

PATHWAYS to Giving

spring 2015



Marcum Family Makes New Park a Reality



Before the end of next year, Hamilton area residents will have a new park downtown to enjoy. Joe and Sarah Marcum's gift of \$3.5 million through the Hamilton Community Foundation will result in the six acre Marcum Park on the site of the former Mercy Hospital.

"I was hoping there would be a park there, maybe something for the kids," says AlexAndrea Lane, lifelong west side Hamilton resident and mother to three young children. "This will be

great, to have a nice new park downtown."

"I think it's the greatest thing going," says Barb Musch, who lives in German Village and will have close proximity to the park. "We should all be very grateful to the Marcum family."

Shawn Stidham sees even greater possibilities for the space, such as weddings and as a lunch spot for the increasing numbers of employees working downtown. "I think the nice thing is that this is a continuation of the reimagining and redevelopment of downtown," says the Courtyard by Marriott Director of Sales. "It started with the opening of the hotel six years ago and continued with RiversEdge, in efforts by the CORE fund and City leaders to bring more life downtown."

"That ground has meaning for our family," said Joe Marcum, who says three of their children were born at the former Mercy Hospital. "The hospital may not be there anymore but the memories sure are." When the Marcum's were approached last year by John Guidugli, president/CEO of the Hamilton Community Foundation, and City Manager Joshua Smith with a request to help fund the vast majority of the park expansion on the site, it immediately felt right.

This is the largest-ever private donation for a park in Hamilton. Marcum Park will expand the current area known as RiversEdge Amphitheater to the east on the green space bound by N. Second, Dayton and Buckeye Streets. "It's a wonderful thing to have a central area where the city can come together and enjoy a nice park. It will add interest to the development of the downtown area. This will help Hamilton to be more dynamic," agreed Marcum. "I want it to be a park that is both utilitarian and a thing of beauty." He added that attention is being given to landscaping details and that even the types of trees are being carefully chosen.

According to Guidugli, the new park fits perfectly with Hamilton's other recent revitalization projects as well as the Foundation's strategic plan, specifically the goal of enhancing community quality of life. "It is one more way to connect people to each other and to the growing vibrancy of our downtown," said Guidugli. "The Marcum family is a strong, long-time supporter of the City of Hamilton and the Foundation."



In addition to their private family foundation, the Marcum's have established five charitable funds at the Hamilton Community Foundation. Joe Marcum is the most recent recipient of the David L. Belew Award, given annually by the Foundation to honor those who've made significant contributions of time, talent and resources to improve the quality of life in our community.

Fitton Center- Expanding the Arts for All

The mission of The Fitton Center for Creative Arts, "To build community excellence through the arts and culture," is more fully realized with its long awaited renovation complete.

The Hamilton Community Foundation is an integral part of the campaign, as Foundation trustees approved \$800,000 in grants in conjunction with the Fitton Center's 20th anniversary.

The campaign's goals included improving efficiencies, reducing energy costs and upgrading the facility throughout. The "capstone" of the project was the new Fitton Family Theater, says the Center's Coordinator of Marketing, Public Relations and Performances Kim Neal. The theater now has an expanded box office and 241 seats on three sides around the room, making every seat a good seat. Neal said patrons will notice improved acoustics, lighting and sound effects, made possible by a technologically updated control room.

"I think it's terrific!" said Vaden Fitton, longtime supporter and co-chair of the Fitton Center's capital campaign. "It has new seating that is permanent, wider, more comfortable and very stable, which all provide an excellent view of the stage. It also has new LED lighting and a digital sound system. The stage, which is not elevated, allows everyone to see all the actors and action very clearly, and it's almost like the audiences are participants."



"Speaking with many of those donors, they shared the same pride and excitement as that of our board of directors and staff that the improvements to the facilities set the stage for future growth," added Fitton Center Executive Director Rick H. Jones.

What guests may not notice is energy saving enhancements, such as motion sensor lighting, new boilers that are 45 percent more efficient

and money-saving LED lighting that will better highlight artwork. A fun feature of the renovation is the artistic restrooms entitled, "Nature Calls," where bright layered wall mosaics by local artist Jan Brown Checco depict Hamilton scenes. A new spring floor in the dance studio enhances that space for those doing yoga to ballet. Refreshed paint and carpeting throughout brighten the atmosphere.

