

So far the children's agency's Building Brighter Futures campaign, which began 2008, has about \$7.3 million in donations and pledges, including \$2 million from Kosair Charities and \$1 million from the James Graham Brown Foundation. The eventual target is \$11 million, including money for operations and endowment.

Of the sum raised to date, nearly \$5 million has been earmarked for the Child Advocacy Center project, including land acquisition, and just over \$2 million for agency operations. Most of the balance has been budgeted for the endowment.

The children's agency plans to borrow against the pledges to get enough construction money to start work, Fox said.

He said the agency has tried to keep neighbors apprised of the plans as they have unfolded, including periodic briefings.

Herb Fink, an Old Louisville neighborhood leader, said the neighbors have been working with the children's agency for several years. He said they opposed an initial plan, since shelved, for the agency to use Ben Washer Park, on the north side of Kentucky at Fifth, for part of its Project.

Renovation of the old Salvation Army site "will improve the neighborhood, save an old vacant building and cleanup an eyesore. We want to be very supportive of this (children's services) program that is of national significance," Fink said.

Family & Children's Place provides direct services to about 1,000 exploited children annually.

RECOGNIZING F.S. VANHOOSE & COMPANY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the most vital components of the American economy, the family-owned business. For over a century, Kentucky's own F.S. VanHoose & Company has persevered throughout the struggles that many small businesses face, and they are still on top. The company has a rich history of serving the Kentucky communities of Paintsville, Prestonsburg, Louisa, and the surrounding area. Although they have evolved and changed throughout the years to keep up with their competitors, it is their dedication to the customer and to the employee that still lies at the heart of the organization. And that is something that has never changed—not in the VanHoose family, and not in the VanHoose Company.

Frew S. VanHoose founded the lumber company in 1910. Frew's son Howard VanHoose, who worked briefly for the company after studying at the Kentucky Military Institute, would answer the call to serve his country in 1943. Howard VanHoose was killed in action in Germany in April of 1945, his son Joe Howard VanHoose aged only four at the time.

Frew VanHoose went on to spend 54 years running the company as president and CEO, until he could not manage the business anymore due to his failing health. With the founder of the company stepping down, the course of the company would dramatically change. After a brief 2-week interlude, in 1964, Frew S. VanHoose's grandson Joe Howard VanHoose, then just 23 years old, became the new president of

F.S. VanHoose & Company. In over a century of business, F.S. VanHoose & Company has had only two presidents in its entirety.

Joe was perhaps inexperienced and not entirely ready to handle the management of his family's company, which under his grandfather, had grown to become a large, multi-faceted operation. In his own words, Joe described himself as "23 going on 18."

"I thought to myself, Joe, it's either sink or swim. I swam," Joe said.

Today, the company's sales rate is 30 times greater than it was in the mid-1960s. Joe has spent 58 years as the company's president and CEO. The business is financially stable and annually injects great amounts of out-of-county and out-of-state money into the local economy. VanHoose & Company has been listed by various national trade magazines in the top 400 businesses several times.

The secret to this small-town lumber company's success is simple. By treating employees well and keeping turnover rates low, the employees are able and ready to stay at VanHoose & Company for the long haul.

Next, Joe relies heavily on the leadership of his fellow family members throughout the company. He believes it is up to them to carry on the business in the future.

Also, every business needs to be able to change with the times—and sometimes even before the times. Joe remembers VanHoose & Company using computers long before they were the norm. Now he can hardly imagine going a day without them.

Last, but certainly not least, is pride. Each individual involved with the organization cares deeply about the well-being of the company, and reveals it in their day-to-day display of upstanding character and customer service.

It is my hope that today, my fellow Senators will join me in recognizing the contribution that this company has made and is continuing to make in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Success stories like that of F.S. VanHoose & Company resonate as examples of what hard work, perseverance, and dedication can lead to in our great country.

There was an article recently printed in the publication "Discover the Power of Southeast Kentucky," published by the Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce in the summer of 2011. I ask unanimous consent that it appear in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to appear in the RECORD, as follows:

[From Discover the Power of Southeast Kentucky, Summer 2011]
VANHOOSE LUMBER SINCE 1910

When you meet Joe Howard VanHoose, president and CEO of F.S. VanHoose & Company, you notice first the smile, contagious laughter and friendly demeanor. Under all this congeniality he's a very good businessman who guided the family business from financial straits in the mid-1960s to the celebration of its 101st anniversary, making the company one of the oldest continuing retail

businesses in the tri-state region. Joe VanHoose has seen the company through the worst of times and the best of times, with more good times than bad.

