

The Book

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Gary Patterson

New York Times best-selling author Bill Bryson had been on the Library Foundation's short list for a while, and when he agreed to be the featured guest at the Vive le Livre 2010 fundraiser for the Huntsville Public Library, more than 650 people came out for the 24th anniversary gala. Held in the South Hall of the VBC on Thursday night, November 11, Vive le Livre, which means long live the book, has become the Library's largest and most popular event of the year.

Beginning with a reception and cocktail hour, Bryson mingled with the crowd and chatted freely with anyone who had questions about his recent bestseller "A Walk in the Woods" and his newest book, "At Home: A Short History of Private Life". A sit-down dinner followed, and Bryson spoke to the audience, taking a lot of questions, and signing books afterwards.

"He was just wonderful and the people really enjoyed it," says Amy Gandy, Library Foundation development director. "He signed books for everyone who asked, so he was quite busy. Some authors don't take that much time."

Bryson is a world traveler who uses his amazing wit to make readers laugh at the most mundane daily experiences. "A Walk in the Woods", which chronicled his walk through the Appalachian Trail became an instant hit. He has also written several highly acclaimed books on the English language.

Created in 1985, the Huntsville Library Foundation's mission is to support the Huntsville Public Library and its branches, and always be an advocate for the library through cash contributions and book donations. ■



Eula Battle & Bill Bryson



Louise & Brian Carter



Bill & Dorothy Huston

Pas de Deux in the *Land of the Sweets*

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Chris Jensen



For anyone familiar with the last act of the Christmas classic, The Nutcracker, when Clara takes her dreamland journey into the Land of the Sweets where the Sugar Plum Fairy hosts her romantic pas de deux with the handsome Nutcracker prince, you will have felt much the welcomed guest in that fantastical scene at the second annual Nutcracker Ball. Presented by the Women's Guild of the Huntsville Ballet as their most important fundraiser of the year for Huntsville's Discover Dance outreach, this year's ball was all lollipops and cotton candy as guests passed through a corridor of brightly red-clad toy soldiers into the

deliciously decorated East ballroom of the VBC on Friday night, December 3.

Part of the magic came alive as this year's cast performed excerpts from the show, choreographed by artistic director Phillip Otto, and performed against the backdrop of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. Otto officially got the "ball rolling" by firing a vibrant confetti canon and WAAY's Erin Dacy acted as the evening's emcee.

This year's "Land of the Sweets" Nutcracker Ball featured hors d'oeuvres and cocktails during a silent auction, followed by a

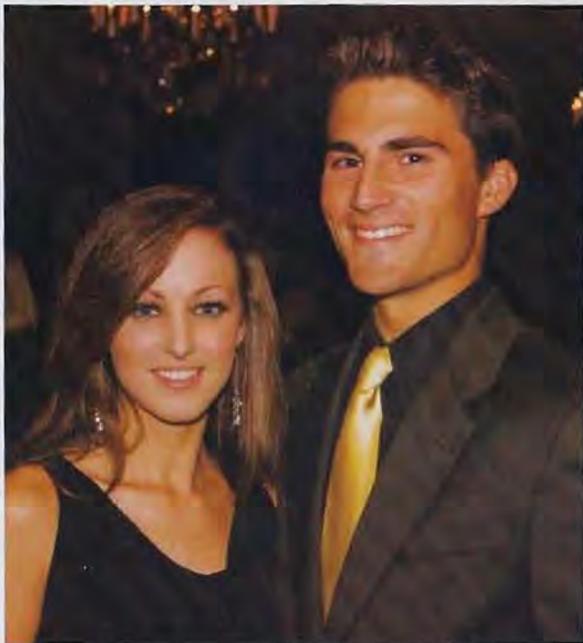
delicious dinner; dancing to the music of Huntsville's popular band Juice; and a live auction featuring a private wine tasting at Kala's Cottage, dinner at The Castle in Sheffield, and private ballroom dancing lessons, all up for the bidding. The annual holiday performance of the Nutcracker, now in its 44th consecutive year, is a favorite in the Huntsville Ballet's ongoing mission to create a sense of excitement for the art of dance that is shared by parents, students, teachers, and administrators. ■



Rachel & Phillip Otto



Mario Burns, Jacque Hudson, Cheryl Barco, Janice Johnson, Christy Bates, Sharon Dennis



Sara Kolodziejczak, Scott Radack



Mike & Pat Guillebeau



Lauren & Adam Dauro, Jan Obermann



Brenda Roark, Julia Hill

Un Altro Bicchiere di Vino, Per Favore!

