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# NewsLight

A newsletter for contributors and friends of the Virginia Community Foundation

Fall/Winter 2010

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## NewsLight

NewsLight is the official semi-annual publication of the Virginia Community Foundation.

### Board Members

Brandon Seppala, Chair  
Nancee Norri, Vice Chair  
Paul Carlson, 2nd Vice Chair  
Donna Leese, Past Chair  
Brenda Suihkonen, Secretary  
Keith Harvey, Treasurer  
Micheal Appelwick  
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Rudy Harvey  
Jeanne Prittinen  
Robert Prittinen  
Mike Perala  
Carol Sundquist

Deb Luoma, Administrative Assistant

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Virginia Community Foundation,  
P.O. Box 559, Virginia, MN 55792  
218-749-8239



[www.virginiafoundation.com](http://www.virginiafoundation.com)

## P & H MinePro Services Donation to Fund for the Arts

The Virginia Community Foundation is pleased to announce a recent \$20,000 donation to the Fund for the Arts endowed fund, from P & H MinePro Services, through the Joy Global Foundation. P & H Midwest Regional Manager,

Jon Anderson, made the check presentation. We thank P & H for their continued support of the Virginia Community Foundation's mission to build a better community by providing additional resources for the arts.



Seated front row: Brandon Seppala, VCF Board Chair; Jon Anderson, P & H Midwest Regional Manager; Rod Meier, P & H Service Manager; and Dave Leustek, P & H Operations Manager; Back row: Board members: Chris Bialke, Carol Sundquist, Donna Leese, Rudy Harvey, Nancee Norri, and Paul Carlson.

Jon Anderson, P & H Midwest Regional Manager, presenting check to Brandon Seppala, Virginia Community Foundation Board Chair.



# Message from the Chair

Wow! 2010 is almost over! I can't believe how fast the year has gone by and how fast the last 18 months have gone. I am finishing up my 18 month term as board chair in December. Where did the

time go? Just think – eleven months ago we were at the New Year's Ball, kicking off the Foundation's 20th year. We brought back the golf tournament this summer, and just last month we held our Fall Fundraising Luncheon. What a year!

Our golf tournament in June went well, thanks to all of the participants, and of course, all of the volunteers. We especially thank the Erik Peterson Agency, Norri Distributing, and Ken Waschke Auto Plaza for their sponsorships.

The Fall Fundraising Luncheon held on October 5th was another success with pledges increasing over 2009. Thank you to all of our donors and sponsors for helping in that achievement. We also need to thank all of the table captains, the volunteers, Cavan Stackpool for his

musical talent, Carol Sundquist and Jeanne Prittinen for the great program. Most importantly, we want to thank our event sponsors, Edwards Oil/Lucky Seven, Queen City Federal Bank, Stifel Nicholas, and Wells Fargo Bank. Thanks again to all who made this event successful!

I would like to thank all of our volunteer board members for their time and talents this past year. The Foundation would not be able to do the things it does without your dedication.

A special thank you to the outgoing board members, John Kohlhase and Ken Sussman, for their dedication to the Virginia Community Foundation Board. We wish them success in their future endeavors.

As you are probably aware, Linda Niskanen resigned as the Executive Director in October. Linda spent the last 10 years putting in countless hours helping the board and the Foundation get to where we are today. Thank you, Linda, for your hard work and dedication, and good luck on your next venture!

Thank you all for your past and continued support! Have a great holiday season, and here's to a fantastic 2011!

## Linda Niskanen's Farewell

The fact that the Virginia Community Foundation is celebrating our 20th Anniversary is a great accomplishment and a testament to the generosity of the people with ties to this community!

As the Executive Director for the past 10 years, I am so proud of the

accomplishments of the Foundation. In the past 10 years, I have seen

*I look back fondly at my time with the Foundation.*



first-hand the impact of 73 different grants. That is something that will stay with me forever. I will also remember the "sting" of not having the resources to fund so many good ideas for improving Virginia.

As the Foundation closes their second decade, this is a perfect time for fresh leadership. I am saying "good-bye" to the Foundation. I am leaving with a good deal of pride in the past 10 years and an even

greater confidence in the future of the Foundation. As I start a new and exciting chapter in my life, I look back fondly at my time with the Foundation. My life is richer for having known the *caring and generous spirit* that is alive in this community.