F.S. VanHoose & Company was founded in 1910 by Frew S. VanHoose who ran the business until he was into his 80s. "Technically, we have had only two presidents of the company in the 101 years of operation," Joe says with a smile. "My grandfather's failing health in the 1960s changed our course. In 1964 I was nominated as president of our company. I was 23 going on 18. Oh, we had an interim president for two weeks. Frew gave one of his cronies the position with no money changing hands. The man was to get his with what was to come by turning the business around. A 'falling out' over something said to him got him to throw down his keys and go home."

"At that time we had a longtime secretary/treasurer of the company named McKinley Baldwin, also a stockholder in the business, who nominated me as president. I'm pretty sure he was looking out for his own interest as well as the company's when he did that. He knew I was so green and inexperienced I would do whatever he said. I thought to myself, 'Joe, it's either sink or swim.' I swam!" Then he added with a grin, "More out of fear than intelligence."

Joe came from good stock. His father Howard VanHoose had graduated from Paintsville High School in 1935 and attended Kentucky Military Institute before joining his father in the family lumber business as manager of the Louisa operation. He was very active in civic affairs: a member of the Louisa City Council, vice president of the Rotary Club, secretary/treasurer of the Business Men's Club and a member of the I.O.O.F. This was all interrupted in 1943 by a call to service for WWII. Howard VanHoose was killed in action in Germany in April 1945. Joe was but four years old.

When Joe assumed the leadership role, F.S. VanHoose & Company had a hardware store, lumber yard and wholesale department in Paintsville, a facility in Prestonsburg and a lumber yard in Louisa. To get the company back on solid ground, Joe said he shored up some things and put good practices into place. "We consolidated our Paintsville operations and the Louisa yard."

Joe attributes much of the success of the company to hiring and retaining excellent employees. "We give employees a good benefits package. This is one reason we have so many long-time employees. That, plus we treat them well. Low turnover means a lot to us as well as to our customer base—friendly, familiar faces. Besides our regular career employees, we have family members who have been here a long time. My cousin Scott Craft retired from here about six years ago. He was vice president. His brother Mike retired about two months ago. He was manager of our Prestonsburg operation as well as secretary/treasurer. I have a son, Harry, in the business now, and hopefully the family will carry the business on in the future."

Another crucial move on VanHoose's part was changing with and sometimes before the times. His company utilized computers before it became the norm. "It's so common now," he said "that I wonder how companies ever operated without them."

At one point the growing trend of "chain yards" started getting close to what was considered F.S. VanHoose & Company's market area, which was a 75-to-100-mile radius reaching into three states. "They were getting into Huntington, around the Ashland Oil plant near Catlettsburg and in Ironton, Ohio. They were shifting into our market, and I knew we had to do something. I knew it would be just a matter of time before they were in our face."

"The older way of doing business was by operating off certain margins. We went through a gradual evolution from margin to volume."

Over the years some of the large chains have moved on up the Big Sandy Valley into VanHoose's backdoor. Some stayed around a little while, others longer. "We have taken some hard shots over the years, but we have managed. We have two large sales each year—spring and fall. We promote these sales in 25 newspapers with full-page ads. We use 10 to 12 radio stations and two TV stations, also. We have no outside sales, and this gets our name out there. It brings people in from other markets. We've been doing these sales since the early '70s."

Joe said new facilities are planned for the Prestonsburg store. "Adjacent to where we are now, we are renovating a large former Betsy Ross warehouse and plan a move into it soon. Also in Prestonsburg, we have a new manager since Mike retired. Calhoun Salyer from Paintsville had worked several years for us while going to college . . . probably 25 years ago. After he graduated from UK, he became secretary/treasurer for us and stayed around about five years before going elsewhere. He is back. He had been in management and sales and has brought that expertise with him. He is a good addition.

"We are financially stable now. Sales are 30 times what they were in the mid-1960s. We bring a lot of out-of-county and out-of-state money into this area."

Joe said that higher volume has required expansion of equipment and personnel to handle it. "Today, we have a fleet of a dozen trucks and a maintenance department to keep them running well, a boom truck to handle drywall, 10 forklifts, and half a dozen piggyback trucks with forklifts hanging off the back for special deliveries . . . all to serve our customers. Our total personnel varies between 37 and 50, depending on the economy."

