

The Darke County Foundation is a community foundation dedicated to improving the lives of Darke County residents by receiving, managing and distributing charitable gifts.

“This is Our School”

Brinley Family of Hollansburg Starts Scholarship Fund for Tri-Village Students

Bill and Rosy Brinley of Hollansburg have been proud supporters of Tri-Village schools since their children began attending in the 1970s. The couple demonstrated their love and commitment to the school and its students by starting a fund that will award scholarships every year to Tri-Village High School graduates.

The William and Rosalyn Brinley Family Scholarship Fund was established at the Darke County Foundation to support further educational endeavors of Tri-Village students.



Bill and Rosy Brinley

“This is our school,” said Rosy. “We know the teachers. We know the students. We know the community. It’s like our own family. We wouldn’t consider living anywhere else,” she said.

The scholarship fund will make its first awards totaling \$4,000 to the class of 2021. As a permanent endowment, the fund will use investment income to generate awards every year indefinitely.

The Brinleys hope their example will inspire others to offer financial assistance to Tri-Village graduates who face ever-increasing college tuition.

“By establishing this scholarship, we hope other people will also consider doing the same thing for our students” said Bill. “Supporting our students will help Tri-Village remain a strong school district.”

Bill and Rosy started attending Tri-Village sporting events and activities when their children – Gary, Byron and Susan – participated in the 70s and 80s. They continued cheering for their grandchildren who also attended T-V. Going to basketball games is still a favorite activity, and they have missed those outings this year due to pandemic restrictions.

The couple has a long history in the community. Bill has lived in the

Continued on back page



Dr. Marlin and Shirley Thompson

Thompsons Leave Gift for Ansonia Students

“The community you leave your grandchildren is more important than the inheritance you leave them.”

Dr. Marlin D. Thompson, founder of the Darke County (HOPE) Foundation, and his wife, Shirley A. Thompson, have left a generous bequest to the Darke County Foundation following their deaths. Marlin died in 2010 and Shirley in September 2020. The permanent endowment fund will provide annual financial support to Ansonia Schools for the benefit of students with special needs. The Thompsons lived in the Ansonia school district since 1964.

Marlin and Shirley were ardent advocates for education, and they were especially encouraging to students who needed assistance due to physical, intellectual or behavioral challenges. As superintendent of Ansonia Schools from 1964-1977, and superintendent of Darke County Schools from 1981-1993,

Continued on back page



Keplers Start Community Fund for Arcanum and Pittsburg Areas

Family roots run deep in southern Darke County for Dixie and David Kepler of Pittsburg. Both of Dixie's great-great-grandfathers settled in Darke County in the 1830s. Their descendants continued living in southern Darke County, including her grandparents and parents, Chalmer and Opal Holsapple Baker.

David's great-great-grandfather, Jacob Godown, was from Darke County and fought in the Civil War. His descendants also found southern Darke County an appealing place to live, counting David's great-grandparents, grandparents and parents, Don and Ruth Blumenstock Kepler, as residents.



Dixie and David Kepler

For Dixie and David, lifelong residents of Pittsburg, embracing their community goes without saying. Wanting to ensure their support for Darke County even after they are gone, the couple established the Dixie and David Kepler Community Fund at the Darke County Foundation. The permanent endowment will use investment income to provide annual community grants to non-profit organizations that serve residents of the Arcanum and Franklin-Monroe school districts.

"God has truly blessed us our whole lives," said David. "We want to show His compassion by helping others in the area we have lived."

"There are many worthwhile organizations that help our residents," added David. "It is often difficult for groups to find

funds, so we wanted to help charitable organizations long after we are gone."

The Keplers started the fund while they are living so they can see how the grants impact their community.

They have provisions in their

"We wanted to help charitable organizations long after we are gone."

will to donate more to the fund.

Dixie graduated from Arcanum High School and David from Franklin-Monroe. Their son Ryan graduated from F-M in 1998. Dixie and David are active members at Castine Church and long-time volunteers at Grace Resurrection Community Center in Greenville, among many other charitable causes.

David is a former trustee for the Darke County Foundation, so he saw firsthand how the Foundation takes care of its resources and donors' intentions. The Foundation is grateful to the Keplers for taking this step to strengthen the work of local organizations, now and in the future.

