THE CORBIN COMMITMENT

A History of The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation

THOMAS M. WELSH
based on the symmetry of their life’s work, their care of and contributions to others, and how they were viewed by those who knew them. One was recognized for his trumpet (cornet technically), infectious smile, and raspy voice. The other was recognized for his voice in his community and for trumpeting business, organizations, and charitable causes that elevated the standards by which so many in his community lived.

The latter, David Chenault Corbin, was born in Georgetown, Ky., on Aug. 25, 1901. It was a year noted for, among other events, the assassination of President William McKinley, the first Texas oil gusher, the incorporation of U.S. Steel, and the birth of Louis “Satchmo” Armstrong.

Armstrong, also born in August, had 19 top-10 hits, one of the most appreciated being “What a Wonderful World.” We’ll never know if Mr. Corbin ever sang along to that tune, but he most certainly spent a great deal of his life working to make its title a reality.
The Corbins of Kentucky

Georgetown is located about 12 miles from Lexington, as the crow flies. It was originally called Lebanon when founded by Rev. Elijah Craig but was renamed in 1790 in honor of President George Washington. Today it is the seventh largest city by population in the Bluegrass State, and it is the seat of Scott County. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, its 2019 population was 34,992.

Mr. Corbin, the son of Lannis and Virginia L. (Chenault) Corbin, lived in Georgetown until he was six years old, at which time he moved with his parents to Indianapolis, Ind., where he attended elementary and high school. At the age of 18, he enrolled in the Marmon Car Training Course, learning the basics of the automobile business from mechanics, road tests, and sales work.

Auto sales captured his interest, and at age 20 he left Indianapolis and returned to Kentucky – this time to Lexington to become an employee of Kentucky Motors, where he would soon become the firm’s sales manager.

While in Lexington he became interested in more than cars and began courting a school teacher named Mary F. Swinney. She was from Eminence, Ky., in Henry County, about 27 miles from the state capital of Frankfort. They were married June 14, 1924.

Mary Swinney and David Corbin’s 1924 wedding invitation.
As zone manager in Cleveland, Mr. Corbin traveled to Akron occasionally, and it was on one of those trips that he became acquainted with the owner of City Chevrolet, W.L. “Skipper” Bill Copley. It didn’t take long for the acquaintance to become a partnership, and on Dec. 30, 1944, it was announced that Mr. Corbin was leaving General Motors after 19 years to join “Skipper Bill” two days later at the Akron dealership. Mr. Corbin was now co-owner and secretary/treasurer of City Chevrolet, located at 333 E. Market St., and given the moniker “Captain Dave” in the dealership’s retail advertising campaigns.

The Corbins moved to Akron and into a home at 333 E. Market, nestled among tree-lined Exchange Street and South Hawkins Avenue. They would later move less than a half mile away to 365 S. Rose Blvd., where they lived for the remainder of their years.

As zone manager in Cleveland, Mr. Corbin was determined to be fair market value. Mr. Corbin wasn’t just successful in selling cars; he spoke with a Kentucky drawl and loved to smoke and hunt and collect pipes and guns. Though it likely was difficult for the newlyweds to come to Akron and go into business for a future move that would benefit the citizens of Akron and Summit County for years to come.

The couple settled not far away, in Cincinnati, where Mr. Corbin became one of the best welcomes the area. The same article described the hospitality. The same article described the hospitality. The same article described the hospitality.

In 1933 the Corbins left Cincinnati for Omaha, Neb., where Mr. Corbin became one of the very first to profit by leasing cars. Recognizing that large companies might prefer to invest their capital in other places, Mr. Corbin, along with Copley, helped form in 1946 C.C.C. Rental Inc., of which Mr. Corbin became the sole owner in 1948. He persuaded companies to lease their vehicle fleets rather than purchase them. One of his first corporate customers was the B.F. Goodrich Co., to which he leased 20 cars for use by salesmen from coast to coast.

Just as Mr. Corbin grew City Chevrolet, so too did he grow C.C.C. The company became one of the largest car leasing firms in the Midwest, and at its peak leased more than 800 cars to clients in 39 states. Mr. Corbin served as president and treasurer while Mrs. Corbin served as secretary. Two men who would remain key advisors over the years and who would be prominent members of The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation. Bruce “Scotty” Bierce and George W. Darrow Jr., served as assistant treasurer and assistant secretary, respectively.

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A Bonus of 10% of the company’s net profits. His highest annual income from the dealership was $70,000 for each of the years of 1949, 1950, and 1951. He would have earned another $5,000 to $10,000 per year in stock dividends.

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Mr. Corbin didn’t just work for GM or run City Chevrolet. Just as he would lead many community organizations later, he took on local, regional, and national leadership roles in the auto industry. He was president of General Motors Clubs in Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. He served as chairman of President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s Inter-Industry Highway Safety Committee. He served on the General Motors Dealers Advisory Council and the Chevrolet National Dealers Planning Committee. Closer to home, he served two terms as president of the Akron Automobile Dealers Association and was also president of the Ohio Automobile Dealers Association.

Mr. Corbin often spoke out locally and nationally on industry issues such as safety, quality, ethics, ingenuity, and advertising.

He admired the Japanese for their skill and ingenuity in producing quality automobiles, once saying to the Akron Beacon Journal’s James Jackson, “They learned from us and now we have a great deal to learn from them.”

A vigilant advocate of ethical advertising in the auto industry, in 1956 Mr. Corbin urged car dealers across the country to subscribe to the “Recommended Standards of Practice for Advertising and Selling Automobiles” set up by the National Automobile Dealers Association and the Association of Better Business Bureaus.

He was tall and thin, but his name and voice carried weight. His opinions mattered.

