

KEOWEE KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (KKCP)

Thank You Keowee Key!

What a year 2021 has been! When the year began, life was largely dominated by COVID; vaccines were coming, but not yet available. The impact on our community and our neighbors will linger for some time. However, it now feels that life is beginning to seem almost normal, with outdoor activities and social events returning. We here in Keowee Key have so much to be thankful for.

However, for the 20 Charities that are part of the Keowee Key Community Partnership (KKCP), 2021 has been a struggle. We know that many of you who volunteer may have been reluctant to do so. Traditional fundraising activities that are so vital to our partners have been seriously curtailed. But your generosity has been literally a lifesaver for many of our Partners and the people they serve. Way to go, Keowee Key!

In addition to your individual donations, our members, through various committees and organizations have shown their support in a big way! The Ladies 18-Hole Golf Association held a charity day for Ripple of One and the 9-Hole Ladies Golf Associations held one for Tamasee DAR School. The Men's 18- and 9-Hole Golf Associations together held an event for Our Daily Rest. The Pickleball Association donated to Ripple of One, the Couples Invitational golf tournament gave to Our Daily Rest, and the recent Crafts and Bake Fair, as organized by the Community Relations Committee, donated proceeds from the Bake Sale to The Golden Corner Food Pantry. All together these committees and associations raised \$ 20,150 for our Partner Charities. What an impact our community is having!

Many of you have also participated in some of the fundraisers that our Partners have finally been able to hold in these last few months: golf tournaments, silent auctions, music on the green, and more. December will see even more of these events in which we hope you will partake. The generosity of Keowee Key members knows no bounds. On behalf of the Keowee Key Community Partnership and all our Partner Charities and the people they serve, we thank you for what you've done this year.

Our wishes to all for a great Holiday Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Keowee Key Craft Fair Benefits Golden Corner Food Pantry

The 20th Annual Keowee Key Craft Fair, sponsored by the Community Relations Committee, held on November 6 was again a huge success. There were 42 different vendors, all from Keowee Key, who sold a variety of crafts they had made. It was obvious from

the laughter and smiles that it was enjoyed by all who attended. Many purchased Christmas presents, while others bought special things they wanted for their households. There certainly was not much left at the end of the Fair.

A special part of the Fair was the Bake Sale chaired by Cricket Thibeault. Keowee Key members brought their special baked goods to sell in further support of the Golden Corner Food Pantry. Cricket also baked 400 delicious cupcakes that were all sold, with all proceeds donated!

A small fee is paid by the participating vendors that is combined with the money made from the bake sale to be donated to Golden Corner Food Pantry. This year over \$2,500 was donated to the Food Pantry! This money will be put to good use through the many projects available through this much-needed nonprofit in our community. Because of the tremendous support from their volunteers, 97percent of every donated dollar goes directly to program services.

Golden Corner Food Pantry is a partner with Keowee Key Community Partnership. They play a critical role in our community by distributing over 1.2 million pounds of food to those in need in Oconee County. They expect to serve close to 16,000 people in our county this year, including seniors, families, and individuals. They have many programs in addition to the food distribution service, which all make a direct positive impact in our community. They always welcome new volunteers.

Many thanks to the chairman of the Fair Committee, Barbara Stacy, and the other committee members: Debra Swift, Gail Anderson, Bill Howell, Denise Doyle, and Deanna Stacy. Their hard work resulted in a very fun day at the Fair and a wonderful contribution to a very worthy nonprofit in our community. Keowee Key Community Partnership is proud of our members and honored to partner with Golden Corner Food Pantry.

The Cason Group Joins KKCP as a Partner Supporter

Patti and Gary Cason have loved working with many of the community support groups in Oconee County since they moved here more than two decades ago, but a recent meeting with KKCP representatives brought more of the county's needs to light.

The Casons have been real estate brokers in this region for the past 18 years. They are known as The Cason Group of Keller Williams and work with their daughter, Melissa Cason-Custer, and their friend, Renee Baxter.

"We have lived here for over 21 years and, besides our



church, our first involvement was with the Christmas Tree Festival in its early years as well as Our Daily Rest. Over the years the organizations we supported increased," said Patti Cason. "However, when Jon Bachman and Nanine Hartzenbusch Fox (with KKCP) met with Gary and me personally, we were intrigued to help these organizations that the KKCP introduced us to. We knew that Keowee Key was a significant contributor to many support groups in Oconee County, but we did not know the extent of the Keowee Key Community's contribution." "We always knew that the residents of Keowee Key were strong in both the number of volunteers and in their financial support of many, many of our county's various organizations. Keowee Key has a philanthropic culture," Patti added.

The couple discovered organizations that they knew about but were not supporting. They found an opportunity to expand their horizons and for the first time, reached out to Tamasee DAR and Collins Childrens' Home with matching donations of \$500 to each organization. "These young people are our future leaders and each organization has a long history in Oconee County," said Patti.

"Gary and I have called Oconee County our home for over 21 years and this is the longest that we have lived anywhere during our 49-year marriage. It has been a great place for us to live once our children were grown. Each of us commuted to our jobs for the first three years that we lived here. However, the opportunity to reinvent myself led me into the real estate business. My husband, Gary, joined me about 18 months later and now, our daughter Melissa Cason-Custer, and our dear friend, Renee Baxter, have been part of our team for almost seven years," said Patti. Renee Baxter may be a familiar face to Keowee Key residents when she is at the Keowee Key FRC assisting members.

Patti and Gary agree, "We are grateful that we live in a country that allowed us to create a small business and touch people's lives. Our joy is that we got to be the "helpers" to so many people through the years. You hear people talk about how blessed they are and we can say we still are. We don't take anything for granted!"