Another added value that has most certainly contributed to the company's success is also a source of pride. "The amount of expertise that we have to offer to the customer that is free is phenomenal," Joe said. "If a professional contractor wants to know something, he or she comes to us."

"In the 1980s and early '90s, national trade magazines had our little company listed in the top 400 several years in a row. No little feat considering the large amount of lumber companies in this country and their sizes."

Joe grinned, "Can you imagine continuing 101 years in the retail business and having only two presidents of the company during that time?"

When asked how much longer he plans to work, he laughs and answers, "There was a man in Lewisburg, West Virginia, who ran his lumber company and showed up every day until he passed away at 103. I'd like to break his record."

REMEMBERING WHITNEY ELIZABETH HOUSTON

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, today I wish to honor the life of Whitney Elizabeth Houston who passed away on Saturday, February 11, 2012. Whitney Houston was a shining star born in the great city of Newark, NJ, whose life will be celebrated locally and globally by her family and friends.

Whitney followed in the footsteps of her mother and began performing as a soloist in the junior gospel choir at the New Hope Baptist Church in Newark, where her first solo performance was

"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah." Later she became the first woman of color to grace the cover of Seventeen Magazine and was also featured in layouts in the pages of Glamour, Cosmopolitan, and Young Miss.

In 1983, Clive Davis, head of Arista Records, helped start Whitney's recording career, and she went on to begin her meteoric rise to fame, with Rolling Stone praising her as "one of the most exciting new voices in years," while the New York Times called her debut, self-titled album "an impressive, musically conservative showcase for an exceptional vocal talent."

In 1986, a year after the initial release of her debut album, Whitney topped the Billboard 200 albums chart and stayed there for 14 weeks with the final single, "Greatest Love of All," which became one of her biggest hits. The album became the first album by a female to yield three No. 1 hits.

Whitney Houston is recognized as the most awarded female musical artist of all time, having received 2 Emmy Awards, 6 Grammy Awards, 22 American Music Awards, and 30 Billboard Music Awards. She also holds numerous other distinctions, including the best selling single by a female artist in music history, first solo act to sell more than 1,000,000 copies of an album within a 1-week period, the only artist to chart 7 consecutive No. 1 Billboard Hot 100 hits. She also had the best selling movie soundtrack of all time, "The Bodyguard."

Beyond her professional career, Whitney Houston demonstrated her commitment to humanitarianism as a supporter of Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement, refusing to do business with agencies that did business with the then-apartheid South Africa. She also founded the Whitney Houston Foundation for Children, an organization that cared for the homeless and children with cancer and AIDS. And during the 2009 2010 academic school year, the Whitney E. Houston Academy of Creative and Performing Arts became a thriving, arts-focused institution that provides expanded educational opportunities for the student body and surrounding community.

There are many reasons why America will never forget Whitney Houston, but one of the most memorable was her performance of "The Star Spangled Banner" at Super Bowl XXV on January 27, 1991. That performance was so powerful that it was later released as a commercial single and the video of her performance reached the top 20 on the Billboard Hot 100, making her the only person to turn the national anthem into a pop hit of that magnitude.

Mr. President, it is with immense sadness but great honor that I recognize, commend, and celebrate the life and legacy of Whitney E. Houston, a star of New Jersey who went on to shine bright across the globe. I extend my deepest condolences to Whitney's mother Cissy Houston, daughter Bobbi

Kristina, her other family members and friends, and to her millions of fans.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mrs. Neiman, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

ECONOMIC REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT DATED FEBRUARY 2012 WITH THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS FOR 2012—PM 41

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Joint Economic Committee:

To the Congress of the United States:

One of the fundamental tenets of the American economy has been that if you work hard, you can do well enough to raise a family, own a home, send your kids to college, and put a little money away for retirement. That's the promise of America.

The defining issue of our time is how to keep that promise alive. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do very well while a growing number of Americans barely get by, or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.

Long before the recession that began in December 2007, job growth was insufficient for our growing population. Manufacturing jobs were leaving our shores. Technology made businesses more efficient, but also made some jobs obsolete. The few at the top saw their incomes rise like never before, but most hardworking Americans struggled with costs that were growing, paychecks that were not, and personal debt that kept piling up.

In 2008, the house of cards collapsed. We learned that mortgages had been sold to people who could not afford them or did not understand them. Banks had made huge bets and doled out big bonuses with other people's money. Regulators had looked the other way, or did not have the authority to stop the bad behavior. It was wrong. It was irresponsible. And it plunged our economy into a crisis that put millions out of work, saddled us with more debt, and left innocent,