Any non-profit organization that serves Darke County residents, including the Arcanum and Franklin-Monroe districts, may apply for grants beginning May 1 at www.darkecountyfoundation.org. Applications are due June 30.

Church Uses Remaining Assets to Support Cemetery

St. Paul Lutheran Church provided a place of worship in the village of Willowdell for 157 years. When the northern Darke County church closed in 2019, its members wanted to honor its legacy by helping to preserve the place where many of its members are buried or plan to be buried.

The church council voted to use its remaining assets to establish the St. Paul Lutheran Church Cemetery Fund at the Darke County Foundation. The permanent endowment fund generates investment income that is distributed yearly to the Patterson Township Trustees to use for maintenance at the cemetery on Foote Road.

"We were searching for a solution to ensure that the

cemetery was always going to be maintained for current and future generations," said Chris Hecht, Versailles, former treasurer of St. Paul Lutheran Church. "We did not want to just set aside money in a savings account that would eventually be spent."

"The Darke County Foundation provided us with the peace of mind that the funds needed to maintain the cemetery at a high level were going to be available," Chris said.

The Darke County Foundation is pleased to help local organizations like St. Paul's to create everlasting legacies with a meaningful and useful purpose.



DCF Community Grants Strengthen Darke County Organizations



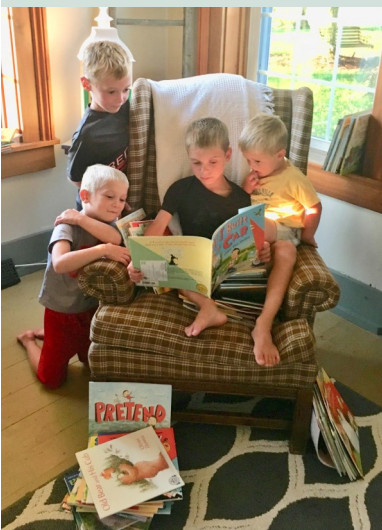
Meals on Wheels deliveries



Student running club at Council on Rural Services



Utility shed for Ansonia High School FFA



Free books to all Darke County children age 0-5 through United Way's Imagination Library



Furniture and supplies for Kinder Korner Preschool, Versailles



FISH Choice Food Pantry, Greenville



Book giveaway at New Madison Public Library



Maintenance of Darke County Parks



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(Brinley cont. from p. 1)

Hollansburg area his entire life except a few childhood years in Indiana. He graduated from Westmont High School (consolidation of Palestine and Hollansburg communities) in 1958. Westmont became Tri-Village High School in 1972. Rosy went to Lindamood School in Greenville Township and graduated from Greenville High School in 1959.

Bill owned and operated his own trucking company until his retirement in 2006. Rosy worked for Tri-Village schools for 15 years as a secretary and library aid. She also worked at the Hollansburg post office for 12 years.

"Tri-Village does a good job educating our kids," said Bill. "This is our way to give back."

The Brinleys daughter, Susan Laux, is a volunteer board member at the Darke County Foundation. Susan has presented Foundation scholarships at Tri-Village graduation for the past decade.

"Susan introduced the idea to us," said Bill. "She said the Foundation gave scholarships to Tri-Village students out of its general fund, but it didn't have any scholarships set up specifically for Tri-Village students. Our fund will support only Tri-Village students," he said.

The Darke County Foundation is proud to assist the Brinleys as they invest in the future of deserving Tri-Village students.

(Thompson cont. from p. 1)

Marlin valued the education of every child under his care. Shirley was a devoted mother, grandmother, and active member of Ansonia United Methodist Church, providing love, guidance and charitable work to help others be the best they could be.

"My parents always valued education and wanted to provide opportunities to others to get the education and tools needed to succeed in life," said Jill Ulrich, daughter of Marlin and Shirley.

The Thompsons indicated in their will that the fund, named the Marlin D. Thompson and Shirley A. Thompson Memorial Fund, will be used to "enhance the ability of special needs students with financial need to be more successful in their academic programs." The Darke County Foundation will work with administrators at Ansonia Schools to identify uses for the annual distributions, which will begin in 2022.

When Marlin started the HOPE Foundation (now the Darke County Foundation) in 1986, he was fond of saying, "The community you leave your grandchildren is more important than the inheritance you leave them."

With this inspiring gift, Marlin and Shirley have demonstrated their heartfelt commitment to their community, giving special students a boost to reach their full potential.