MEMBERSHIPS
Akron-Area Boy Scouts of America
Akron Automobile Dealers Association (also former president)
Akron City Club
Akron Regional Development Board
American Golf Classic Board of Governors (also former vice chairman)
Bluecoats Inc.
Freemasons (32nd degree Shriner)
Navy League Area Council (also president)
Newcomen Society in North America
Ohio Automobile Dealers Association
Portage County Club
Rotary Club of Akron (also former president)
The Summit County Historical Society
The University of Akron College of Business Administration Advisory Committee
The University of Akron Hilltoppers
The University of Akron Lampighters
Trustees, The University of Akron Foundation
United Way of Greater Akron
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Akron, Ohio
World Series of Golf Board of Governors

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS
President (1947-1952), Akron Automobile Dealers Association
President (1955), Ohio Automobile Dealers Association
President (1959), Portage County Club
Chairman of board of trustees (1948-1956), Better Business Bureau of Akron
Board of governors (1956-1962), International Association of Better Business Bureaus
President (1909-1915), Akron Chamber of Commerce
President, General Motors Clubs of Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and Cleveland
General Motors Presidents’ Dealers Advisory Council (1960-1961)
Chevrolet National Dealers Planning Committee (1953)
Co-founder (1951)/president (1956), United Foundation of Akron
Vice chairman, St. Thomas Hospital Lay Advisory Board (Akron, Ohio)
Summit County chairman (1955), President Eisenhower’s Inter-Industry Highway Safety Committee
Trustees, Summit County Society for Children
Director, Akron Automobile Dealers Association
Director, Director, The Salvation Army
Director, Goodwill Industries

AWARDS AND HONORS
Kentucky Colonel (1931)
Better Business Bureau Hall of Fame (1956)
Better Business Bureau Service Award (25 years) (1979)
Paul H. Revere Silver Bowl Community Service Award (1964)
American Red Cross – Resolution of Commendation (1974)
American Red Cross – Distinguished Volunteer Service Award (1979)
City of Akron – Distinguished Service Award
Rotary Foundation of Rotary International – Paul Harris Fellow Award
United States Senator Jacob Ferry Award for Outstanding Voluntary Community Services (1970)
Marquis Who’s Who in America
Marquis Who’s Who in Finance and Industry

Mr. Corbin was a busy man. What follows is an estimated account of his involvement in various community organizations, the leadership roles he held, and the many awards and honors he received.

An INDUSTRY LEADER

Mr. Corbin often spoke out locally and nationally on industry issues such as safety, quality, ethics, ingenuity, and advertising. He admired the Japanese for their skill and ingenuity in producing quality automobiles, once saying to the Akron Beacon Journal’s James Jackson, “They learned from us and now we have a great deal to learn from them.”

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Successful and respected as Mr. Corbin was, all good things must come to an end. In 1969, after an illustrious 43-year relationship with Chevrolet, Mr. Corbin sold the City Chevrolet dealership (though he retained the name City Chevrolet Inc.) for $858,813.49 to Ralph MacIntire, a Huron, Ohio, car dealer who renamed the dealership MacIntire Chevrolet.

Then, in August of 1971, Mr. Corbin sold the assets of C.C.C. (again retaining the name C.C.C. Inc.) to Mid-America Leasing, owned by car dealer David Towell. The sale price was slightly more than $1.5 million.

To say that Mr. Corbin contributed to his community would be like saying Louis Armstrong could blow his horn. In an editorial noting Mr. Corbin’s passing, published March 10, 1989, the Akron Beacon Journal said, “He didn’t just belong to important community boards or work on important community events. Very often, he led them.” A prime example of his leadership was the city of Akron’s 150th anniversary. Sixteen Akron community leaders formed a corporation to aid in Akron’s sesquicentennial celebration. Elected president of the organization, which was named Ohio Sesquicentennial of Summit County, was David C. Corbin.

The list of organizations and charitable causes he championed is long and impressive, with names that remain familiar today: the American Golf Classic, the Rotary Club of Akron, and The University of Akron, to name a few. His assistance benefited them all. But he had his favorites.

Mr. Corbin, president of Ohio Sesquicentennial of Summit County, and Denny Kontzakos, watches Sesquicentennial Queen Janet Bailey, the proper way to aim a muzzle loader prior to the Akron parade celebrating Ohio’s 150th birthday, the powerful moment Akron knows now.

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTOR
In 1950, as part of Akron’s 125th anniversary, the changing economy would be easier for all to see how each group and that once those principles became clear, it result when people understand each other, he said they would first study the basic facts and provide added strength to the chamber’s voice.

As the top officer of the chamber, Mr. Corbin led Akron’s first community forums, which were town meetings designed to discuss by including many more phases of Akron’s industrial and commercial interests. As president of both Rotary and Chamber of Commerce in 1950.

Mr. Corbin wrote a letter, addressed to the head of the Rotary Club of Akron, which was to be included in a time capsule that was to be opened in that faraway year. It read as follows:

Dear Sir:
I have just written a letter to the President of Rotary 2000 A.D for I have the unique privilege of serving as president of both Rotary and Chamber of Commerce in 1950. You will see that we have what is today a healthy 1,250 members supporting our activities. You will also see the committee organization through which we work.

Current projects include: (1) working out municipal, county and school financing; (2) an ambitious highway program; (3) a downtown improvement project; (4) obtaining a new post office; (5) conducting a continuous traffic, industrial and home safety campaign; (6) improving the airport; and (7) at this moment the All-American Soap Box Derby. You can find out who won the 1950 Derby and the results.

The Chamber has many active and interested men working unselfishly for the good of this city. It is my hope that the results of our efforts today have made Akron a better city for you.

Cordially,
David C. Corbin
President

The Greater Akron Chamber’s 2018 Annual Report listed membership at 1,533. Although not a large increase from Mr. Corbin’s day, the chamber estimated that its members in 2019 employed 117,000 people, paid $2.3 billion in wages, and generated $66.2 billion in revenue.

When Chevrolet ended its association with the Derby in 1972, the company transferred copyrights and trademarks to The Akron Chamber of Commerce, of which, as noted before, Mr. Corbin was a prominent member. The chamber ran the race the year 1973, and then, along with the Akron Jaycees, coordinated the incorporation of The International Soap Box Derby, as it remains today.

Mr. Corbin wrote a letter, addressed to the chamber’s president in the year 2000. He also wrote one to the head of the Rotary Club of Akron, which was to be included in a time capsule that was to be opened in that faraway year. It read as follows:

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Although many worthy causes occupied his time in his later years, it’s hard to imagine that anything took up more of Mr. Corbin’s hours or as much of his talent as did the Better Business Bureau (BBB). According to the BBB of Akron’s September 1986 FACTS Bulletin, Mr. Corbin was first elected to the BBB of Akron Board in 1948. He became vice chairman in 1951 and served in that capacity until 1956, when he was elected chairman. During his three years as chairman, the BBB of Akron grew in numbers and received many honors for quality of service. Nationally, Mr. Corbin was elected chairman of the board of the Association of Better Business Bureaus (ABB) in 1957 and served in that role for six consecutive terms until 1963. According to the BBB, with Mr. Corbin in the lead, the ABBB became international in scope (its name would later change to International Association of Better Business Bureaus), with bureaus being formed in Mexico, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, and Israel. There was also substantial expansion of the bureau network throughout the United States and Canada. It was Mr. Corbin’s notion of a national/local merger, an idea he first presented at an ABBB convention in 1955, that ultimately grew into the formation of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, which still exists in that form today.

