ability to be far reaching and to generate maximum impact for youth. YMCA CEO, Tony Sigmon, is excited about the success of TCGC. Mr. Sigmon has a vision of expanding the program into multiple high schools within Gaston County and then seeing it being replicated in YMCAs throughout the world as a Teen Legacy Club of the YMCA. TCGC is a rewarding program that puts our youth on the right track by teaching them the importance of giving back to the community, knowing the community better, and working to make it a better place.



## Run for the Money 9 Making a Difference in Gaston County



*Run for the Money 9* will be held on Saturday, April 16, 2011. An expected 1,300 runners and walkers will take to the streets of Gastonia to raise money and awareness for non-profits in our community. Since its inception in 2003, *Run for the Money* has raised over \$9,123,360 for Gaston County non-profits. The Community Foundation has granted \$2,086,500 through *Run for the Money* over the past eight years.

*Run for the Money* was recognized as one of the key pieces to the City of Gastonia's bid for All America City in June. All-America Cities benefit by increasing community pride, networking with civic activists from across the country and gaining national recognition.



The *Run* is a huge undertaking. Volunteers begin making plans for the springtime event in late fall. LeeAnn Harris stated, "Our non-profit volunteers are committed to the success of *Run for the Money* and their hard work shows in the millions of dollars they have raised."

### Important Dates for *Run 9*:

**December 3, 2010**

Deadline for applications to participate in *Run for the Money 9*

**February 14, 2011**

Foundation begins to accept donations/participant registration begins

**April 16, 2011**

*Run for the Money*, Rotary Pavilion Downtown Gastonia

**April 22, 2011**

Deadline for contributions



K. Sanders, T. Efird, & C. Efird

of his parents, he and Sally have explored the world. Ralph's wanderlust led them on many exciting adventures. To capture these experiences he has developed a love of photography and can delight visitors with wonderful photos in his home or office. Some of his highlights include scuba diving with his son, underwater photography, swimming with sharks and a trip to Tibet. Ralph once commented to a family member about the ideal conditions of the day describing it as a "blue bird day". This expression is now commonly used in and around the household and sheds a positive light on the man that coined the phrase.

As a young man, Ralph achieved the rank of Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America organization. It is easy to see that his service did not stop there and became a way of life. Currently, Ralph is the Managing Trustee of The Ralph. S. Robinson Family Foundation, Chairman of the Board of Governors for The Anderson Foundation and Chairman of the Gaston County Library Board. He was honored in 1995 as the NC Trustee of the Year.

Tom Efird, Community Foundation Board member and long time friend of Ralph Robinson's presented the award. Tom Efird recounted the many contributions Ralph and his wife Sally Robinson have made to the community along with comments on Mr. Robinson's readiness and preparation for any situation.

Plato "Tete" Pearson, Community Foundation Board member, introduced the guest speaker for the evening. Capt. Erwin (Earl) Morse, Ret. USAF who is most widely known for his role in establishing the Honor Flight Network, an organization with the mission of taking WWII veterans to visit their national memorial in Washington, DC. Capt. Morse conceived the idea for Honor Flight and became the co-founder of the organization. The Board felt that hearing his inspiring story would be the perfect fit to our celebration of philanthropy. He is a fine example of how a person can start something big by having the heart and desire to do for others.



**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**  
OF GASTON COUNTY, INC.

...Building a Solid Foundation for Gaston County



## Featured Donor

The Community Foundation of Gaston County has an office that is always open to visitors. It is wonderful when donors stop in to visit and we encourage everyone to do so. There is one visitor in particular that brings a smile to all our faces when she stops by. Billie May Carroll has a contagious grin and is always a pleasure to see appear. She leaves everyone she encounters with a happier perspective with her stories and wit.

Back in 1993, Billie May and her husband Walter Carroll opened a donor advised fund at the Foundation. Walter, known as "Lefty" to his friends, was a successful businessman in Gastonia for years. The Carrolls raised three daughters and have 6 lovely grandchildren. In 2004, Mr. Carroll passed away and left many fond memories of happy times with family and friends. Today, Billie May continues to support local charities and work in our community for the betterment of people in Gaston County. As the advisor to the family fund, Mrs. Carroll also loves and supports her church. She remains true to the purpose and original intent of the Billie May and Walter Carroll, Jr. Fund and in doing so keeps the generous spirit she and her husband shared as a couple alive and well.

We would like to thank Mrs. Carroll for her generosity and continuing support to our community.

## Investment Performance Update

After a challenging second quarter, we have seen good, steady positive returns through October. Our year to date results are up 8.1% as of October 31<sup>st</sup>. We have seen positive returns across the board in all asset categories. Your investment committee continues to monitor performance of the fund and, as appropriate, is making small changes in managers and allocations while remaining conservative but well positioned in order to be rewarded with upside improvements in the market.

## How does 8% Interest Sound?

An interest rate of 8% can turn almost anyone's head. Is it really attainable? Well, yes, for some it is. The key is in the timing and the method used.

The Community Foundation of Gaston County, Inc. offers gift annuities to those individuals wanting to plan a charitable gift. The gift annuity is backed by the Foundation and is handled by a financial partner for backroom work. The more advanced in age the person generating the gift, the more attractive the interest rate will be.

Gift annuities work very well because they generate an income from the amount used to set up the annuity and provide a charitable deduction for the donor. The remainder of the annuity is designated as a gift to an endowment at the Foundation or any charity with an existing endowment.

Call The Community Foundation if you or someone you care about could benefit from this giving tool, 704-864-0927.

### Board of Directors

#### President

Charles W. Pearson

#### Vice President

W. Alex Hall, Jr.

#### Secretary / Treasurer

Susan B. Lewis

#### Members

Robert H. Blalock, Jr.

Susan Briggs

Tom D. Efird

Dr. Herman Gore

Titus W. Greene

W. Duke Kimbrell

Dr. Philip G. Leone

Steven D. Long

Gene R. Matthews

Dr. Charles J. Meakin III

Arthur R. Newcombe IV

Plato Pearson, Jr.

Dr. Richard E. Rankin, Jr.

Marshall A. Rauch

Sally Robinson

Dr. Edward D. Sadler

Julia Shovelin

T.J. Solomon II

William W. Toole

Susanne D. Whitesides

Elizabeth G. Wren

#### Staff

##### Executive Director

Ernest W. Sumner

##### Donor Development

##### Coordinator

Janet D. Spencer

##### Financial Coordinator

Lynnelle H. Dobbins

##### Program Coordinator

LeeAnn Harris

##### Administrative Assistant /

##### Grants Coordinator

Erin O. Welsch