The Foundation is in the "forever" business...it will be here forever and I'm honored to have been a part of it.

SAVE THE DATE:

**Blue Pride  
Dance**

*Friday,  
January 21, 2011*

## Golf Event – June 10, 2010



## VCF Welcomes New Board Members

Carol Sundquist is a past Virginia Community Foundation board member, served as the Foundation's first Executive Director from 1997 to 2000, chaired the Foundation sponsored Great Virginia Get-Together in 2008 and is currently a member of the Foundation's mural committee.



Carol completed her Bachelor's degree in elementary education and special education at Mankato State University. She taught school in both the Bloomington and Minneapolis school districts as well as served as an interim director at the Apple Tree Learning Center in Virginia.

Additional employment includes her work as the Fund Development Director for the Northern Lakes Girl Scout Council and the Director of Senior Employment and Training Programs at the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency. Carol is a graduate of the Blandin Community Leadership Program.

Carol's extensive board experience includes the Animal Humane Society Board, Ironworld Advisory Board, the Land of the Loon Executive Board, the Northland Foundation Board, the Virginia Charter Commission, American Association of University Women State Board and she has been a Trustee on the National Narcolepsy Board. Carol is a past American Association of University Women Branch president, AAUW State Convention co-chair, and past national committee chair for one of the

AAUW Association Conventions.

Carol and her husband Kurt's family includes their daughter Trisha, son Karl, daughter-in-law Stacey and three grandchildren, Leif, Mikko and Maedi Sundquist. When Carol isn't busy with her grandchildren and community work, she and her husband enjoy training their German Shorthair Pointers for North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association trials.

Mike Perala has recently joined the board of the Virginia Community Foundation.

Mike is a 1983 graduate of Roosevelt High School. He received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from North Dakota State University in 1987 and a Master of Arts in Management from the College of St. Scholastica in 1999. Mike currently works in Eveleth for Minnesota Power as the Manager of Strategic Accounts.



Mike is a past president of the Blue Pride Fund Committee and has been active in several community organizations including Little League, the Virginia Band Boosters, the Virginia Basketball Hoop Club, and the Virginia Diamond Club. Mike coaches both Little League and elementary basketball, and also is a cantor at the Virginia Area Catholic Parishes as well as a past member of the East Range Choral Society.

He and his wife Lisa live in Virginia and have three children.

# Veteran's Mural Update



Virginia's 3rd Mural, the Veteran's Mural, is nearly complete after years of anticipation and months of hard work by dedicated committee members and community volunteers. The Vet's mural was one of the very first concepts the mural committee

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*"Absolutely love it!  
Every time family  
members come to  
Virginia they visit the  
mural."*

---

wanted to bring to fruition, however a decision was made early on that the timing and location should coincide with the delivery of the Veterans

Memorial Statue in Virginia's City Center Park. Mick Giblin, owner of the Greater Minnesota Agency, made the project possible by consenting to the use of his building adjacent to Virginia's Veteran's Park.

To raise funds for the mural, the mural committee sold images, stars and plaques. Through the Virginia Community Foundation, the Mural Committee sold 76 images, 80 plaques, and over 244 stars. The committee was amazed by the public's reaction to the sale of the images. While other communities have struggled to raise funds for similar murals, the images on the Virginia Veteran's Mural sold out in just four days, and a waiting list was quickly established. Each person on the waiting list had a personal story about

the loved one they wanted to honor on the mural. Committee members couldn't imagine not including them,

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*"My daughter took  
photos of my image on  
the mural and sent it to  
my granddaughter in  
London."*

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so Apple Tree Learning Center was approached for more space. This additional wall space allowed all requested images to be painted on the mural. Only three images remain to be completed on the lake side of the mural. One of them is the image of beloved teacher, Mr. Leo L.



## *View Donor Lists Online*

In order to reduce our mailing and production costs, the Foundation will no longer print donor lists in Newslight. To view donor lists, please go to:

**[www.virginiafoundation.com/donors](http://www.virginiafoundation.com/donors)**

If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact the Foundation and request a print out of the donor list from the website. We will be happy to mail the list to you. This change will save the Foundation hundreds of dollars each year, allowing more resources available for grants.



Michels, whose private benefactor bid \$5,000 towards the Veteran's Bronze Memorial to secure this image.