In 1986 Mr. Corbin was tapped for the prestigious International Association of Better Business Bureaus Hall of Fame. The local bureau’s publication said at the time, “The Akron Bureau is proud of the honor which has come to David Corbin, a man who has been described as a trusted leader among his peers, a valued advisor to those in his industry, a first citizen of his own community and a natural to inspire and encourage BBB executives everywhere constantly to attain higher levels of achievement.” Ken Wilson, retired president of the National Better Business Bureau and himself a BBB Hall of Famer, said, “Dave Corbin had done so much to help build strength, stability and public confidence in the BBBs that he epitomized the best among us for honor, decency, dignity and trust.”

Drive to or from downtown Akron on West Market Street, and you will see the headquarters building of the American Red Cross of Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties. You also will see that the names displayed prominently on the building are those of Mary S. and David C. Corbin.

Mr. Corbin joined the Summit County Red Cross Board of Directors in 1960. Over the years he served on a variety of volunteer committees. In 1971 he was elected chairman of the Red Cross Board. He served three terms, but his service to the Red Cross continued the rest of his life.

It is fitting that the Red Cross building in Akron bears his name, for during his three years as chapter chairman, he directed the search for a new chapter headquarters and served on the New Building Transition Committee in 1974. On April 19, 1979, at the age of 77, Mr. Corbin was awarded the Red Cross Distinguished Community Service Award, the organization’s highest award for community service. As a longtime Chevy dealer, he must have been a bit perplexed that the evening’s program referred to him as the “Mr. Cadillac of Community Service.” The program lauded Mr. Corbin for his service to his community, saying that it was the board of directors’ consensus that David Corbin had been a significant part of Akron’s cornerstone for more than 30 years and that few individuals possessed his social consciousness and fewer still had equalled the high caliber and scope of his service to the community. The program further stated that it was impossible for the tribute to relate all the generous contributions of time and talent David Corbin made to the Greater Akron Area. However, the program added, a record that he holds is a definite and positive impact on the lives of every Summit County resident through his civic and philanthropic leadership in all facets of the community, businesses and industry, education, preservation of Akron history, and the quality of services provided by area health and welfare agencies and institutions.
The Yoder Brothers were once among the world’s largest producers of mums and had for years managed greenhouses for O.C. Barber, the founder of Barberton and, at one time, the largest property owner in Summit County.

The rebuilt structures, meant by Mr. Corbin to be a memorial to Mrs. Corbin, were completed and dedicated in early September of 1980. But as Bill Snyder reported in the Akron Beacon Journal’s Aug. 31, 1980, issue, Mr. Corbin recognized the importance of a sustainable operation and so contributed another $100,000 to provide for ongoing maintenance and staffing.

According to Miller, once the conservatory was on solid ground and the endowment established to help offset expenses, Mr. Corbin turned his attention to the Stan Hywet rose garden. Mr. and Mrs. Corbin enjoyed a rose garden of their own at their home on South Rose Boulevard, and Mr. Corbin contributed an additional sum to help make sure Stan Hywet’s roses would flourish.
The year 1951 was the beginning of the United Foundation of Akron. It was in that year, after six months of study, that a citizens’ committee decided that Akron would join other major American cities in an effort to consolidate the fundraising efforts of health and welfare organizations. So, a United Fund (later to be renamed United Way) was created. No longer would there be separate campaigns by the American Red Cross, Polio Foundation, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, National Tuberculosis Association, or Crippled Children Society.

As one of the founders and incorporators of the original United Foundation of Akron, Mr. Corbin joined many of the most respected names in Akron on the organization’s board of trustees in 1951. Serving with him (among others) were such notables as John S. Knight, Harvey Firestone Jr., Norman Aubin, Roger Berk, Bert Polsky, Lisle Buckingham, Galen Rouah, E.J. Thomas, Jack Heaslop, Lee Jackson, Hayes Jenkins, P.W. Litchfield, Ben Maidenburg, C. Blake McDowell Jr., William O’Neil, John Pflueger, and David Towell.

Those names are forever etched in Akron’s history, but it was from that list that Mr. Corbin was chosen to be the first general chairman of the inaugural United Fund Campaign. The goal was to raise $1,990,309 to support the Akron District’s principal health and welfare agencies. With continuous encouragement and some significant arm twisting, the campaign reached its goal, and Mr. Corbin was not only reelected to the board the following year, but he was also publicly thanked for his role in the successful campaign at the organization’s 1952 annual meeting. His support of UF would continue over the years, and in 1956 he served a term as board president.

These many years later, it would be almost impossible to list every cause, campaign, and charity that Mr. Corbin adopted as his own. Perhaps his friend John Franklin Miller summed him up best, describing Mr. Corbin as a man determined to return to his adopted city a substantial portion of the fruits of his success, whose great personal warmth, ready smile, and dignity of bearing made him the very image of a southern gentleman. This warm, southern gentleman ferociously attacked barriers that stood in the way of the fruitful endeavors of those who lived and worked around him, and he consistently committed himself to Akron’s social and economic progress.

After Mr. Corbin’s death, The Corbin Foundation built upon his support, contributing $291,000 over the years to keep those roses blooming. Miller noted that during the last decade of Mr. Corbin’s life, one of Mr. Corbin’s greatest pleasures was his weekly drive through the Stan Hywet grounds, during which he would admire the sparrows of the gardens. Often accompanying him on those drives was his longtime comptroller and foundation board member, Valerie Clauss, old friend Bob Pflueger, and Pflueger’s secretary, Ruth Butler. The greenhouses, conservatory, and gardens stand today as a memorial to Mary Corbin. A large boulder, which was moved from the Corbins’ home, remains a plaque upon which is engraved a recognition of the Corbins’ generosity as well as Mrs. Corbin’s favorite garden poem. It reads:

DAVID C. AND MARY S. CORBIN PROVIDED FOR THE RESTORATION OF THESE BEAUTIFUL NEW GREENHOUSES IN ORDER THAT STAN HYWET WILL ALWAYS HAVE FLOWERS.

