

February 2009



Dear Community Foundation Donors:

You may already have heard this news, but we're still awed at the level that the community stepped up to help Branch Area Food Pantry more than meet the requirement to receive the \$5,000 match from the Creal Fund. And we're overjoyed to have received a \$100,000 gift from Dick and Janet Wendorf. They took advantage of the charitable IRA rollover opportunity for 2008 – which will continue through December 31, 2009. Details on both of those pieces of inspiring news can be found on our website. Be sure you [read more](#) about the \$15,000 match challenge that began in January to grow Quincy Community School's new endowment. We already have several donations. See how you can help!

We're working to keep the positive momentum going by looking at innovative ways to use the Wendorf's unrestricted gift for Branch County. Among the possibilities we're developing are two options that may give us the opportunity to leverage additional funding for internal capacity-building grants for Branch County nonprofits and for economic development and entrepreneurial training to help fuel economic recovery. I'll keep you posted as we get more information and the Board's conversations move forward.

There is strength in partnership. What one cannot do alone, we can do together. Along those lines, the Community Foundation, the Community Health Center Foundation, Tibbits Opera Foundation, and Branch County United Way joined forces last year through HomeTown Competitiveness Charitable Partnerships. Last October we offered planned giving programming to professional advisors and nonprofits, and in January we collaborated on advertising encouraging our community to "Keep your legacy local^(sm)". We're looking forward to more joint activities in 2009 that promote charitable giving locally.

Generosity in Branch County seems to be boundless. And I always welcome the opportunity to thank the people who've given back to the community through the Community Foundation. But I don't always get a chance to do that. In the last couple of years, we've received bequests from giving people whom I've never had the opportunity to thank or to talk to about exactly how they wanted their gift used. Yes, there's the language in the will or trust document; but legal language doesn't have the ability to capture a person's passion about the cause or charity s/he championed during his or her life.

Last fall we launched our Legacy Society, and several donors have stepped forward to let us know they've included the Community Foundation in their will or estate plan. I'm delighted to be able to say 'thank you' and to have important conversations. **Visit our website to see who the [Founding Members](#) are!**

If you've made a future gift, you're eligible to be a member, too. Even if you don't want to be publicly recognized, I'd still like a chance to talk with you personally about why you made the choice to give and what in the community you care about. I've enclosed a brochure to give you more information.

Because of visionary donors, a strong board, and community and regional partnerships, the Community Foundation is here – front and center, present and future. In addition to visiting our website, please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like more information about anything I've mentioned in this letter.

For Good. For Ever,

Colleen Knight, Executive Director

Enclosure – Legacy Society Brochure

P. S. – Our fiscal year 2008 annual report will be available soon! We'll send you a postcard when we've posted it on our website. You'll have the option of reviewing it there or requesting a print copy.