The Fitton Center for Creative Arts was a gift to the community from the bicentennial commission to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of Hamilton. It opened in 1993 and the Carruthers Center for Arts and Technology was later opened in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Fitton Center. The not-for-profit community arts center features programs for all ages including visual and performing arts classes, exhibitions, entertainment and theatre productions.



New Fund Profile - Hamilton Mill Fund



The Hamilton Mill has established one of the newest funds at the Hamilton Community Foundation. Mill Director Chris Lawson sees a link between The Mill and the Community Foundation, noting that local heads of thriving industries helped contribute to the Foundation's success at its inception. More than sixty years later, The Mill's long term focus is to again strengthen the local manufacturing and industrial base, and therefore the wider community.

Last July, the former BizTech Center changed its name to The Mill in tribute to Hamilton's strong industrial and manufacturing past, says Mill Operations Director Antony Seppi.

The business incubator's mission is all about supporting positive economic impact in the community by assisting entrepreneurs who are launching high growth start-up businesses. The Mill has received several awards in recognition of its innovation and public/private partnership.



Fred Williams of kW River Hydroelectric

Lawson believes that Hamilton's "core attributes" are renewable energy, clean technology and advanced manufacturing, pointing out that our community already has long held, built-in expertise in manufacturing. Nurturing entrepreneurs and what Lawson calls the "next gen" industrialist is key.

The Mill's success stories are building. kW River Hydroelectric, a clean technology company, is now researching and testing a hydroelectric power turbine, which will produce power by harnessing energy created by the Great Miami River. Another Mill-launched company, Lagoon, was founded by a team of engineers and designers who recently created a water monitoring device they wish to pilot test with Hamilton citizens. In fact, beta testing of projects throughout the city is an important tool used by The Mill.

Perceptive Devices is another Mill triumph, says Seppi. Its PER-CEPT-D headwear makes controlling a computer hands-free, through a network of sensors monitoring eye movement as well as head and facial gestures. There are wide ranging applications for the device, from government agencies to medicine and home use.

Lawson and Seppi agree that this is a pivotal moment for Hamilton, when many in the City are interested, involved and supporting innovation. "The community foundation continues to be a huge partner for us," added Lawson, noting that both organizations make investments in organizations providing a greater benefit to the entire overall community.

Shakespeare Comes to Hamilton

On a cold winter day, 400-year old literature recently came to life for 600 Hamilton students. A Harry T. Wilks grant to the Hamilton City Schools from the Hamilton Community Foundation funded The Cincinnati Shakespeare Touring Company's performance of Shakespeare's Macbeth at Hamilton High School. English teacher Linda Spurrier had her students read and discuss the play in class to prepare for the theater troupe's live performance.

Spurrier reports that student comments ranged from, "Loved it! It was great and on point!" to "I liked how they didn't leave a lot out of the play from the book. I also thought the actors described the images I saw in my head perfectly."

During their four years in high school, Hamilton City School students also read Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream and Julius Caesar. Spurrier said she feels there is no substitute for the experience of seeing such a play live and on stage to motivate learning, engage student interest and bring cultural enrichment to students.



How a Small Midwestern City is Reinventing Itself

The Impact of Leadership and One Amazing City Manager

(NOTE: This article originally appeared in the January 2015 KMK Consulting Company, LLC newsletter and is reprinted with the permission of author James J. McGraw, Jr., jmccraw@kmklaw.com)

Hamilton, Ohio is a small 223-year old blue collar city about 40 minutes northwest of Cincinnati undergoing a major renaissance. The model for this reinvention is different than what we at KMK Consulting normally experience. We have preached private sector leadership with great success in over 100 cities for three decades.