Written by Kimberly Ballard Photos by Gary Patterson

What better atmosphere than the elegance of The Ledges to host the 2010 Wine & Dine for ALS event. Held on Saturday, November 20 and open to the public, more than 100 supporters of a cure, and families who have personal experiences with victims of this terrible illness, better known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, enjoyed a cocktail reception, platters of hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction, and the quiet tunes from pianist Wallace Lee.

Guests feasted on a five-course gourmet dinner, each course paired with a different bottle of wine provided by ALS benefactors Dale and Dixon Brooke from Birmingham. Sponsored by Crestwood Hospital, who has a designated clinic for ALS patients, the annual event raised more than \$30,000.

Crestwood Hospital CEO, Dr. Pam Hudson was the keynote speaker, and special recognition went to

Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Obermann, whose son passed away this summer from the disease, and who are driving forces behind the Wine & Dine event.

Lou Gehrig's disease is an unpredictable neuromuscular disorder and one of the most financially devastating diseases because it attacks every part of the body. Proceeds from events like the Wine & Dine for ALS help support ALS outreaches like the Equipment Loan Closet program where victims loan and reuse equipment like wheel chairs and respirators instead of each patient buying it new.

The first chapter established in Alabama, the Huntsville ALS opened its doors in 2004, and is the statewide headquarters. ■





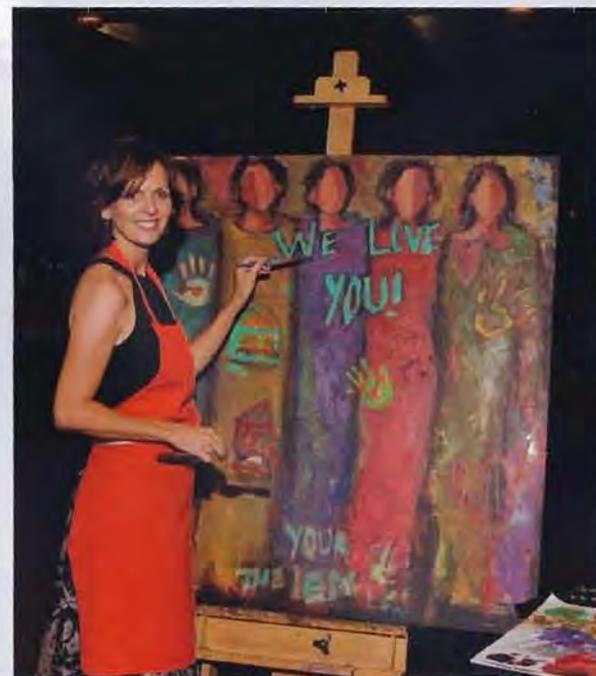
Debbie & Dr. Ben Washburn



Margaret Belle Crow, Sally Stockton, Lane Mickle



Scott & Solly Schubert, Patsy & David Williams



Leslie Lockhart

Cancer Survivors Breathe a Breath of Summer Air

Honored for their heroic battle against the disease, cancer survivors Dr. Kendall Black and Sally Stockton highlighted the North Alabama chapter of the American Cancer Society's 6th annual A Summer Lights Celebration at the VBC North Hall on August 21. The fundraising event captured all the elements of a perfect summer's day, decorated in lively colors with fresh blooming flowers, transforming the ballroom into a summer wonderland. Local artist Leslie Lockhart set up her easel live at the event and the more than 500 guests, ACS supporters, and friends and families affected by cancer celebrated their

victories over the terrible disease while recognizing loved ones who lost their lives to it.

Dr. Ben Washburn, who co-chairs A Summer Lights Celebration with his wife Debbie, says he and his wife were honored to assist in the event. "Despite all of the wonderful advances in cancer detection, prevention, and treatment, cancer continues to afflict millions of people," Dr. Washburn says. "The American Cancer Society has contributed greatly to the fight against cancer for more than 60 years."