The kiss of the sun for pardon, the song of the birds for mirth, one is nearer God’s heart in a garden, than anywhere else on earth.

At the entrance to Stan Hywet Hall is a crest with the words Non Nobis Solum (Not for Us Alone). Mr. Corbin spent a good part of his life making sure that the wonders of Stan Hywet would be appreciated not just by the people of Akron, but by visitors from around the world.
Mr. Corbin's commitment to Akron would go beyond his own lifetime. On March 27, 1965, Mary and David Corbin, along with attorney Bruce “Scotty” Bierce, met at 500 First National Tower in Akron (the office of Bierce’s law firm, Brouse McDowell) to create and establish a foundation to carry on their philosophy of philanthropy, not only in their retirement years, but also after their deaths. Mr. Corbin acted as chairman, and Mrs. Corbin kept the minutes. The meeting began with Mr. Corbin stating that he had requested the preparation of a Declaration of Trust, which he presented. The three signed their names to the document and agreed to act as trustees until their successors were appointed and qualified.

**THE DECLARATION OF TRUST**

The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation

1. This Declaration of Trust made this 27th day of March, 1965, by Mary S. Corbin and David C. Corbin hereby establishes The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation.

2. The purpose of this Foundation is to devote and apply the property and the income derived therefrom exclusively for charitable, religious, scientific, literary or educational organizations exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the 1954 Internal Revenue Code, and its regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended; provided, however, that no part of this trust fund shall inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, and no part of the direct or indirect activities of this trust shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, or of participating in, or intervening in (including the publication or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision hereof, this trust shall not conduct or carry on any activities not permitted to be conducted or carried on by an organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its Regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended, or by an organization contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of such Code and Regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.

3. Trust Fund. The property to constitute this trust and Foundation shall consist of One Hundred Dollars ($100) transferred to the Trustees at the time of execution of this instrument, together with such other assets as the creators of this trust, or anyone else, may from time to time transfer to the Trustees. All of this property is to be held by the Trustees and disposed of exclusively as herein provided.

4. Use of Trust Fund. The Trustees, except as hereinafter limited, shall have the power and authority and are directed to distribute from time to time such amounts of income or principal of this trust fund as they in their discretion may determine, for the purposes specified in Article 2 hereof. In no event shall the income or principal of this trust fund be accumulated so as to offend the provision against unreasonable accumulation of income within the meaning of Section 504(a)(1) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and its Regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.
At a special meeting on June 17, 1970, Mr. Corbin pointed out that in accordance with the action of the board of trustees of the original foundation, the old trust had transferred its assets to the new corporate foundation, and he acknowledged the receipt of $35,514 by the corporation as of June 11 of that year. Trustees also approved the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the officers of this corporation invest and keep invested a substantial portion of the funds of this corporation or foundation in either C.D. arrangements with local banks or in commercial paper or other investments which will earn for this corporation the highest return, consistent with safety, at the direction of said officers.

The trustees approved another resolution at that meeting which read:

Be it resolved that the trustees at this time designate the following organizations as possible recipients of gifts or grants from the Foundation: The University of Akron, United Foundation of Summit County, American Red Cross, YMCA, YWCA, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, Summer Home for the Aged, Summit County Children’s Home, Goodwill Industries, Father Flanagan’s Boys’ Home, Boys’ Town, Nebraska, Salvation Army, churches for capital improvements, colleges and universities with gifts or grants shall be made by the Trust to such organizations for either general or special purposes, provided however, the various corporations, associations and institutions mentioned herein are not listed with a view to precluding the trustees from making grants to other corporations, associations, trusts, funds and institutions of similar character which may qualify under the Internal Revenue Code, and it is understood that the naming of the corporations, associations and institutions above do not in any way assure to them the making of gifts or grants from the Trust, but that the making of such gifts or grants shall be determined by action of the trustees and be made from time to time to such corporations, associations, trusts, funds, or institutions of a similar character as those above mentioned, as the trustees in their discretion may from time to time designate.

From 1970 to 1990, The Corbin Foundation contributed approximately $246,570.14 to civic, charitable, and community causes. Available records are not complete, but, during that same time period, Mr. Corbin made personal donations of more than twice that amount—giving at least $524,000.

During a meeting in June of 1978, Mr. Corbin shared with the board his personal views about the foundation’s future, particularly regarding what should be done following his death and the material funding of the foundation from his estate. He suggested that, going forward, the board should always include a lawyer and a certified public accountant, as well as a membership that represented a sufficiently broad spectrum of individual charitable interests, so that the validity of requests for grants could be properly evaluated.

At a December 1982 meeting, Mr. Corbin told the board that he would be leaving an envelope addressed to the board and containing letters and/or memos expressing his wishes and thoughts that he would like the board to discuss and consider. He gave them an example of how such a letter might read. In 1984 he again distributed to the board a sample of how such a letter would read. Then, three years later, in December of 1985, Mr. Corbin presided over a meeting attended by board members Valerie E. Clauss, David B. Albright, Robert C. Brouse, James S. Hartenstein, Joseph M. Holden, Louis A. Maglione, and Raymond R. Wernig. At the meeting Clauss distributed and led a review of financial statements reflecting the composition of the foundation and a valuation of its assets at that time, as well as those of City Chevrolet Inc. and C.C.C. Rental Inc. The total was $7,202,491.19.

During the meeting Mr. Corbin updated his 1982 observations on the ultimate course of giving that he had formulated for the guidance of the board after his death. A written copy of those observations (prepared by Brouse) was distributed to the board. It read (in part) as follows:

“...in the course of discussions at meetings of the Foundation and its corporate and financial records, you will find reference to charities...”

A plaque from the Red Cross expressing its grateful appreciation for The Corbin Foundation’s outstanding support of the Summit County Chapter...
which I favor and/or in which I had an interest during my lifetime. Additionally, talks between you and my treasurer, Mrs. Clauss, and/or my accountant, Lou Maglione, and/or my lawyer, Robert Brouse, or Joe Holden, will advise you of charities to which I have made personal contributions and whether such contributions evidence continuous support or represented a “one-time” recognition. In the envelope that contains this general letter to you, I expect to add, from time to time, additional messages that represent current thinking on my part on organizational matters and the like.