Completing the mural was essentially a three-step process. First,

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*"I was so surprised when I saw my Pa's image. It looks just like the photo that was in our home when I was growing up."*

---

artist Kelly Meredith completed the first 15 images on panels in her studio, while volunteers prepped the building for the remaining images. Volunteers spent their weekends scrubbing, caulking and painting the building to prepare for phase two. Once the wall was prepared, Meredith began the process of outlining paper doll like figures onto the wall so volunteers could begin painting the base coat of each image. Once the base coat was complete, Meredith began the painstaking job of completing each image on the mural.

Meredith said of the mural, "it is the most moving and meaningful piece I've ever done, and the one I am most proud of." She added, "I thank the community for its unbelievable level of support."

Meredith isn't the only person that feels an enormous sense of pride from the mural. Each and every volunteer

"thank you!"

"The entire community can be proud when they visit the mural, that besides being a work of art, is a reminder that there are those who serve our country in the military, some at great personal risk," said Johnson.

When asked, what it was like

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*"My husband has dementia. My daughters took photos of him and the image and produced a book for him. When he looks at the book and the image, he recalls his time in the service, which he is very proud of. My kids think it is such a great thing, they thought I spent thousands of dollars for the image!"*

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experienced an outpouring of interest, enthusiasm, gratitude and pride from passers-by. For some, the public response was very emotional and heartwarming. Committee member, Marieta Johnson, was recently reminded how proud she is to be part of this community when more than a dozen cars passed volunteers working on the mural and clapped and cheered as they passed, yelling,

to see images of his father and grandfather on the mural, John Cope explained, "I think about how proud I am of them, about how much I learned from each of them and how I now see traits showing up in my children and grandchildren. I am happy they are there. I think the mural is a place to honor and remember the past, and think about the future."

# 2009 Financial Report Summary

The 2009 Virginia Community Foundation audit is complete and a summary is listed below. The Foundation's investment portfolio has performed reasonably well in today's volatile market environment. The investment portfolio has regained a substantial portion of what was lost in 2008. Please note that our total

assets increased by over 16% in 2009. The Finance Committee continues to monitor the performance of the endowment under the guidance of the Investment Policy. The Investment Policy insures that our portfolio is invested in a wide ranging mix of equity funds, bonds and fixed income investments and is geared

for the long term. The Foundation Board of Directors is very serious about its fiduciary responsibility and commitment to donors. The audited financial statements and the IRS Form 990 are available for review at the Foundation Office at 519 Chestnut Street.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES Total Assets	2009 \$2,237,546			2008 \$1,866,008		
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
<b>REVENUES &amp; GAINS</b>						
Grants - Minnesota Sesquicentennial	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
- Arrowhead Regional Arts Council	\$ -	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Contributions	\$111,001	\$21,176	\$132,177	\$100,299	\$55,877	\$156,176
Special Event Revenue - Great Va Get Together	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$120,202	\$120,202
Special Events - Other	\$19,753	\$ -	\$19,753	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Investment Income	\$37,970	\$ -	\$37,970	\$45,656	\$ -	\$45,656
Net Realized & Unrealized Gains on Investments	\$297,779	\$ -	\$297,779	\$ -	\$ -	\$-
Miscellaneous Income	\$1,213	\$ -	\$1,213	\$2,614	\$ -	\$2,614
Total Revenues and Gains	\$467,716	\$23,176	\$490,892	\$148,569	\$178,079	\$326,648
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$8,441	\$(8,441)	\$ -	\$185,006	\$(185,006)	\$ -
<b>TOTAL REVENUES AND GAINS</b>	\$476,157	\$14,735	\$490,892	\$333,575	\$(6,927)	\$326,648
<b>EXPENSES AND LOSSES</b>						
Program Services						
Grants	\$66,525	\$ -	\$66,525	\$61,567	\$ -	\$61,567
Costs of Direct Benefits to Donors	\$6,431	\$ -	\$6,431	\$85,867	\$ -	\$85,867
Management and General	\$23,246	\$ -	\$23,246	\$23,664	\$ -	\$23,664
Fundraising	\$34,164	\$ -	\$34,164	\$60,850	\$ -	\$60,850
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$130,366	\$ -	\$130,366	\$231,948	\$ -	\$231,948
Net Realized & Unrealized Losses on Investments	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$567,071	\$ -	\$567,071
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES AND LOSSES</b>	\$130,366	\$ -	\$130,366	\$799,019	\$ -	\$799,019
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	\$345,791	\$14,735	\$360,526	\$(465,444)	\$(6,927)	\$(472,371)
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	\$1,809,718	\$51,648	\$1,861,366	\$2,275,162	\$58,575	\$2,333,737
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	\$2,155,509	\$66,383	\$2,221,892	\$1,809,718	\$51,648	\$1,861,366