Sponsored by Crestwood Hospital, Aegis Technologies, Comcast, Fox 54, and Lite 96.9, the event opened with a cocktail hour and silent auction with a new, live bid board component hosted by Nate Adams. Both Dr. Ben and Debbie Washburn joined John Malone in hosting the live auction. The Ken Watters Group provided music and entertainment following a gourmet sit-down dinner. Presented with framed honoree certificates, Dr. Black and Stockton also received crystal globes etched with the gala theme: "It takes a world of research to find a cure." ■

*Written by Kimberly Ballard
Photos by Gary Patterson*

Madison Goes Caribbean

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Gary Patterson

In an event always held come rain or shine, Saturday, August 21 was a balmy, but clear, late-summer night as Oscar, a Greenwing Macaw, and his fellow Madison Rotary Parrotheads hosted the 8th annual Parrots of the Caribbean at Madison's beloved ramshackle neighborhood clubhouse at #58 Martin Street in historic downtown Madison. Beachcombers dressed in their finest Caribbean patchwork and tatters, brought blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy a sultry, but spirited, evening of 1950s - 1980s rock and roll hits, while munching ribs from Dreamland Bar-B-Que. The island theme went full swing as Parrotheads kicked up their grass skirts to the eclectic beat of Four on the Floor with special guest Curtis Jordan and his steel drum pounding out tropical tunes in true, Caribbean style.

What began eight years ago as a small gathering of Madison Rotarians has grown into a spectacular community-wide fundraising event with more than 500 guests from all over the Southeast bearing libations and participating in the basket raffles. Tickets were limited to attendees age 21 and older, since water and soft drinks accompanied beer and wine.

All proceeds from Parrots of the Caribbean benefit the Madison YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club of North Alabama, and international projects like the Honduran Eco-Stove Project. With more than 1.2 million members worldwide, Rotary club members volunteer to work locally, regionally, and internationally to combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, provide education and job training, promote peace, and eradicate polio. ■





Kevin Fleming, John Sweeney, Alison Haines, Kevin Sharp, Camille Gardner, Jason Schrimsher

Granting Wishes for Sick Children

Written by Kimberly Ballard Photos by Chris Jensen

Award-winning vocalist, musician, and bone cancer survivor, Kevin Sharp, headlined the Wish Upon a Star Gala for the Georgia and Alabama chapters of the Make-A-Wish Foundation held at Research Park's new Jackson Center on Friday, August 27. Introduced to the Make-A-Wish Foundation as a senior in high school after being diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma, Sharp has become one of the country's top keynote speakers, especially on behalf of Make-A-Wish who grants wishes to children with life-threatening medical conditions in order to enrich their lives with hope, strength, and joy.

The enchanting evening began at 6:00 p.m. with a silent auction, cocktail hour, and music by Cristina Lynn. Make-A-Wish regional director, John Sweeney, made introductions followed by a scrumptious buffet at 7:30. At 8:00, Heads-and-Tails games began with prizes that included a \$100 gift card from the Melting Pot, a Nintendo Wii family package, and a 46-inch LCD HDTV. Sharp gave an inspiring speech and at 9:00, John Sweeney emceed the Dutch Auction of Wish Sponsorships followed by more Heads-and-Tails games.

The Georgia-Alabama chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation is in its thirteenth year, using 80% of its \$3.8 million budget to grant wishes to sick children. Make-A-Wish is the largest wish granting charity in the world and grants more than 12,500 wishes a year — that comes to one wish every 41 minutes. ■



Robbie & Kari Love



Jamie Brabston, Greta Schrimsher



Tim & Elizabeth Golden

*Make-A-Wish ... grants more than
12,500 wishes a year — that comes
to one wish every 41 minutes.*

the HMA Vignettes Garden Party

*Written by Kimberly Ballard
Photos by Gary Patterson*

Too hot and humid in June for an outdoor event like Vignettes, the Huntsville Museum of Art (HMA) made an artistic decision to move the annual garden party and art show to the fall - and what an elegant decision it was! Held in the historic Twickenham garden of Jean Templeton on Thursday, September 9, five artists from the Southeast, selected by the HMA based on artistic style and quality, exhibited 15 pieces from their collection in vignettes throughout the Templeton yard. A mixed media of oil on canvas, acrylics, and wood designs exhibited in apropos settings were up for sale in a unique method that was part auction, part lottery.