I recognize that circumstances will change over the years and that when the Foundation is materially funded from my estate the scope and amount of its contributions must broaden. A review of the recipients and nature of the contributions made during my lifetime will indicate the area of my charitable interest and give you, and your successors, some general guidance which I hope you can follow. As you must broaden the scope and increase the annual distributions from the Foundation, ($700,000+), it is my preference that you give primary consideration to the city of Akron and Summit County charitable organizations, and/or local chapters of national charities located in this area, for it is here that Mrs. Corbin and I spent our productive years. This does not mean that an extremely worthy cause outside this area is not to be considered.

There are quite a few other things we give to (see list) that I would like continued. Since you will have the income from over $7 million, you will be able to do much more for this area than we are doing now.

In September of 1989, the board unanimously resolved that the number of trustees be fixed at seven, and at a special meeting of the trustees on June 22, 1994, the board agreed on the following criteria for the selection of new members:

• Conformance to Corbin Philosophy
• Diversity of expertise: attorney, CPA, banker, broker, general business
• Consider Mr. Corbin’s suggested names
• Civic-minded
• Time available for grant investigation, et cetera
• Availability to attend meetings
• Foundation manager
• Summit County-based
• Active in local civic affairs
• Sound moral character
• Compatibility with the group
• No conflicts

By the time of Mr. Corbin’s death on March 7, 1989, the $7 million had grown to $9,300,000. As he wished, the foundation was materially funded through the transfer of that amount from his estate. In 2001, following her death, an additional $850,000 was donated from a trust Mr. Corbin had established for Valerie Clauss, his trusted comptroller and longtime treasurer of the Corbin Board.

In 1990 the foundation began accepting formal grant requests. That year 103 grant requests were reviewed. Nine were granted, totaling $600,000 ($500,000 of which was for two-three year commitments). Another $21,560 was distributed by way of contributions. That was also the first year that the board began to meet quarterly.

On Oct. 22, 1991, trustees met for the first time at the foundation’s first formal office on the ninth floor (#910) of the Society Building (later renamed the Key Building) at 159 S. Main St., in downtown Akron. It was just one floor down from Mr. Corbin’s former business office. This location would be the foundation’s home until it relocated in 2012 to 50 S. Main Street, Suite 703.

From Mr. Corbin’s original $9,300,000 and the income generated by the investment decisions by board members over the years, The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation, as of Dec. 31, 2020, had contributed more than $27,291,747.50 to approximately 230 deserving organizations in the Akron and surrounding areas. Of those 230, the organizations shown on the following page make up the top 20 by total grant amount ($15,696,951.16) from 1990 to 2020.
### Top 20 Organizations by Total Grant Amount from 1990 to 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Grant Years</th>
<th>Akron or Other Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akron Art Museum, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akron Canton Regional Foodbank, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1991-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akron Zoological Park, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1993-2018</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American National Red Cross, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1993-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga Valley Preservation and Scenic Railway Assoc., Peninsula, Ohio</td>
<td>1995-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat for Humanity of Summit County Inc., Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1995-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Soap Box Derby Inc., Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1995-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interval Brotherhood Home, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1993-2007</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MusicMatters Association/The Cleveland Orchestra, Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(The) Salvation Army, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1995-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan Hywet Hall &amp; Gardens Inc., Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>2014-2018</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan Hywet Hall &amp; Gardens Inc. (Gardensheets) Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1995-2012</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summa Health System, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1993-2015</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University of Akron Foundation, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Way of Summit County, Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Reserve Historical Society</td>
<td>1991-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hale Farm and Village, Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Men’s Christian Assoc. of Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>1990-2020</td>
<td>Akron</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $15,696,951.16

The Corbin Foundation has been dedicated to enriching the lives of the people of Akron and Summit County since 1965. Including the original five members, 20 civic-minded professionals have served as members of its board. In keeping with Mr. Corbin’s advice, there have been six business executives, five lawyers, three accountants, two bankers, two financial advisors, and two combination lawyer/accountants. Each has tried to abide by the guidelines Mr. Corbin first outlined regarding the type of charities and organizations he favored. Each has adhered to an investment strategy that is diversified and conservative and that has grown the $9,300,000 Mr. Corbin bequeathed to the foundation into a balance, as of December 31, 2020, of $22,599,608.80, net of the $22,291,747.50 that has been distributed.

Mr. Corbin would likely consider the foundation’s performance over its 55-year history and the good that has come from its financial support quite a success story. The trustees who have contributed their time and talents toward achieving that success did so not in pursuit of recognition or reward; rather they did so to honor his memory and to distribute the wealth that accumulated to the organizations and causes that were most important to him.
Here are their stories.

BRUCE W. “SCOTTY” BIERCE

Bruce “Scotty” Bierce first earned fame on the football field and then in the courtroom and corporate office. One of the Akron area’s most beloved athletes, he starred on the gridiron, Bierce lined up against the likes of the legendary Jim Thorpe, but after using his football earnings to pay his way through Western Reserve Law School, Bierce earned his own legendary status as a corporate officer. It has been said that George W. Daverio’s career should be used as a model for students in business school. Upon his death, the Association.

MRS. CORBIN

Mary S. Corbin was at her husband’s side for 51 years. She assisted him in his business endeavors and his philanthropic efforts, as she shared his belief in the importance of community involvement and voluntary service.

A 33-year resident of Akron, she, like her husband, was a longtime member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Corbin was described by those who knew her as a caring person who was very gracious and always elegantly dressed. Slim and active, Mrs. Corbin (far right) and others followed them.

Along with Mr. Corbin and Bill Copley, Scotty Bierce was a member of City Chervil’s board. He was served on The Corbin Foundation Board from its inception until 1977. He died April 26, 1982.

GEORGE W. DAVERIO

It’s appropriate that his name be associated with the school’s Certified Public Accountant’s Distinguished Service Award. It has been said that George W. Daverio’s career should be used as a model for students in business school. Upon his death, the Association.

Daverio served as assistant secretary of The Corbin Foundation Board from its inception until his death in 1981.
He was a member of the Ohio, American, and Federal Bar Associations, the American Society of Corporate Secretaries, and the Kewanee Club of Akron. He was president of the Portage County Club, the Akron City Club, and the Akron Auto Club, and served on the boards of the United Fund Foundation, the Akron Auto Club, and Summit County Red Cross. He was a 30-year member of First Evangelical United Brethren Church and served on its board. Later he also served on the board of the Litchfield, Ariz., Rehabilitation Center.