But Hamilton, Ohio may be the best example of public sector leadership that we have seen. And it is in the title of City Manager. His name is Joshua Smith. We have been honored to work with him, particularly in helping him build his city's catalytic redevelopment corporation called CORE (Consortium for Ongoing Reinvestment Efforts), a \$6.2 million public/private redevelopment non-profit funded by the Hamilton Community Foundation, the City, First Financial Bank and US Bank. Joshua Smith is an amazing man. He's aggressive, relentless, creative and tireless. In fact, he is the driving force saving Hamilton, Ohio.

With leadership support from John Guidugli, CEO of the Community Foundation, Claude Davis, CEO of First Financial Bank, Mahendra Vora, CEO of the Vora Tech Park and Mike Dingeldein, Executive Director of CORE, the reinvention of this old town is a remarkable success story.

More than \$130 million has been invested by the public and private sectors in this City just since 2010. Take a look at some of the deals and the pipeline as assembled by Mike Boyer of Cincy Magazine.

- *Art Space Hamilton*, a \$10 million mixed-use residential project in the former H. Strauss Building on High Street, opens this coming spring with 42 artist loft apartments and ground floor commercial space.
- *Mercantile Lofts*, a 139 year old building once facing condemnation, underwent a \$8.6 million renovation two years ago creating street-level commercial space and 29 market grade apartments that are fully leased with a waiting list.
- *Community First Solutions*, a non-profit, providing health and wellness services and one of the City's largest employers is renovating the six story former Ringal's Furniture Store on South Third Street as its new corporate office and training center.
- *ThyssenKrupp Bilstein*, a maker of automotive shocks, announced in July its third expansion in recent years – a \$52 million project that will add 200 jobs.
- *iMFLUX*, a new P&G subsidiary to create more energy efficient plastic containers, announced last year it was investing \$50 million in the former Hamilton Fixture Plant creating 220 jobs.

- Its decade old business incubator rebranded itself as *The Mill* in July – recalling the City's industrial past – and refocused its mission on emerging markets such as water technology, advanced manufacturing, and information technology.
- The City has launched its *17 Strong Neighborhoods* initiative to focus these areas on projects important to them.
- The City has demolished more than 130 blighted buildings supported by state funds and Butler County's Land Bank Program.
- *The CORE Fund* is just one tool in the City's redevelopment tool kit. It has hit the ground running committing more than \$4 million to buy four vacant downtown buildings including the former Elder- Beerman department store on High Street and preparing them for redevelopment. Now that Hamilton's resurgence is gaining such good traction, developers are looking at projects in the City without the need of assistance from the CORE Fund, which is exactly the idea.

The City is taking critical advantage of its major differentiator asset which is its own municipal electric system. The City will begin receiving low cost hydro from a facility at the Meldahl Dam on the Ohio River through a partnership with American Municipal Power, a \$500 Million project. Nearly three-quarters of Hamilton's electricity will come from renewable sources when the plant begins operation this spring. The City is also focusing on clean and alternative energy in other ways and is building the area's first public compressed natural gas fueling station offering lower cost fuel for City vehicles and the public.

The sea change starting all of this was a new group of City Council Members several years ago along with leadership from the Community Foundation.

Together they made a brilliant move in hiring Joshua Smith. This is simply a great story about a small older city coming back to life in a big way, leveraging both public and private leadership to make a difference and to realize a set of aspirations that previously most folks in that community thought were impossible. Working collaboratively has made a difference for this City. Along with the City Manager's leadership, the Chamber, the Foundation and other businesses, everybody is moving in the same direction.

They have a terrific City Council and a very effective and creative leader in Joshua Smith taking advantage of every opportunity and creating new ones on a daily basis.

Time spent on taking a close look at the progress of Hamilton, Ohio and how it is happening is well worth the effort by leaders and economic development organizations from across the country.

Scholarship Profile - Julie Statzer



A Hamilton Community Foundation scholarship recipient from eight years ago is now giving back to the community through her nursing career at Fort Hamilton Hospital.

Julie Statzer received the John A. Shafer Nursing Memorial Scholarship Fund in 2008. This fund honors Shafer's lifelong commitment to helping students reach their educational goals by offering a scholarship to a young man or woman who wants to pursue a career in nursing. Shafer was the former owner and president of the Shafer Implement Company.

