



**Bringing a New Focus on Finding a Cure for Parkinson's
BY KATHY HARLAN**

Over the years we have all watched or participated in great events to further an important cause. Jerry Lewis Telethon for Muscular Dystrophy; Susan G. Koman, Run for the Cure; and the March of Dimes are well known for their ability to raise money for a particular cause. They were not always world-renowned and well-funded – they had to start somewhere.

*In 1966, the first-ever Jerry Lewis Telethon to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Associations of America was broadcast from a single station, WNEW-TV in New York City.

* The first Race for the Cure for breast cancer was started in Dallas, Texas in 1983, with 800 runners. In 2010, there were about 130 races.

*President Franklin Roosevelt's personal struggle with polio led him to create the March of Dimes, which was funded largely by schoolchildren collecting dimes in paper folders. With the virtual elimination of polio, the focus has shifted to premature birth and birth defects, which has saved thousands of babies.

We in Houston have a chance to help an organization formed in 2010 that is quickly earning respect for its business approach and determination to make a difference by finding a cure for neurological disorders, starting with Parkinson's. This organization known as the KiMe Fund, was begun by a man who grew up in the Bay Area. The founder, Steve Hodges, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at age 48. Now living and working in Knoxville, Tennessee, Hodges and friends have initially organized groups in Washington D.C., Knoxville, Las Vegas, Chicago and now Clear Lake.

KiMe is shorthand for the founder's two daughters, Kim and Megan, and is symbolic of the drive to find a cure before the next generation of children everywhere is diagnosed. Its initial goal is to target funds toward existing projects that are nearing a cure for Parkinson's. Funds are given directly to reputable institutions with reasonable administrative expenses that are the "Best Chance For a Cure".

The KiMe Fund is a fund of East Tennessee Foundation (ETF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit community foundation.

Most everyone knows someone with Parkinson's disease. Working with the KiMe Fund is a chance to contribute to improvements in their lives and futures. An upcoming dinner on November 5, 2011 at League City Civic Center will be the first activity to involve the community. Contact Betsy Hodges at 281-538-3180 or holbet0525@verizon.net for more information about this event. Visit www.kimecnd.org for more information about the KiMe Fund.