



## Athena Society of Burleson 2011 Check Presentations



Athena Society encourages young women to give back through volunteering throughout the community. The young woman with the most volunteer hours was chosen from Burleson High School and presented **\$2,000** College Scholarship.



Above - Athena Society members presented a check in the amount of **\$40,000** to the Careity Foundation, a nonprofit known for its effective, individualized services and support of Johnson County cancer patients and families.

Below - Check presented for **\$10,000** to Careity's Branded Event in support of Palliative Care at Cook Children's Hospital.







# Athena Society of Burleson 2011 Check Presentations



Check presented for **\$6,000** in support of the Crystal Heart Gala. This Crystal Heart Gala raised funds for cancer screening for uninsured patients.

Check presented for \$10,000 in support of The Muy Caliente Pink Luncheon, a Careity Foundation Event. The Muy Caliente Pink Luncheon raises funds to support the Careity Breast Care Center and Huguley Hospital, located in Burleson, Texas.



Check presented to Burleson's New Journey's Christian Women's Job Corp for **\$2,000**. The Burleson's New Journey's Christian Women's Job Corp encourages and provides training to women who have been out of the job force. They assist in enhancing their skills increasing the possible employment opportunities.





# The Goddesses Among Us:

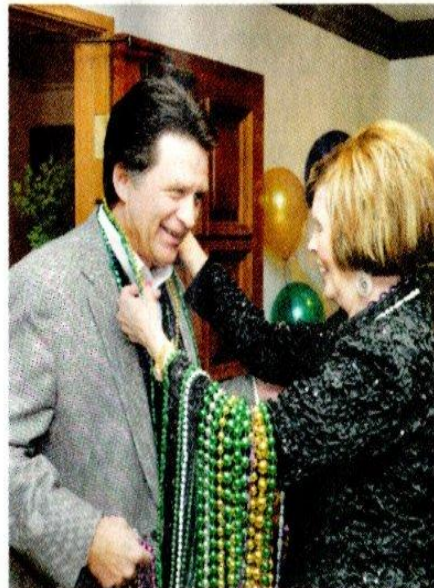
## The Athena Society spreads hope and help to Johnson County

By Emily White Youree  
Special to Burleson-Crowley-Cleburne  
UpClose

Athena is commonly identified as the Greek goddess of wisdom, but she is also known as the goddess of strength, strategy, female arts, justice, skill, crafts and the 'goddess of heroic endeavors' - what a lady. While this divine diva rests in the annals of mythology, several Athena ladies - with gumption, grace and good deeds - reside alive and well in Burleson, Texas.

The Athena Society of Burleson is a non-profit organization of 19 female business leaders in the Burleson area who are dedicated to making a difference in the lives of their Johnson County neighbors. These women work together to fulfill the society's mission: "to assist

women in realizing their full leadership potential, participating in the com-



The March 5 Mardi Gras gala helped raise funds to support the many programs sponsored by the Athenas. Above are Jerry Payne and Patsy Dumas.

Star-Telegram photos

munity by contributing time and energy to improve the quality of life for others, serving ethically with dignity, grace and sensitivity."

### Caring about cancer

Whether through the illnesses of loved ones, friends or personal experience, cancer has touched nearly all the lives of the Athena Society members; thus, making cancer care a cause these ladies are passionate about.

Sharon Wright, a past Athena president, says, "From the beginning, we decided to make helping cancer patients and caregivers, who live in Johnson County, our primary goal. While we praise the many organizations that help with research and funding, we wanted to focus on helping our neighbors cope with the realities of battling the disease."

As a result of this conviction, the Athenas joined

forces with the Careity Foundation.

"Careity works with oncologists and other cancer care providers to help economically challenged cancer patients, including providing cost-free mammograms to encourage early detection," says Wright.

Most recently, the Athenas celebrated the Feb. 24 opening of the Careity Breast Care Center on location at the Huguley Memorial Medical Center campus. Patsy Dumas, current Athena president, believes this new center will make a significant difference for cancer patients in Johnson County.

She says, "When you hear that you may have cancer, you immediately fear the worst. Uncertainty is all around you and your family. There may be sev-

More on ATHENA SOCIETY, 4QQ

4QQ Wednesday, March 23, 2011

## Athena Society

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eral days that pass due to tests and meetings with various doctors before the diagnosis is known. With the new Careity Breast Care Center, the patient will meet with the team of doctors within 72 hours from the first visit to discuss the actual diagnosis and learn the recommended treatment plan."

The Athenas' work and

support made an impact in the development and success of this center. According to Lyn Walsh, Careity Foundation president and CEO, "The Athenas' support and work has enabled Careity to help patients in Johnson County who had no other alternative. No doubt, their funding has been a huge boost to our work with those Johnson County residents. They are hands-on; they work closely with us. We enjoy an incredibly wonderful relationship with them."

The Athenas also raise money to fund scholarships for the New Journeys Chris-

tian Women's Job Corps, which is program committed to teaching women job and life skills. The group supports Pediatric Palliative Care at Cook's Children Hospital as well. This unit provides medical care for children with devastating diseases and life-threatening illnesses.

### In the beginning

In 1992, Dumas received the first Athena International Foundation Award - an honor the Burleson Chamber of Commerce bestows on a local woman who excels in business, leadership and service to the community. Eleven years later, all the Athena Award winners, led by Aly Engstrom, came together to form the Athena Society of Burleson with the goal to "impact Johnson County, one life at a time." The award is now sponsored by Huguley Hospital.

"As Athenas are recognized with the award on a yearly basis, these women have the opportunity to join the society," says Wright, who was the 1993 Athena Award winner.

Throughout the past seven years, the Athenas

have donated more than \$250,000 to charities that benefit Johnson County residents. A large portion of this money is raised at the Mardi Gras gala hosted by the society each year. The 2011 event - which included casino and Texas Hold 'em play as well as silent and live auctions - was held at the Mountain Valley Country Club on March 5.

Aside from involvement in the society, Athena members volunteer for numerous organizations - the American Cancer Society, Burleson Chamber of Commerce, Burleson Rotary, Pregnancy Aid, United Way, Meals on Wheels just to name a few.

Dumas notes, "These ladies have a passion for our community and use our networking to make the community a better place. We were all good friends when we formed the society, but now we are like sisters."

And Wright agrees. She says, "I have always felt you need to give back to your community. The women who are involved in the society make me a better person."



Casino games and Texas Hold 'em were part of the Mardi Gras gala, held at Mountain Valley Country Club. Throughout the past seven years, the Athenas have donated more than \$250,000 to charities that benefit Johnson County residents.