Julie's mother, an assistant at a local dental office, was talking at work about her daughter's desire to attend nursing school. Scott Hartford, a patient at that office who is now on the Hamilton Community Foundation's board, overheard the discussion and mentioned the variety of scholarships available from the Foundation. With the help of her guidance counselor at Fairfield High School, Jack Crain, she completed the Foundation scholarship application and a few months later, she found out she won the scholarship. The scholarship paid \$5,000 a year toward her education.

Julie graduated from Good Samaritan Hospital nursing school in 2010. After passing the nursing boards in 2011, she worked at a nursing home for a year. She has worked at Fort Hamilton for three years. "When I was younger I was quiet and shy," she says.

"Nursing school brought me out of my shell."

Julie continues to challenge herself academically. She is now finishing her last two online classes at Ohio University and looks forward to a spring graduation when she will receive a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. "The sky is the limit with nursing," she said.

She is also now looking for a house and getting married this summer. She thinks back to where she started. "I would never have been able to attend college if it had not been for the scholarship help I received from the Foundation." She says. "Everyone was supportive and very helpful."

Scholarships Go Cyber at hamiltonfoundation.org

Hamilton Community Foundation's scholarship program is now paperless, creating a more user friendly and seamless process. On January 1, area high school seniors took to their computers for assistance in their pursuit of higher education.

An immediate benefit of the online process is that the number of students completing scholarship applications has increased by nearly a third over last year's applicants, says Vice President Katie Braswell. She attributes that increase to the user friendly system, and the fact that students are now generally at ease with computer applications.

The paperless process begins when students create an online account to complete their application. Work can be saved and revised later if needed. Transcripts can be easily uploaded. Students are automatically matched to the scholarships for which they may be considered. Using the portal, students can accept or deny scholarships, send donor thank you notes and reserve their space at the annual scholarship reception.

The portal also gives detailed information about each scholarship, its requirements, and even information about its origins and original donors. "Many of the Foundation's scholarships are in memory or in honor of someone, or have been established by community members who have now passed away," says Braswell. "Knowing this information and being able to read about it gives students a sense of understanding of the legacy of these awards. It reminds them that there is a long line of citizens who believed in the future of young people enough to make these investments."

Since 1951, more than 4,000 scholarships totaling \$10 million have been granted to graduating seniors from area high schools. In 2014, scholarships for high school seniors totaled more than \$500,000. The deadline for high school applicants was in early February, but; the Foundation also offers scholarships to current college students and adults returning to pursue higher education. Guidelines and lists of these scholarships are available on the Foundation's website, and those applications are due June 12, 2015.





YPC student profile – Austin Malone



Hamilton High School senior Austin Malone has always liked to understand how things work – by taking them apart, seeing the inside and putting them back together. “That’s how I learn,” he says.

So it’s not surprising that his favorite part of the Youth Philanthropy Committee (YPC) of the Hamilton Community Foundation is the hands-on volunteering that the group does in the community

and the opportunities it gives to see the inner workings of nonprofit organizations.

Malone has been in YPC since his high school freshman year. The National Honor Society student is from a family of engineers and plans to major in Mechanical Engineering this fall at college. He has taken Engineering Design for three years at Hamilton High School, and is currently interested in three colleges – Miami University, University of Kentucky and University of Dayton.

He first learned about YPC through his oldest brother, Patrick, who was in the group before him. “I heard a lot about community service and I thought it would be a great thing to do,” he says. “It’s shown me different aspects of leadership....like delegating to others. YPC has also taught me to be humble – what I learn about people’s needs in the community through our grants.”

He explained that he has liked the volunteering at soup kitchens, and the feeling of helping people to improve their lives. He says it is satisfying to be part of the check presentations when the grants are given to the nonprofit organizations.

He also enjoys attending Foundation donor events, and finds it interesting to meet adults who have been heavily involved with the Foundation for years. “They are the historians of Hamilton,” he remarks.

Though Malone was born at Fort Hamilton Hospital and grown up in in Hamilton, he feels that YPC has helped him become even more connected to his hometown. Though interested in international travel and seeing the world, Malone says he likes to stay close to home and he foresees himself continuing to make his life – and his future -- in Hamilton.