## Thank You to our Newsletter Volunteers

A special "Thank You" to all our volunteers who help tape and label over 11,000 newsletters. If you are interested in helping with our next newsletter, please contact the foundation office by phone at 749-8239 or email [assistant@virginiafoundation.com](mailto:assistant@virginiafoundation.com)

SAVE THE DATE:

*Virginia  
Educational Fund*

**Wine Tasting  
Event**

*Thursday, April 7, 2011*



Connect With  
Us On Facebook

The Virginia Community Foundation has launched a new facebook site. Connect with us at [www.facebook.com/virginiafoundation](http://www.facebook.com/virginiafoundation) for news updates, events, photos and discussion boards, and please add our link to your facebook page to spread the word to friends and family.

**Virginia High School senior, Cavan Stackpool, sharing his musical talent at the Virginia Community Foundation's Fall Fundraising Luncheon on October 5th.**



## *A Tribute to Richard Kohlhase*

My Dad loved the Virginia Community Foundation.

When Carol Sundquist approached me back in the late '90s and asked if I thought my father, Richard Kohlhase, would be interested in becoming a Foundation board member, I knew right away the answer was, "Yes." You see, my Dad liked to be involved. He believed he could make a difference, and felt obligated to try. I believe these are traits he had gladly inherited from his father, Joyce, who had been active in his community, International Falls.

Since my Dad had recently retired from his distinguished career at Mesabi Community College, I felt he would be more than ready for a new challenge. As I suspected, Dad eagerly accepted a seat on the board. I don't know much about his tenure on the Board except what his fellow members have told me. I've heard that he was an articulate and deliberate presence at board meetings – someone who's opinion was valued.

Dad stayed involved with the Foundation long after he left the board. He was a generous

contributor, and he sincerely looked forward to Foundation events such as the golf scramble or the fall fundraising event. I think the scramble was particularly dear to him – a chance, perhaps, to spend a day with his sons while supporting an institution he treasured. The golf was usually less than memorable, but it was always a special day for him, and for me.

This year, Dad was disappointed by having to miss the scramble due to some minor surgery that he had

put off for too long. He offered to sponsor a "Team Kohlhase" with his sons playing in his stead. We agreed it wouldn't be the same without Dad actually playing, so we opted out. "There's always next year," we thought.

Richard Kohlhase passed away unexpectedly June 5, 2010, the weekend before the golf scramble. The Foundation has lost a good friend and a key supporter. The torch has been passed.

— *John Kohlhase*

**SHARE  
OUR VISION  
FOR A PROUD PAST  
A CHALLENGING PRESENT  
AND A FUTURE FULL OF PROMISE.  
FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE**

VIRGINIA COMMUNITY FOUNDATION DURING 2010, OUR 20TH YEAR OF SERVICE.



**20/20 CAMPAIGN**  
*Share the vision!*

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP: [WWW.VIRGINIAFOUNDATION.COM](http://WWW.VIRGINIAFOUNDATION.COM).

# Anniversary is Golden Opportunity for Virginia Educational Fund

Longtime Virginia residents, George and Marlene Munig, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 31. In fact, they also celebrated their daughter, Lane's, 25th and daughter, Cathy's, 20th anniversaries on the same day!

George taught economics, sociology and psychology in Virginia for a combined total of 31 years. Marlene was a nurse and licensed social worker and worked at Range Mental Health Center. George loved to teach. Most of his former students still refer to him as "Mr. Munig", even those who now serve as his attorney and his dentist.

The Munigs decided that rather than have their anniversary guests feel obligated to buy gifts marking the occasion, they would suggest a donation to the Virginia Educational Fund.

"Who needs more stuff?" asked Marlene rhetorically.

"We couldn't have found a better place to raise our family, and we both thought the Educational Fund was such a good idea when we heard about it," added George.

The Virginia Community Foundation congratulates all the Munigs for their marital

milestones, and we thank them for giving back to the community on their special day!



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