

Year-end giving twice as nice

Donations to the Theatre 7 Endowment Fund will be matched dollar for dollar by a challenge grant by the Schmalz family of Decatur.



Donations to the Early Childcare Initiative Fund will be matched dollar for dollar by the ADM Foundation.



Foundation program at Golden K Kiwanis



*By Larry Bechtel, Editor
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The November topic for Decatur's Golden K Kiwanis Club was Decatur, 'Why I Like It Here.' Lucy Murphy, Executive Director of The Community Foundation of Decatur/Macon County, presented the program on November 17. Lucy listed the following: "You know you're in Decatur if you measure distance in minutes, if you properly pronounce Mattoon and cheese toastie, if you know what's knee high by the 4th of July, if your idea of a night out is sitting on the porch, if you wake up when it's dark and go to bed when it's light....."

Lucy said, "In Decatur we pursue happiness, we have energy, we believe in good things and we are determined." Americans give approximately \$241 billion to charities every year. Americans and Decaturites also give time, talent and energy in addition to money. Lucy also explained that those who help others are healthier and live longer lives. She shared case histories of various Decatur people and how they are setting aside money in funds to be used to help others. The funds are invested and managed by The Community Foundation. Lucy briefly described some methods to protect money from taxes and to maximize help that can be realized from

money. She also briefly explained a new Federal program for sheltering monies from taxes to encourage giving that might otherwise have been reduced because of the considerable drain on donations that occurred following hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The Foundation is 5 years old. There are 94 funds in The Community Foundation amounting to a total of over \$4 million. Since its inception The Foundation has distributed about \$700,000 from earnings and some limited distribution of principal. Distribution is directed by recommendations from donors themselves. Professional investment counselors help advise the Foundation. Currently, the annualized rate of return on The Foundation's investment portfolio is 6.61%. Last year's rate of return was 8.9%. A 1% fee is levied for managing the funds. Once money is placed into The Foundation it cannot be returned since tax advantages were realized as a result of the gift. Participants in The Foundation include individuals, businesses and non-profit organizations. The minimum size of an account is \$1000. Once it attains a total of \$5000, distributions can begin. The Community Foundation also works with other local foundations, such as the Richland Foundation and the Decatur Schools Foundation.