“YPC has changed me to see how fortunate I am. Most high schoolers do not get the chance to make this impact.”

He says that the YPC alums – those who were in YPC when he started but have since graduated -- are still in touch with the group. The experience of serving together helps create lifelong friends, as it creates an emotional connection.

“Because of YPC I will be a lifelong volunteer,” says Malone. “I want to help people no matter what.”

Reviewing the grant applications from the community organizations is the hard work, he says. Members review more than a dozen detailed applications, applying for the approximately \$35,000 the YPC has to grant annually. A teaching process and help from the adult advisors help prepare the youth for the evaluation process. “Granting involves tough decisions,” Malone says. “You want to give them the amount they ask for, but you cannot always do that. It’s opened my eyes to the realities of life.”

Over the course of high school, including four years in YPC, he says he has grown up a lot. He says he has learned more than just time management skills; he has learned about what really matters. And he says he will be back after graduation, looking in on the new YPC members, offering them support and encouragement to new members as they embark on their journey of philanthropy, volunteerism and granting.





Donor Profile - John and Lori Rehm Fund

Lori Rehm's life is about community and connection, both through both her nursing career and volunteer service. The registered nurse has worked at LifeSpan for more than 20 years, where she is a care manager working with senior citizens. She has practiced nursing in many different clinical settings, and in states from Tennessee to New York to Ohio.

Rehm recently established the John and Lori Rehm Fund at the Foundation, and joined the Legacy Society. She first became acquainted with the Hamilton Community Foundation through friend Dave Belew. "Dave approached me directly about investing in the Foundation," she says.

Originally from Columbia, Tennessee, she met her husband, John, in his hometown of New York City, where they both worked. In 1965, he received a job offer from Joe Marcum at Ohio Casualty Insurance to head the company's Bond Claim Department. It was a good job, and they decided to move to Hamilton. They enjoyed a busy family life in Hamilton, raising four children here -- Jim, Amy, Abby and Joe.

Her husband remarked to her at the time that besides being a good career move, that the new job in Hamilton would allow an "opportunity to give back." He held that position for almost 30 years before retiring in 1993. "This relationship with the Hamilton Community Foundation is a way to give back personally," says Rehm.

John has passed away and Lori continues to balance her job and community activities. She reflects on some of Hamilton's attributes. "I see an upswing in Hamilton," she remarks. "The symphony is the best kept secret in town," she asserts. Rehm brought the idea of a guild for the Hamilton-Fairfield Symphony Orchestra here after she saw it working well in another community. Many years later, the guild is firmly established with 60 members and continues to actively support the Symphony. Rehm is also a board member of Heritage Hall, chairing the Robert McCloskey celebration last year and is also active with the Zion Lutheran Church.



Becoming a Legacy Society Member

You can provide a permanent source of support for your charitable interests while generating tax savings and even personal income through deferred gifts to the Foundation. By joining the Hamilton Community Foundation's Legacy Society, you can make provisions today to meet the needs of tomorrow.

You can become a member of the Legacy Society by naming the Foundation as a beneficiary in your estate plan or through a another charitable gift arrangement. Contact us to discuss your options. We will be happy to answer your questions! When you join, you will receive invitations to Foundation events, and your name (if you wish) will be published in the Foundation's publications as a Legacy Society member. Best of all, you have the knowledge that you are supporting your community forever!

NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Mrs. Virginia Briggs

Dr. James R. Carr

Mrs. Barbara Copeland

**John and Lori Rehm*

**deceased*



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Bill and Mae Prentice Scholarship Fund

John and Lori Rehm Fund

Nathanial and Marva Doris Sherman Scholarship Fund

Norm Thompson Spirit in the Sky Fund



UP & COMING

General and capital grant applications due –
MAY 1, 2015

Women's Fund grant applications due –
May 22, 2015



www.hamiltonfoundation.org

We hope you have enjoyed the artistic elements throughout this issue....they are photos of the tile mosaics installed in the newly remodeled Fitton Center for Creative Arts (see page 2).