

∞ DONOR SPOTLIGHT ∞

Ken Roberts, Jr.

Ken Roberts, Jr. has been a generous supporter of Humanities Tennessee—and the Young Writers’ Workshops in particular—since 2009. We took some time to learn more about Ken, his hobbies, and his love for the humanities.



What do you do professionally?

I’m a former English teacher and freelance writer. Now I work as a consultant for Antique River Logs, a small company based in Bowling Green, KY that harvests, preserves, and creates art out of century old reclaimed lumber.

What do you do for fun?

Anything outside! I hike, bike and snowboard. (Although the snowboarding in Tennessee leaves much to be desired...).

How did you first become aware of Humanities Tennessee?

Through my dear friends Helen and [former Humanities Tennessee board chair] Neil Hemphill. And of course, the Southern Festival of Books.

What made you want to become a donor?

Helen and Neil. Through them, I got introduced to all the cool things that were going on as a result of Humanities Tennessee and it was an easy fit.

What is your favorite Humanities Tennessee program and why?

Well, of course I love the Southern Festival of Books, but what really caught my attention was the [Appalachian and Tennessee] Young Writer’s Workshops, the writing camps. Helen took me to visit one a while back. I just thought it was amazing. Made me kind of jealous to be honest...

Why/in what ways are the humanities important in your life?

Simple. The humanities make Life worth living. I love science; engineering fascinates me; and a successful business can change lives, but in the end, it’s the arts, the humanities that make you want to stick around till the ‘end of the show’ so to speak.

What kinds of programs would you like to see HT produce in the future?

Good question... I'm not sure at the moment. I know the folks on board running the place are a creative bunch; I'm sure they'll come up with things I could never imagine.

What do you wish other people knew about Humanities Tennessee?

The Young Writers' Workshops probably. The stuff for young people. There are so many programs, but the camps remain my favorite. With all the talk about 'kids these days' and the failing school system etc., I think Humanities Tennessee plugs in and makes a difference. That matters to me.

What might someone be surprised to know about you?

That I play the saxophone. And the guitar. Badly. *Very badly* to be honest. But I love music and I love to learn, and even though no one will ever hear me play either of these beautiful instruments, I like to think that when I practice, I'm somehow connecting myself to those that *can* play, and that's pretty cool.

**HUMANITIES TENNESSEE THANKS KEN
FOR HIS GENEROUS SUPPORT!**