

Methodist Medical Center History Book and the MMC Foundation

(As published in The Oak Ridger's Historically Speaking column on March 23, 2010)

To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe. This is an Anatole France quote included on the first agenda of the Board of Directors of the Methodist Medical Center Foundation, March 20, 1990.

Since that first meeting of the foundation many "Great Things" have been accomplished for the Methodist Medical Center. You are about to learn of yet another "Great Thing" (an excellent history book) accomplished by the foundation and a team of dedicated individuals – ***The Heart of the Community – Methodist Medical Center – 1943 – 2008.***

I am pleased to bring you the story of how this book was created and what it feels like to be a part of such a hugely successful endeavor. It was my pleasure indeed to participate in the creation of a truly landmark story of our hospital's history. I will bring the story to you in the words of three of the people involved.

First it will help to give you some insight into the overall impact of the Methodist Medical Center Foundation, the overall sponsor of the history book, as written by Mary Sue Greiner:

"David McCoy, a past Executive Director of the Methodist Medical Center Foundation, practically held his breath as he awaited a decision from the board of the medical center's Volunteer Services. [Those of you who know David McCoy understand and appreciate his dedication and long standing community service to Oak Ridge. This directorship is but one of many such efforts he has undertaken over the years. - Ray]

"After the board meeting, he learned the volunteers planned to contribute \$300,000 over five years to the Foundation for the da Vinci robotic system, relying on gift shop proceeds and hospital sales. The volunteers were one of the largest contributors to the new \$1.3 million robotic surgery system installed at Methodist Medical Center in 2007.

"The in-house support, as well as contributions from the community to bring robotic surgery to Oak Ridge, reminded him once again of the giving spirit both within and outside the medical center that has helped the Foundation reach its goals.

"The Methodist Medical Center Foundation was established in 1990 to acquire and accept charitable gifts for Methodist Medical Center of Oak Ridge. The Foundation aimed to advance the highest quality of health care services and assist those in need, regardless of ability to pay.

"From the Foundation's beginnings, those within the hospital provided critical support. The very first gift came from a group of MMC employees, and soon after, the volunteer organization contributed \$9,000 from proceeds from the Pink Placebo gift shop.

"Kenneth Menefee was the first Foundation director, hired by Marshall Whisnant to start the new organization from scratch, recruiting board members, developing lists of potential donors and establishing programs. He had spent seven years at Fort Sanders in Knoxville before leaving to start a hospital foundation in Terra Haute, Indiana. Menefee had grown up in Oak Ridge, his son had been born at Methodist Medical Center, and he was interested in coming home.

"Among those serving on the Foundation's first board were Don Maxwell, George Jasny, Herman Postma, Tom Young, John Dabbs, Dr. Gene Caldwell and the Rev. Ben St. Clair.

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"The Foundation's first event, proposed by Menefee, was Holiday Lights for Health. He wanted an event that would not only bring in gifts, but also promote a greater awareness of the foundation. Lights were purchased in honor or in memory of individuals, and those lights provided decoration on the front of the hospital. The event is still held annually.

"Other annual events sponsored by the Foundation are Casino Night, the Acorn Classic Golf Tournament, and the Pancake Breakfast served by MMC physicians and employees.

"The Foundation has raised funds to open the Hospitality House and CALM House, offering free accommodations for cancer patients and for families of hospital patients who live more than 30 miles away. Foundation funds also support the Wellness Center, the Cancer Center, the Hospice Program, indigent care and many other programs. The Foundation also wrapped up its campaign for the Breast Cancer Initiative in 2009.

"Menefee remained almost three years. Heading the Foundation after Menefee was Glenn Landy, who remained until 2000, when Dave McCoy became director. Mary Sue Greiner was named Director of Development in 2008, and she is assisted by Quincey Harrington, Development Coordinator.

"This was clearly their hospital, for the community and surrounding area,' Menefee said of the community attitude as the Foundation began. 'Oak Ridge was a generous community where the leadership of the area stepped forward and they were committed to making things happen.'

