

Welcome to Carnival

From the 2011 President of Carnival



As many of you are aware, Believe Memphis became the rallying cry for a rejuvenated Grizzlies NBA team in the recently completed playoffs this spring. As much as the Grizzlies have experienced challenge and rebirth, Carnival Memphis has endured challenges for 80 years. In 1931 Carnival was initiated by Everett Cook and Arthur Halle in an effort to rejuvenate an ailing Memphis economy enduring the Great Depression. Today that same organization has morphed into a significant philanthropic force. The Carnival Children's Charity Initiative, begun in 1999, has now raised in excess of \$1.12 million for numerous charities in the Memphis area.

The Children's Charities for 2011 include the following: Hope House, an organization dedicated to assisting young families touched by AIDS; Memphis Athletic Ministries, located in the shadow of the old Army Depot, provides after school sports activities for at risk children elementary age through high school; and finally, SRVS, Shelby Residential and Vocational Services, a wonderful resource for special needs individuals in southeast Shelby County.

In January, Grand Krewe Coronations began with interesting celebrations that spanned the city from Germantown's Performing Arts Center to the downtown Train Station. The following month, King John Dobbs and Queen Kate Smith were revealed to an adoring crowd amid great fanfare. They presided over our third annual Krewes for Kids Fund Raiser held in April at the newly refurbished University Club. The event proved quite successful with an engaging live auction highlighted by spirited bidding from a group of avid duck hunters.

The 25th Business and Industry Luncheon honored Health Care this year. This proved quite appropriate as the University of Tennessee Health Science Center celebrated its Centennial Year. A personal mentor of mine, Dr. Ralph Hamilton, received the Cook Halle Award for his work to establish the Hamilton Eye Institute. Other individual winners included Dr. William West, Oncologist and Founder of West Clinic; Dr. Kevin Foley, Semmes Murphy Neurosurgeon and Founder of MERI; and Mr. Gary Shorb, CEO of Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare. The luncheon proved interesting and informative as each winner had an opportunity to tell his personal story in a candid fashion that thoroughly entertained the audience.



The Wesberry Family - Standing left to right: Mary Lee, Jess and Frannie Seated: Elizabeth and Jay

Three years ago, I was invited to serve as Carnival Memphis President for 2011. I accepted the opportunity because I believe in the organization's purpose which is to serve our community in it's own unique way. My family has supported this decision because they have been involved in Carnival for many years. Mary Lee and I have served the Grand Krewe of Memphis – she as a Duchess and Queen, and myself as General Chairman. Also, our son, Jay, and daughters, Frannie and Elizabeth, have all participated in the Carnival Royal Court. It is our hope that this 80th year will inaugurate an even greater role for Carnival as it seeks to expand its membership, attain greater outreach in the community and become an organization of which the original founders would be proud.

Jess M. Wesberry, Jr., M.D.

President of Carnival Memphis 2011