Firestone served as vice chairman of the Corbin Foundation Board until 1977. He died March 9, 1993.

DAVID B. ABLIGHT

A longtime resident of Akron, David B. Albright was a 1938 graduate of Buchtel High School and attended Western Reserve University and the Harvard Business School. He was an All-American football player at Buchtel and, like his friend “Scotty” Bierce, a member of the Summit County Sports Hall of Fame. A veteran of the U.S. Army Air Forces, Albright was employed for a time with the Bell Telephone System in Cleveland, Akron, and New York City. In 1932, he joined Akron Savings & Loan, then headed by his father, Archie Albright. Four years later he was named president and ultimately chairman of the board, before retiring in 1984. He relocated to Longboat Key, Fla., in 1988.

He was president of West Akron Kewanee Club; member of the Builders Association of Summit County; and member of the Akron City Hospital Board, the Akron Regional Development Board, the Akron Community Trust, the Akron Automobile Association’s Board, and Bluecoats Inc. of Summit County. He served for many years with the YMCA of Akron. He was involved in the formation of Summit County’s charter government and for more than 70 years was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church of Akron.

Albright spent many years on Wimbledon’s board, including serving as chair from 1971 to 1989. The school’s tennis facility is named after him. He was a member of Portage Country Club, the Peachtree Golf Key Country Club, the Sarasota Yacht Club, and the Cedars Tennis Club.

He summed up his personal philosophy this way in a 1969 Akron Beacon Journal article: “To help people on a person-to-person basis. Never to represent any one with people who don’t care about their fellow human beings.” Albright served on The Corbin Foundation Board from 1977 until he died in 1994.

ROBERT C. BROUSE

Five generations of Brouses had lived and worked in the Akron area by the time Robert C. Brouse was born in 1913. Before his death in 2004, he would help manage one of Akron’s most respected law firms and leave a legacy of corporate and community service that will last for generations to come.

While attending Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio, where he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and played basketball, Brouse represented many high-net-worth individuals specialized in estate planning and taxation and his service to his firm and community. He was named president of the firm in 1982, continuing the family tradition of corporate and community service that will last for generations to come.

In addition to numerous corporate directorships, Brouse was on the board of Akron Children’s Hospital and its foundation, Western Reserve Academy, the Litchfield, Ariz., Rehabilitation Center, Akron City Club, Akron YMCA, Portage Country Club, Permanent Federal Savings, and Brouse McDowell.


JAMES S. HARTENSTEIN

Jim Hartenstein’s career was spent in the insurance business, but, like other Corbin Foundation Board members, he spent his adult life helping civic organizations and charitable causes.

Born Oct. 19, 1922, he grew up in Akron and attended the University of Oxford, Ohio, where he was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and played basketball. He worked for Great American Insurance before forming the James Hartenstein Insurance Agency, which he ran from 1952 until 1986. After retiring, he served as a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force and then, after returning to Akron and earning a Bachelor of Science degree from The University of Akron in 1948.

He worked for Akron Agencies Inc. and Acme Insurance before forming the James Hartenstein Insurance Agency in 1958. Two years later he merged his company, creating Akron–Hartenstein Insurance Agency, of which he was named president. Another merger created Akers, Hartenstein, Dailly Insurance (AHD). Then, in 1978, Hartenstein
he was seven and was raised by his brother,

RAYMOND R. WERNIG

vice president in 1990 and its vice president
Board from 1977 to 2007. He was elected its

Hartenstein served on The Corbin Foundation

Episcopal Church.

60-year member), and the Summit County Red

the Portage Country Club (of which he was a

Nurse Service of Summit County, and president
of the Visiting
Kiwanis Club, co-chair of the Akron Children's

Hospital Fund Drive, president of the Visiting
St. Vincent de Paul Parish School, Our Lady

sabers. From that day on, they seldom crossed

exiting the church under an archway of 14

36 months overseas during World War II with

Command and General Staff College and spent

Wernig was a graduate of the U.S. Army

member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and Army

attended elementary school and high school in

were married in 1941 in a military ceremony,

Wernig was the recipient of the Sisters of St. Dominic

High School, all in Akron, and with Walsh Jesuit

A man of faith, he was an active volunteer

High School, in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. He also

with the Catholic Service League, and with

A man of faith, he was an active volunteer

in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. He also served the Rotary

Community Service League Award in 2007.

Mr. Corbin and a trusted advisor. She served as

elected vice president in 1990 and 1999.

Bruce McCulloch, was a very effective leader, a caring community

data on 1996 to 2019. After merging the positions of assistant secretary, vice president, and

secretary, and president, the latter of which he held for ten years.

A lifelong resident of Akron, he attended

Buchtel High School for two years before

graduating from the New Mexico Military

Institute in 1945. He graduated from Harvard

and gentle man with an easy smile and a good

sense of humor. He and his wife, Mary Jean,

one of the most beloved and respected

corporate citizens in the Akron area. He was a president of the

professionals, Maglione served many

practice would later be merged with Bruner

Revenue Service. He later worked for national

F.B. Hall, vice president of the American Tax

by the Junior Chamber of Commerce and

received the Distinguished Service Award from

the Akron area.

At Holden's funeral service, longtime Corbin

corporate citizens, described Holden as a gentleman lawyer; quiet,

thoughtful, and contemplative; serious but with

thoughtful and articulate; and with whom one

teachers, and long-time Corbin Board member, Louis A. Maglione.

Born in Akron, Ohio, on Feb. 20, 1940, "Lou"

graduate baseball player, he had offers from two teams to play

and baseman who had been a two-sport athlete, and later from The

University of Akron, where he earned a degree

he was a two-sport athlete, and later from The

one of Mrs. Corbin, no one served Mr.

Mr. Corbin more faithfully, or was more dedicated to

Other than Mrs. Corbin, no one served Mr.

Mr. Corbin and a trusted advisor. She served as

Mr. Corbin and a trusted advisor. She served as

vice president/treasurer of City Chevrolet Inc.

and gentle man with an easy smile and a good

sense of humor. He and his wife, Mary Jean,

one of the most beloved and respected

His community service was exemplified through

His community service was exemplified through

and received the Distinguished Service Award

of Mr. Corbin, his understanding of math

decades in history and economics. He was

the knowledge, expertise, and contributions

of his accountant, friend, and longtime Corbin

He served as a second lieutenant in the U.S.