"Currently, fundraising has begun to purchase a percutaneous left ventricle assist device (LVAD) for cardiac and surgical patients – cost is about \$75,000. The LVAD is a small pump that it inserted into the heart and actually pumps for the left ventricle, allowing the heart muscle to rest while still oxygenating the body. It is used for 24 – 72 hours and will be the first in East Tennessee when the Foundation makes the purchase.

"The Foundation is also on a mission to build the endowment for the Hospitality Houses in order to make them self-sustaining. Meanwhile, ongoing support is still in place for the Hospitality Houses, which are now under the Foundation and the Wellness Center, the Jane Manly Quiet Room and various areas that need assistance throughout the hospital.

Thanks to Mary Sue for the insights of the Methodist Medical Center Foundation, the same organization that had the insight to encourage a group of volunteers to do the research and write ***The Heart of the Community – Methodist Medical Center – 1943 – 2008.***

The depth of appreciation for our history conveyed by Mike Belbeck and the MMC Foundation and the patience with which they allowed the book writing committee to do its work is indicative of their understanding and supportive attitude. A strong foundation such as this one can accomplish "Great Things."

Next we will examine the impressions of author, Kay Brookshire, resulting from her participation in this monumental project. She undertook an assignment, thinking it was just another opportunity to write – which she does well and really enjoys.

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However, the experience turned out to be much more than “another opportunity to write.” She learned to better appreciate Oak Ridge and our unique history. She found the history of the Methodist Medical Center caused her to see her community in a far better light than ever before...a light of substantial historical significance.

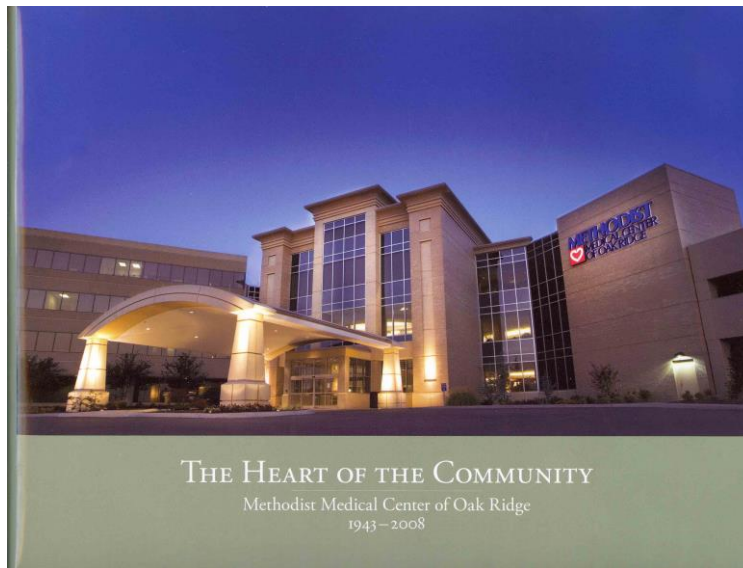
To learn more about how to buy the book and explore the four distinct historical eras of MMC, call the MMC Foundation office (865-835-5262) or order your book online at www.thesekecitystore.com. All proceeds from sales of “The Heart of the Community” will go to support MMC programs and services.



The Methodist Medical Center Foundation front row from left, Dr. David Stanley, Dr. Tom Clary, Jean Stone, Elizabeth Lyons, Rechell Wilson, Chris Johnson; second row from left, Tom Hilton, Sharon Templeton, Stacy Myers; on stairs from left, Bear Stephenson, Nancy Gray, David Bradshaw and Dr. Paul Spray (*Emeritus*). Not pictured but on the board are: Brenda Curtis, Lou Dunlap, Loy Johnson, Debbie Magill, Rose Templin, and *Emeritus* members Pat Coffey, Wanda Craven, Martha Moore Hobson, Charlcie Presley and Ken Sommerfeld.

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Methodist Medical Center history – book cover