

## *Richard C. and Vina L. Sauer Charitable Leadership Award*

Established in 1993 by the Community Foundation Board of Directors, the Richard C. and Vina L. Sauer Charitable Leadership Award serves as a memorial to Mr. & Mrs. Sauer for their philanthropic support of our community.

The 1996 recipient of the Richard C. and Vina L. Sauer Charitable Leadership Award, Kermit Edney, is a Henderson County native. A graduate of Edneyville High School, Kermit went on to graduate from the UNC-Chapel Hill. After serving in World War II, he returned to Henderson County and started his career as a broadcaster, later becoming the owner of WHKP. Over the fifty years he was in broadcasting, he went from being in management to being the owner of the station. Kermit used his platform of broadcasting to involve hundreds of local citizens in a wide variety of community service products.

Kermit Edney has always preferred to work in the background rather than hold visible leadership positions. In 1955, he was the driving force behind the organization of the Henderson County United Fund (now United Way), and he served as its first campaign chair. Later, as President of the Chamber of Commerce he pushed for a balanced economy for the community.

In the early 70's, he organized local business leaders to research ways to improve downtown Hendersonville. He led a group to Grand Junction, Colorado; and from that trip came the design and implementation of the current downtown serpentine main street. Among other organizations to benefit the community from Kermit Edney's leadership as their President were the NC Apple Festival, Hendersonville Merchants Association, YMCA, and the Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees. He also served on the Boards of Brevard College and UNC-Asheville and the NC Board of Transportation.

It was Kermit Edney who saw a need for a vehicle to manage charitable funds. He was the Trustee for the Charlie Renfrow Scholarship Fund, and he knew first hand the amount of paperwork required to manage a charitable trust. With his leadership, the Community Foundation of Henderson County, Inc., was formed in 1982, and he served as its first President until 1987.

One of Kermit Edney's admirers stated; Kermit never did anything for self interest. He has always been totally dedicated to the people and the community he loves."

As we go through life, we are all graded according to our accomplishments in serving others. We cannot judge how much Kermit Edney has done for others directly or indirectly, but we know because of his leadership he can be graded with an A+.

In honor of Kermit Edney, a \$1,500 grant was presented to his charity of choice, the First United Methodist Church Building Fund.

