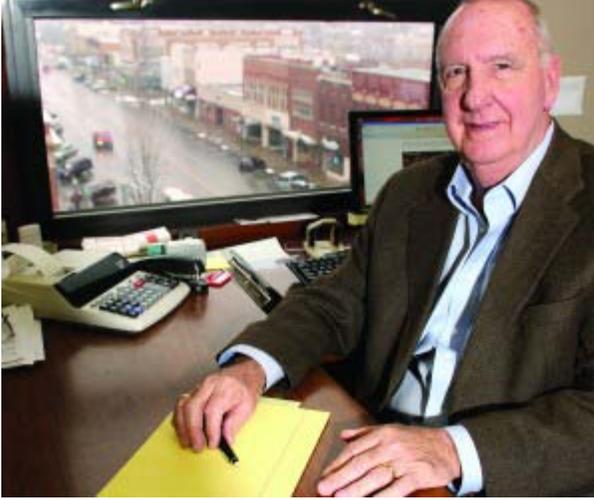


Calhoun to retire from Emporia Community Foundation

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Matthew Fowler

Ken Calhoun

Ken Calhoun retires March 30 from the Emporia Community Foundation, after spending 12 years as the day-to-day advocate for and supervisor of the Foundation's day-to-day functions.

Calhoun to retire from Emporia Community Foundation Bobbi Mlynar | 0 comments

Ken Calhoun will leave a window on main street and a job he enjoys when he retires from the Emporia Community Foundation.

Calhoun notified ECF trustees and board members this month that he will retire on March 30 because of health reasons, after spending the past 12 years as the day-to-day advocate for and supervisor of the Foundation's day-to-day functions.

"It's been fun, doing something that I want to do," Calhoun said in a recent interview. "It's been rewarding matching donors with charities that they want to support. That part's rewarding, I think."

Calhoun talked about the job and about the significance of his corner-office window on the fifth floor of the [Bank of America](#) building at Sixth and Commercial Street.

The office once housed the law practice of Calhoun's mentor and friend, Elvin Perkins, long-time attorney and community leader who founded the Emporia Community Foundation to benefit area citizens far into the future. It's a constant reminder of the historical connection the men share in the city and within the Foundation itself.

The window also gives a bird's-eye [view](#) of the downtown and beyond — fire and police activity, changes in store fronts, maintenance work, vehicle and pedestrian traffic and more. It's a good place to see the big picture of the town's changing face and, as a native Emporian and keen observer, the scenes fascinate him.

"They say a town turns over every seven to 10 years," he remarked.

Calhoun has watched population, demographics, the economy, [employment opportunities](#) and retail-store offerings fluctuate and change during over the years.

The challenge for the Foundation staff and volunteer boards is to establish an array of endowed funds to meet the needs of Emporia and the area now and far into the future.

“The whole concept of the Foundation is that 50 years from now, there’ll be enough money to take care of the charitable needs of the community — and we don’t even know what they will be,” Calhoun said.

The Foundation’s board of trustees and board of directors are convinced Calhoun has made remarkable progress in preparing to meet those unknown needs.

“It’s going to be hard to replace Calhoun,” said Ken Buchele, board of directors president. “There’s no question about that. He’s given a lot to the foundation. It’s going to be hard to find somebody to pick up the leadership.”

During Calhoun’s tenure, the Foundation’s assets have grown from \$1.7 million, contained primarily in one fund, to \$12 million spread across 80-plus funds, including the Bowyer 79 Fund.

Some of the funds may be modest; some are well-endowed; some are from established charities and other foundations; some were set up by individuals. All of them, though, serve the purposes for which they were established.

So far, about \$2.5 million of the assets have been donated over the years to charities and causes specified by the donors when they set up and restricted allocations of their funds. ECF in recent years also has been able to give about \$25,000 annually to other charities through its earnings on [the Fund](#) for the Future, one of four types of funds managed by ECF.

“Calhoun came in about 12 years ago, and that’s when things really got going,” Buchele said. “He knows a lot of people in the community, and he’s got credibility. ... I’m convinced he’s the reason the foundation’s where it is today.”

Calhoun, however, credits Perkins for having the idea and laying the groundwork with a \$5,000 investment 17 years ago. Perkins coaxed four other Emporians — Gazette owner Barbara White Walker, certified public accountant Bobbie Agler, financial advisor George Osborn, and attorney Steve Davis — to join him in creating a lasting and self-perpetuating foundation for the betterment of the community and its residents.

The result was a Foundation that gave small and large donors alike the ability to give to their favorite charities or to the community at-large, according to their preferences, without carrying the responsibilities of annual reports, tax filings, monitoring investments, and other related tasks. ECF does all that for them, Calhoun said.

“Foundations pool their funds into us to get rid of the backroom issues and get the joy out of the giving,” he explained. Individuals benefit similarly by settling their funds in ECF, and Calhoun has enjoyed his role in dealing with all of them and growing the Foundation’s ability to make life better in this area.

“It’s been fun. Emporia has always been a good, giving town, and the Foundation has provided another way for people to give,” he said. “As we got the word out and people saw what we were doing, they became more interested, they knew about it, they set up funds and made it grow.”

Calhoun took on responsibility for ECF’s growth from both a professional and a personal interest.