Opportunities to purchase items displayed in a particular vignette had a non-negotiable price tag with a closing time for submission. Guests interested in purchasing said piece, submitted their intent on a slip of paper, and if the item had multiple buyers, one name was drawn from the wall pocket.



Jeane Templeton, Sheree LeMon



Jim & Jeanette Shackelford



Lisa Noah, Susan Linn, Ann Davis, Dianne Reynolds, Carl Cleghorn

A pianist performing an unusual, but pleasing, compilation of jazz, show tunes, and popular classic rock provided entertainment, and the 150 - 200 invitees enjoyed heavy hors d'oeuvres provided by Reese Covington.

This was the third consecutive year for the Vignettes event, which was moved from its former June date to a cooler time in the fall. Held on behalf of the HMA Foundation Board, proceeds from the fundraiser go to support the Huntsville Museum of Art. ■



Gail & John Moss

Living Heroes Honored *in* Huntsville

Written by Kimberly Ballard Photos by Chris Jensen

It is America's highest award for valor in action against an enemy force, bestowed on individuals serving in the U.S. Armed Services, usually by the president of the United States in the name of Congress. Twenty-four of the 87 living Congressional Medal of Honor recipients tread the red carpet at The Davidson Center for Space Exploration on August 28, flanked by the Patriot Riders who formed a corridor of flags from their emergence from their vehicles to the elevators. Once they arrived in the great Davidson Center hall, hundreds of invited guests; board and staff members from the Medal of Honor Foundation; and education specialists working on the Medal of Honor curriculum waved and saluted them as they made their ceremonial walk into the elaborately set black-tie dinner.

Character, bravery, and distinction personified, it was Huntsville's first opportunity

to host the Medal of Honor Gala: In the Company of Heroes and the atmosphere was electric. Also honored was former US Airways pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, who accepted the American Spirit Award for his bravery in safely landing US Airways Flight 1549 in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009. Country music star Randy Owen played patriotic music throughout the evening and Fox News' anchor, Jon Scott, emceed.

Proceeds from the event support the Medal of Honor curriculum implemented in Huntsville City, Madison City, and Madison County schools. The Medal of Honor recipients were also honored at a dinner on Friday night at the Ledges and enjoyed a concert at Bridge Street immediately preceding the gala, complete with four F-15 military flyovers. ■



Blount Hospitality House Enjoys a Perfect Evening in the Garden

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Gary Patterson

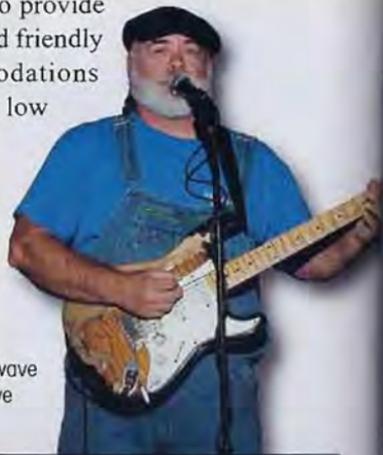
It was a gloriously intoxicating fall evening with the aroma of catfish and squash fritters drifting in the cool night air, as more than 200 guests strolled along the greenhouse paths of Bennett Nursery for the inaugural Casual Evening in the Garden event on Friday, October 1, to raise money for Blount Hospitality House. Supporters were each presented with pansies to take home as their thank you gift and found special deals on fall bloomers and holiday favorites like pumpkins and ornamental gourds. Musical entertainment was provided with tunes from Microwave Dave and the Nukes. In addition to the fritters, Catering by Narvell provided beef tenderloin and black-eyed salad with corn cake. The special guest for the evening was Blount Hospitality House's retired founding director, Bernice Blount, who acted as its executive director for 25 years.

A Casual Evening in the Garden raised more than \$12,000 for Alabama's first hospitality house, which opened its doors 30 years ago to provide a home away from home for out-of-town patients who are released into outpatient recovery, but

are unable to afford a hotel, or who have no place to stay during their recuperation. Blount Hospitality House also provides accommodations for family members who need a place to stay while their loved one is in the hospital. More than 30,000 guests from all over the world have stayed there over the past three decades.