He served as a second lieutenant in the U.S.

He served as a second lieutenant in the U.S.

The Raymond R. and Martha G. Wernig

Foundation for almost 25 years, joining the

The Raymond R. and Martha G. Wernig

Foundation was established in 2000 to support their philanthropic intents.

Ray Werning served on The Corbin Foundation

board for 32 years, from 1981 until 2013.

VAlERIE E. CLAUSs

Other than Mrs. Corbin, no one served Mr.

Mr. Corbin more faithfully, or was more dedicated to

the knowledge, expertise, and contributions

of his accountant, friend, and longtime Corbin

He served as a second lieutenant in the U.S.

VAlERIE E. CLAUSs

In 1981 she was named comptroller of The

Corbin Foundation. She became a trustee and

the foundation. She, however, was very forceful,

she was determined, after Mr. Corbin's

he would have wished.

Lou Maglione served as a member of The

Corbin Foundation Board for 35 years and was
elected vice president in 1984 and holding the positions of

For his work in 1984 and 1988, and holding the positions of

senate, and president, the latter of which he held for ten years.

A lifelong resident of Akron, he attended

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ROGER T. READ

Ask almost any Akron-area nonprofit organization the name most associated with philanthropic support, and you will most likely hear Roger Read.

During a 28-year career at Hanwell Chemical Corporation in Akron, Read helped build the company and sold his ownership interest until he retired in 2014.

Read joined The Corbin Foundation Board in 1989. He retired from the presidency and sold his ownership interest in 1995.

He has served on numerous nonprofit boards, including the Akron Symphony, OPEN M, the Smithers Corporation and is a former trustee of Science in Business Administration, then as vice president and general manager of F.W. Albrecht Family Foundation.

SOPHIE E. ALBRECHT

A Corbin Foundation Board member since 2001, Sophie E. Albrecht has been a strong and passionate voice in support of worthy causes in the Akron and Summit County areas, especially those relating to education and children.

Born in Akron to Teofila and Joseph Cyc, she attended Akron Public Schools and graduated from The University of Akron in 1971. She attended the University of Akron in 1961 and was admitted to the Ohio State Bar Association that same year.

She worked in the legal department of The Timken Company as a governance officer. She practiced law with David Lieberth from 1978 to 1984. He graduated from Babson College in 1981 and from Boston University School of Law in 1984. He is a member of both The Ohio Society of CPAs and the Ohio State Bar Association.

When Mr. Corbin suggested in 1978 that, going forward the board should always include a lawyer, Read recommended Albrecht, who is a member of the board of the Old Trail School Foundation.

Robert C. Berk

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R. MARK WERNING

As the old saying goes, the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. So, when Ray Wernig stepped down from The Corbin Foundation Board in 2015, the Wernigs are the only father and son team to serve on The Corbin Foundation Board since its founding in 1965. The father, Mark Wernig, was chosen to step into his father's shoes in 1985. An Akron native, he has been an active volunteer with civic, community, and charitable organizations for most of his almost 50-year communications career.

He attended elementary school in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, then Akron's Archbishop Hoban High School. He graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 1973. He attended the College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., Mark Wernig has, since 1980, worked with various national wire-house investment firms, and has been senior vice president of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management since 2000.

A graduate of Leadership Akron, he is an ardent supporter of nonprofit organizations, he has been a board member of Stari Hyatt Half & Gardens Inc., since 2015, and currently serves as its board chair. He is a member of the boards of the Summit County United Way and the Summit Foundation.

Tom Walsh joined The Corbin Foundation Board in 2015. An Akron native, he has been an active volunteer with civic, community, and charitable organizations for most of his almost 50-year communications career.

He attended elementary school in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, then Akron's Archbishop Hoban High School. He graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 1973. He attended the College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., Mark Wernig has, since 1980, worked with various national wire-house investment firms, and has been senior vice president of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management since 2000.

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Mark Wernig is a past board member of the American Red Cross Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties; the American Cancer Society; the Summit County Medical Services Bureau, Inc.; the Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, School District; St. Vincent de Paul Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Akron, where he also serves as an investment advisor. He is the past president of the Rotary Club of Akron and was the founding president of the Akron Rotary Foundation. His Rotary Club sponsor in 1980 was Mr. David C. Corbin.

THOMAS M. WELSH

Tom Walsh joined The Corbin Foundation Board in 2015. An Akron native, he has been an active volunteer with civic, community, and charitable organizations for most of his almost 50-year communications career.

He attended elementary school in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, then Akron's Archbishop Hoban High School. He graduated from Kent State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 1973. He attended the College of the Holy Cross, in Worcester, Mass., Mark Wernig has, since 1980, worked with various national wire-house investment firms, and has been senior vice president of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management since 2000.

A graduate of Leadership Akron, he is an ardent supporter of nonprofit organizations, he has been a board member of Stari Hyatt Half & Gardens Inc., since 2015, and currently serves as its board chair. He is a member of the boards of the Summit County United Way and the Summit Foundation.

Mark Wernig is a past board member of the American Red Cross Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties; the American Cancer Society; the Summit County Medical Services Bureau, Inc.; the Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, School District; St. Vincent de Paul Parish Council of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Akron, where he also serves as an investment advisor. He is the past president of the Rotary Club of Akron and was the founding president of the Akron Rotary Foundation. His Rotary Club sponsor in 1980 was Mr. David C. Corbin.

After leaving FirstEnergy, he founded TM Walsh LLC, a sales, marketing, and communications consulting firm. He is an honorary board member of the All-American Soap Box Derby. He is a member of the Akron Area Alumni Board of Kent State University’s School of Journalism & Mass Communication and is past chairman of the board of directors of the American Red Cross of Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties. He has served as a member of the National Alumni Board of Kent State University. He is a former member of the Board of Directors of the Playhouse Square Foundation, Bluecoats Inc., the Summit County Historical Society, the United Way of Summit County, and the Better Business Bureau of Akron.

Welsh was honored as the Kent State University School of Journalism & Mass Communication's Distinguished Alumna in 2002 and, in recognition of his contributions to the community and to The University of Akron, was named an honorary alumna of The University of Akron in 2004.