His family had owned Newman’s department store for decades. After graduating from the University of Kansas and getting experience for several years in Target stores in other parts of the country, he returned home and went to work at the store.

Newman’s had been a sort of one-stop shopping center for the town, with home needs like linens and towels in the basement; men’s and women’s clothing, jewelry, billfolds, purses, fragrances, cosmetics, and more on the main floor; and children’s clothing, Scouting uniforms and accessories and a gift-wrapping section on the top floor. For many years, Newman’s had a beauty shop upstairs, where women and girls sat under hoods with dangling wires connected to the metal curlers in their hair, getting the old-fashioned version of a permanent wave.

"I remember going up to see my dad and smelling that stuff," Calhoun remarked, viewing the odor as a happy memory, once he didn't have to smell it.

The beauty shop was long gone by the time Calhoun returned to Emporia as an adult. He spent 33 years running Newman's, until the building owner decided not to renew the lease.

For a time after the store closed, Calhoun said, he did some receiverships and worked for Pool & Wright accounting company as firm administrator before Perkins and Tim Wright convinced him that overseeing Emporia Community Foundation would be a good fit for his professional skills and for his experience.

"I have been on many non-profit boards and many organizations and until I shifted over here as staff, I now appreciate the difference between staff and dedicated volunteers," Calhoun said. "I like both sides. There has to be staff and dedicated volunteers to make any non-profit work."

And, he said, "Endowments are the lifeblood of all non-profits, including us."

Loni Heins Heinen was hired as administrative assistant three years ago, to help keep pace with ECF's growth.

By late November 2010, the Foundation had reached a goal that Calhoun says is his greatest source of pride in the organization: ECF was recognized for meeting practices and procedures requirements of the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations, which operates under the Council on Foundations in Arlington, Va. Most non-profits do not achieve that recognition.

He expects the Foundation to continue meeting those standards as it continues to grow. In four years, he predicted, ECF will have grown enough to warrant hiring a full-time director.

"It's been rewarding growing the organization and helping the city be a better place to work and live in the future," Calhoun said. "I'm excited about that, and sorry to miss that."

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For now, the board of trustees and board of directors will search for a part-time director to run the Foundation, increase its assets, and maintain the same high standards of operation that bring national acknowledgement of its processes and procedures.

Later, Calhoun and his wife, Judy, will take their annual trip to Bonaire, a Dutch Caribbean island that has been a favorite destination for many years. Judy Calhoun recently retired as chair of the nursing department at Emporia State University and is a member of the American Cancer Society's national board of directors.

They're looking forward to spending more time at Lake Kahola, he said, and undoubtedly will find more opportunities to spend time with family.

The Calhouns are parents of two daughters, Stephani Davis of Denver and Melissa (Missy) Sottoway of Portland, and four grandchildren: three girls and a boy, who range in age from 5 to 19.

"Looking forward, I don't know exactly what our plans will be," Calhoun said. "I have an idea we'll just play it by ear."

Emporia Community Foundation Hires Executive Director

February 27, 2012

For Immediate Release

Contact: Loni Heinen or Ken Calhoun, 620-342-9304

Jackie Scott, Chair of the Emporia Community Foundation (ECF) Trustees announced today that Shirley Antes has been hired as the new executive director of the Emporia Community Foundation.

Antes will assume her duties on March 1 replacing Ken Calhoun who will remain on until the end of March. "A major concern of ECF is that we have a smooth transition", said Ken Buchele, President of the Board. Prior to assuming her duties, Antes was the vice president for Institutional Effectiveness at Wichita Area Technical College. Additionally, she is working on a project for the Kansas Board of Regents concerning the alignment of curriculum of technical programs for the state's community and technical colleges. During her career, she taught at her hometown high school in Iola, KS and two area high schools, Chase County and Northern Heights. She has taught at Flint Hills Technical College and served as the college's Dean of Instruction in addition to serving as President of two other career/technical colleges.

Ken Buchele said of Antes, "ECF is so pleased to have found someone local of Shirley's caliber in the non-profit sector. We feel that Shirley's vast work experience will greatly benefit ECF. She will continue the excellence that we have come to expect from our staff leadership."

Antes, a graduate of Emporia State University with bachelor and master degrees in theater, business education and administration, has a strong record of organizational leadership and experience which will lend itself to continue moving the foundation forward. She has also developed effective relationships with leaders in education and business throughout the state. Shirley and her husband Carl are residents of Emporia.

The Foundation has experienced immense growth during Calhoun's 12 year tenure. The foundation's assets have grown by \$10 million in addition to Chase and Greenwood Counties signing affiliate agreements. Many planned gifts are in place for additional growth. Another major accomplishment has been the National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations confirmation of compliance for ECF's policies and procedures. Mr. Calhoun said that "he is pleased with the hire and feels that Shirley will continue to lead the foundation in a prudent and caring manner while remaining vigilant of its assets."

Ms. Antes said of her hiring, "It is a privilege for me to serve Lyon and the six contiguous counties as the Emporia Community Foundation's Executive Director. I look forward to working with the Board and its many partners and stakeholders as we continue to fulfill the strategic priorities of the Board's mission."

Individuals and groups interested in learning more about ECF may call Executive Director Ken Calhoun or Administrative Assistant Loni Heinen at 342-9304. Use of funds may be specified and directed by the donor, or overseen by the ECF trustees, according to the preference of the donor.