Long timers in Lafayette may be familiar with The Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette but not so familiar with some of the details that make the organization a practical place to turn when making a donation to help our hometown. The Community Foundation of Greater Lafayette, or CFGL, works as a type of not-for-profit consulting group to help Greater Lafayette citizens navigate how to set up donations—large and small—including the financial nuances, and the wide variety of causes that can benefit from the philanthropy. Any individual or group can set up an endowment fund, with a minimum gift of $5,000, and any individual and organization can do this while he or she is still alive and well, as many do, notes Greg Kapp, president and CEO. People also can designate part of their estate to be set up as an endowment fund. The causes that benefit from these gifts represent a wide range of community needs and interests: childcare, hunger, education, art, music, parks and recreation, the disabled community, health care, and the list is seemingly endless. Often individuals, families or organizations will want to start a “foundation” to honor someone’s memory or honor a particular cause that is important to them or to society at large, but setting up a foundation on one’s own is not a simple matter, explains Kapp. “A foundation is quite a lot of work,” he says. “An individual or family foundation has to give away five percent per year, they have to file tax returns with the IRS, and they have to maintain a board.” However, families and individuals who want to honor someone – or honor a cause – can accomplish the same thing as a foundation by setting up an endowment fund at CFGL, and the work, maintenance and fees involved are a lot less, explains Marianne Rose, development director at CFGL. “An individual can set up a foundation on his or her own, but there is quite a cost to it,” notes Rose. “They would need to be working with an attorney and with an accountant because they have to file a lot of paperwork with the IRS.” On the other hand, setting up an endowment fund at CFGL is a lot simpler and less expensive because the staff and its expert financial consultants manage the funds for the individual or family who sets up the endowment, Rose says. To set up an endowment with CFGL, all that is necessary is to meet with one or more of the foundation’s staff at the...
The Community Foundation building, located at 1114 State Street in Lafayette, is well suited to its mission of fundraising and strengthening relationships in and around Greater Lafayette. The interior is cozy, yet when inside, it’s hard to escape the historical presence of the building. According to Community Foundation literature, it’s called the “Elmhurst Community Building” for all of the elm trees that were originally in the back of the property. The structure was built in 1873-74 for John Brockenbrough, whose family lived in it until 1896. After that the building had a series of owners, including Samuel T. Murdock (who is the same Murdock associated with Murdock Park in Lafayette). Some past tenants also include the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, which occupied the building as a chapter house in the 1920s.

It’s easy to see that several interior spots have been restored. The building has weathered some storms, such as a fire in the 1930s that destroyed the roof. After the fire, the structure was rebuilt, and some of the interior elements were redesigned, including the stairway and entryway. The building is now handicapped accessible with a separate ramp entrance.

The Community Foundation shares the building with the offices of the United Way of Greater Lafayette, and events held at the building are related to either of the organizations, says Marianne Rose, The Community Foundation’s development director.

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**LAFAYETTE MAGAZINE 29**

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Walking Through History: Community Foundation Building has had many owners in many eras

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