LAURA B. CULP

Laura Culp may be the shortest-tenured member of The Corbin Foundation Board, but she is a longtime contributor to her profession and to her community.

She is partner-in-charge for construction and real estate services at Sikich, a leading professional services firm specializing in accounting, advisory, technology, and managed services, and has worked for more than 30 years with organizations of privately held businesses to help them grow their wealth and implement tax-saving strategies.

Born in Columbus, Ohio, she graduated from the Columbus School for Girls and from Lafayette College in Easton, Pa., with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Business. She holds a Master of Taxation degree degree from The University of Akron.

She is a Certified Public Accountant, a Certified Construction Industry Financial Professional, and an American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Personal Financial Specialist.

Her community and civic activities are no less impressive. In addition to numerous committee and advisory council positions, she is or has served as a board member of Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist. She serves as a board of advisor to Akron General College of Accountants Personal Financial Specialist.
Erika J. May
Beyond Mr. and Mrs. Corbin, there have been numerous key names associated with The Corbin Foundation over the years: early board members Pierce, Bourne, Coffer, and Hall; former grantee芫s Maglione, and Read. But, since 1990, no name has been more tied to The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation than its longtime grants administrator Erika May.
May graduated from The University of Akron in 1978. During her last quarter at The University of Akron, she began working at Brouse McDowell, primarily for Oscar Hunsicker Jr. In 1986 she gave up full time at Brouse McDowell to become a “floater,” meaning that she would fill in where needed. The Corbin Foundation Board President Joe Holden was a partner at the firm, and as May recalls being told later, he noticed her and her work ethic. Holden asked her if she’d be interested in a full-time, part-time job at the foundation — in other words, full time on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The mother of an 18-month-old baby boy and a three-year-old daughter at the time, she decided that “when a job comes looking for you, you consider it seriously and differently than if you were a job looking for you.”

Mr. Corbin had a handwritten report detailing the grants requested. It was a report she was interested in, and she prepared for many years to come. She remembers Holden telling her if she could deal with Valerie Clauss, she’d be fine. So, in addition to her office duties and typing the comprehensive grant report, she shadowed Holden and remembers as petite, southern, very business-like, and task-oriented. May never knew Mr. Corbin, as he had passed away the year before she joined the foundation; however, she has known and worked with 14 of the 21 board members, who have embodied different personalities, skill sets, and interests.

In her opinion, the desire to do what is best for Akron and Summit County is the very heart of The Corbin Foundation, and she is proud that the foundation has made a difference through thoughtful investments and support of nonprofits and civic and cultural institutions.

The integrity of The Corbin Foundation is paramount to her, and she feels privileged to help carry on Mr. Corbin’s legacy and philanthropic passion — to support the organizations that meant so much to him.

Erika May’s work has enabled charities to develop well-thought-out grant applications with timely insights into grant requests. Her in-depth knowledge of the Akron nonprofit community has been an invaluable resource for the nonprofits. She’s the best by far at what she does.”

Bob Bonchack agrees, saying, “She has brought philanthropic standards to the foundation and, through her engagement in the community, has been able to offer board members timely insights into grant requests. Her in-depth knowledge of the Akron nonprofit community has been an invaluable resource for the nonprofits.”

May’s work has enabled charities to develop and former head of the All-American Soap Box Derby, describes her thusly: “Erika is very passionate about what she does. She is caring and thorough. She is in the community and wants to understand exactly what’s going on at the nonprofits. She’s the best by far at what she does.”

In her engagement in the community, has been able to offer board members timely insights into grant requests. Her in-depth knowledge of the Akron nonprofit community has been an invaluable resource for the nonprofits.

Her official Corbin hire date was June 1, 1992, but she began working at the foundation in 1991. For the first six months, she remained an employee of Bourne McDowell, with her Corbin time billed back to the firm. It was the early days of the “materially funded” foundation, and the board had thrown through the grant application process. Holden had a handwritten report detailing the grants requested. It was a report she was interested in, and she prepared for many years to come.

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To many in the Akron community, Erika May is the Mary S. and David Corbin will live on. Their kindness and generosity will continue. The lives of the people of Akron and Summit County will be enriched even more. The Corbin commitment will continue.

The beneficiaries change, board members retire and pass on, but the legacy of Mary and David Corbin will live on. Their kindness and generosity will continue. The lives of the people who live and work in Akron and Summit County will be enriched even more. The Corbin commitment will continue.
The idea of documenting David Corbin’s commitment to Akron and Summit County as well as the people and events that led to the creation and continued operation of the Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation originated from a discussion at a board meeting on August 20, 2018. I was honored to be entrusted with the project and hope this is as accurate an account as possible considering that most of those with real knowledge of the “history” are no longer with us. Nonetheless, I was fortunate to have the help of many people and organizations deserving of recognition.

Thanks to Office and Grants Administrator Erika May for her ideas, time, information-gathering, and overall assistance. Thanks to the current members of The Corbin Foundation Board, especially Board President Bob Berk, for their help, encouragement, and patience.

A great deal of information was obtained from The University of Akron Archives, and many of the photographs came from those files. The kindness and help provided by Director Vic Fleischer and staff, especially John Ball and Mark Bloom, are much appreciated.

Considerable effort and research went into identifying the photographers, studios, and publications responsible for the photographs used in this publication. In most cases that information was available and attributed; however, the age of certain key photos used herein did not permit such identification and attribution with respect to same.

Most important, it would not have been possible to complete this project without access to historical information from news stories, articles, and obituaries published over the years in the Akron Beacon Journal and available through the Beacon Journal Archives via Newspapers.com. Much of the information in the preceding pages came from those archives. Thanks to Beacon Journal Editor Michael Shearer for his understanding and cooperation.

In addition, the following individuals must be thanked for contributing their thoughts and taking the time to email, text, speak, or meet with the author, or to assist with contacting others who possessed information relevant to this history.

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Mark Gerberich, president and CEO of the International Soap Box Derby
Bob Troyer, longtime Soap Box Derby board member and public relations consultant
Jeff Iula, Soap Box Derby historian
Fred Martin, owner of Fred Martin of Youngstown
John Franklin Miller, former CEO of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens
Valarie Still, vice president of events and personnel and Mike Weiss, creative services manager of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens

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Tom Welsh

Visit The Corbin Foundation website at corbinfdn.org