Because Blount Hospitality House provides guests with a fully equipped kitchen, laundry room, comfortable "family room", and is supervised by a household staff available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, they rely on all types of donations and gifts in order to provide caring and friendly accommodations at a very low cost. ■

Microwave
Dave





Chip Whiteside & Sharon Heinz



Robbie Joffrion, Leah Engler, Sheila Cummings, Sara Deaton

2011 Heart Society Ball Honors Outstanding Service

*Written by Kimberly Ballard
Photos by Chris Jensen*

It was a night to honor outstanding service as supporters of the Greater Southeast Affiliate (GSA) of the American Heart Association gathered at the Westin Mediterranean Ballroom on Saturday, February 5 for the 2011 Heart Society Ball. The black-tie affair recognized Dr. Richard Clay, director of cardiac surgery at Huntsville Hospital, as the 2011 Physician of the Year; and Jean Wessel Templeton received the Heart of Huntsville award for her unprecedented work as a volunteer, businesswoman and advocate for the less fortunate in our community.

Chaired by Heart Association Board members Sandra Steele of Enfinger Steele Development and Rex Geveden, president of Teledyne Brown Engineering, the extravaganza

began with a silent auction and cocktails followed by a formal sit-down dinner. After the honoree presentations, guests enjoyed dessert and dancing to the tunes of Junctional Rhythm.

“Dr. Clay provides a level of patient care exemplary of what our community has to offer,” says Steele. “and Jean is an exceptional leader and role model for us all.”

“The American Heart Association has improved treatments in cardiovascular disease, outreach, and education, making it easier for physicians to treat and communicate with patients,” says Clay.

The Templeton family endowed the Fred Wessel Cardiac Rehabilitation Scholarship Fund at Huntsville Hospital in memory of Templeton’s late husband who suffered from cardiovascular disease. “The scholarship is funded to help those individuals experience the cardiac rehabilitation program who could not afford it otherwise,” says Templeton.

The American Heart Association is the oldest and largest voluntary health organization dedicated to building healthier lives, free of heart disease - America’s number one killer. ■

Serving Together With Purpose

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Chris Jensen

According to Valerie Miles, president of the Huntsville Area Association of Realtors (HAAR), 2011 marks "A year in which real estate services will be redefined." Miles and three new 2011 HAAR officers that include president-elect, Bill Ward; MLS president Julie Lockwood; and secretary/treasurer, Bill Stewart; were officially installed in a black-tie ceremony held at Huntsville's Embassy Suites Hotel, Friday, January 21.

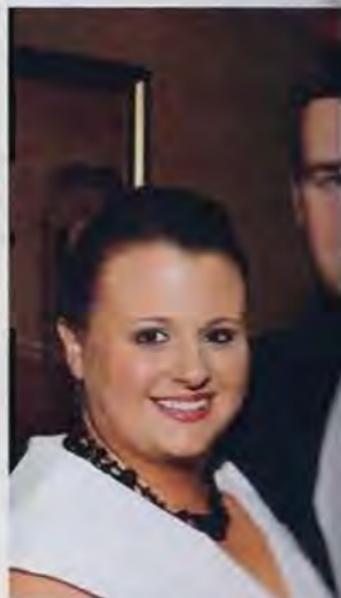
The 2011 HAAR Installation Banquet included a social hour from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with entertainment provided by pianist Chad Cantrell. The dinner and program began at 7:00 p.m. with independent real estate professional Clifton Miller as Master of Ceremonies, and the Honorable Judge William "Billy" Bell, of the 23rd Judicial Circuit Court, officially swearing in the 2011 officers. Steven Todd Miller provided after-dinner entertainment.

2010 outgoing HAAR president, Sid Pugh passed the scepter to Miles who is an associate broker with Summit Realtors. Miles was born into a real estate family. Her parents, Thelma and Frank Dawson, along with Miles' sister Rhonda, made up the Frank Dawson Team when Valerie joined them to work on Frank's first development, the Knox Creek subdivision in Madison.

As the new incoming president, Miles says her theme for the Huntsville Board of Realtors this year is "Serving Together with Purpose". "This is a reminder that amid all the changes taking place around us, we must not forget the foundation of our business - the citizens of our community. I believe we'll have an outstanding year," she said. "We plan to be more visible and active in community projects." ■



Nancy & Richard Ward
(married 47 yrs.)



John & Christine



Sid Pugh, Beth

Tranquility Base Rendezvous Celebrates All That is New and Historic

Written by Kimberly Ballard

Photos by Chris Jensen

What began as an annual winter gala for the U.S. Space & Rocket Center (USS&RC) at the Davidson Center for Space Exploration, rocketed into a multifaceted event celebrating the exciting happenings, both new and historic, going on at the USS&RC. The Tranquility Base Rendezvous held on February 3, first served as a welcoming for the USS&RC's new CEO, Dr. Deborah Barnhart, who replaces the retiring Larry Capps. Barnhart was the unanimous choice for the position and played a major role in the development of Space Camp.

The Rendezvous also served as a ribbon cutting for several new Apollo exhibits at the USS&RC, including the Apollo 16 capsule sponsored by Marshall Space Flight Center; the Apollo 12 moon rock exhibit sponsored by Jacobs Engineering; and the Apollo Courtyard Waterfall Wall donated by Ursula Mueller in memory of her late husband Dr. Fritz Mueller who was instrumental in developing the guidance systems for the Redstone, Jupiter and Saturn I rockets here in Huntsville.

The Tranquility Base Rendezvous also welcomed a rare and exciting appearance by the first man ever to walk on the Moon, Mr. Neil Armstrong, who presented Dr. Georg von Tiesenhausen with the prestigious USS&RC's Inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award for Education. Von Tiesenhausen, who is 96 years old, is one of the last of Wernher von Braun's original team members, and provided the first complete design for the Lunar Rover.

The invitation-only event for supporters of the USS&RC, featured music by the Rocket City Jazz Orchestra with a sit-down dinner and award presentation by Neil Armstrong who has not been back to Huntsville and MSFC in more than 20 years. ■





Daniel Adamek, Cyndy Morgan, Greg Screws



Jodi & Lou Weiner

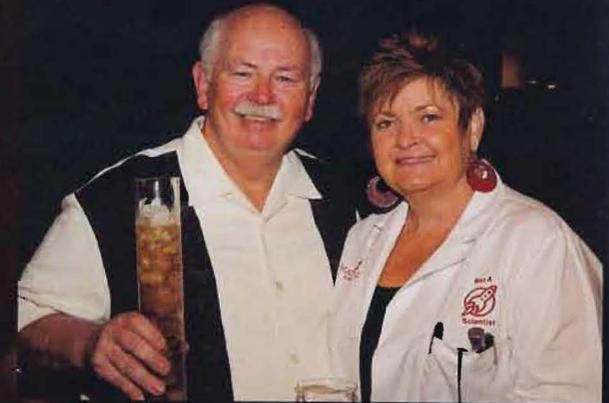


Dr. James Currie, Mindy Williams

Madness & Mayhem

Madness and mayhem ran rampant at Sci-Quest on Friday night, October 8, as more than 300 guests dined on bug brains and sipped from beakers of strange brew at the 2nd annual Mad Scientist Ball. Transformed into the quintessential mad scientist's laboratory with things glowing, smoking, roiling, and bubbling, the Hands-on Science Center mixed the night up with delicious food by Cyn Sheas; drinks provided by Olde Towne Brewery and the Wine Cellar; live music from DiscOasis; and the Quest for Excellence Awards presentation.

*Written by Kimberly Ballard
Photos by Gary Patterson*



Dave & Jo Seay

A silent auction featured autographed science and sports memorabilia, wine dinners, jewelry, and original artwork by local artists, while the live auction offered a pair of Iron Bowl tickets, a sunset yacht cruise, and movie tickets for an entire year from Monaco Pictures. "This fundraiser is our top event to help support the many educational activities we offer at the Center," says executive director Cyndy Morgan.

The Mad Scientist Ball also highlights the year's Quest for Excellence Awards, which are community-wide awards focused on individuals who have made significant contributions in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Presented this year to professionals in engineering - most specifically space exploration - they spanned four categories, including industry, government, academia, and education. "We are proud to be able to honor these men and women at such a wonderful event. It is a great way to recognize the great work they are doing for our community," Morgan said.

The Sci-Quest Hands-on Science Center's mission is to motivate children to discover and explore the wonders of science, mathematics, and technology and to correlate their interest to the existing career fields throughout Huntsville and the Tennessee Valley.

