



Perry County Community Foundation

AUGUST 2009

For Good. For Ever.
For Perry County.

A Legacy of Giving...

I'm not sure at what point in our lives that my siblings and I realized that our Dad was an extraordinary person. Little by little as we were growing up, we saw that he just wasn't like any other father we knew. I will try to take this opportunity to describe the character and values and passion that was Gerald Delano Thomas. We think it is so important for the next generation to understand his motivation and if just a few of us endeavor to emulate him, his legacy of giving will go on.

Many people are wonderful parents and they put their heart and soul into being great at that. Others are totally into their career and put everything into being successful at that. Still others are dedicated to their community and volunteering and spend hours and hours giving back to the community. Others spend all of their time focused on their religion and church life.

What made our father extraordinary is that he was able to excel in ALL of these areas. He was able to make a difference in ALL of these areas. He gave his heart, soul, and passion to all of these areas. He was able to make everyone who depended on him believe that they were his top priority. In a way, we all were his top priority. As an adult now who struggles every day to keep it all together, I now understand what an incredible man he was that he was able to accomplish all that he did in his lifetime. I don't think he had a grand plan. His motivation was simply LOVE: love for God, love for his family, love for Perry County. Everything was intertwined in his mind. For his family to be able to live in and work in Perry County, Perry County needed to thrive. To serve God, he needed to provide for his family and raise us all to be strong adults. This wonderful county, home to all of us, has been home to Thomases and Goffinets for generations. To keep our family close, he wanted future generations to be able to continue to live and work here in Perry County. Dad was incredibly wise. He was able to see beyond the moment and imagine the future. He could then see



what action was needed to form the future. Dad was an incredible leader. He was able to convince others to help him accomplish the actions.

He was a wonderful father to his seven children, loving husband to our mother, and a devoted son to his parents. My Dad and Mom were able to celebrate 50 years of marriage together. They made each other a priority even with all they did in their lives outside of their marriage. I remember they went out as a couple every Saturday night as we were growing up. The Jaycees gave them an inexpensive way to be together as a couple and serve the community at the same time. They were members of a Christian Family Movement group for over 40 years with 5 other couples. After we all grew up, they traveled together and visited all 50 states and also had a home in Florida. They were a great example to us on the give and take and hard-work required to have a successful marriage.

I wish I could put into words what made him such a great father. Could it have been the family vacations we took every year no matter how tight money was? One unforgettable year, we vacationed with Dad's troop at Camp Pahoka Boy Scout Camp. My sisters and I definitely enjoyed being the only girls in a 20 mile radius. Could it have been all of those times Dad came to our rescue like the below zero night my VW Bug died on the west side of Evansville at 2:00 AM? Or could it be the quiet support of his strong hand squeezing my shoulder when

he knew I was hurt or upset? I could write a book on all the wonderful memories we have with dad, but unfortunately there's not the space here to do that.

Later in life, he became a wonderful, loving grandfather to his 19 grandchildren and Jack, his first great-grandchild. Certainly each and every one of them believes they were his favorite. From the many hours he pushed them on the swing in the backyard to the hours and hours he spent attending all of their athletic, dance, cheerleading, religious, school events, birthday parties, graduations to simply sitting with him in his recliner as he read them a story, they all feel they had a very special place in his heart.

I don't know how I can begin to describe his influence in my life. I know I speak for the rest of my siblings when I say I have spent my entire life trying to make him and my mother proud. They were my motivation to succeed, to get married and work hard at having a strong marriage, to have children and raise them in the Catholic faith, to get involved in the community. The biggest thing I learned from my parents is to put all my heart, soul, and passion into whatever I went after in life. Where did this drive come from? It came from them. All I knew as far as how to live my life was to follow their example.

Dad was an extremely dedicated and hard-working employee. It seemed he was always on call for his maintenance superintendent job at General Electric. He

■ Continued on next page



A Word From Our President

This year we are celebrating the Perry County Community Foundation's fifteenth anniversary of service to our local community! It gives us a wonderful opportunity to reflect on our growth and progress—what was merely a concept fifteen years ago has grown into a solid reality today. It was the vision, enthusiasm, and hard work of many local leaders that created this flexible

hope of providing a one-stop shop for social services; and we have created the Perry County Power of Youth Council, a Foundation initiative that aims not only to teach young people about community service and the power of giving back but also aims to provide them with opportunities to lead and provide an example for their contemporaries.

While delighted with the progress the Foundation has made in our short history, I can't let this opportunity go by without acknowledging the fact that the current economic downturn has certainly had an impact on the Foundation. Like the investments of so many, the investments in our endowment fund also have suffered over the past year. Though we are beginning to see small signs of revival here and there, I'm sure we all realize that it may take several years for a full recovery. Because our grant making policy is to protect our funds and donors during times like these, we expect that the grantmaking capacity of charitable funds will be reduced in the coming year and probably in the next few years.

Fifteen years is just the start for the Perry County Community Foundation! As we look ahead, I can tell you with all certainty that the Perry County Community Foundation will be here serving Perry County in the next fifteen years and many, many more. On behalf of everyone at the Foundation, I offer thanks to all those who've believed in the powerful impact community foundations can and do have.

vehicle known as the Perry County Community Foundation.

Today, we administer 72 charitable funds on behalf of our donors, whose powerful love of Perry County has motivated them to give in a way that serves the community today and forever into the future. It is these funds that allowed the Foundation to grant \$1.4 million over the last fifteen years. To date, 1385 people have given to the Foundation—gifts from \$5 to \$225,757. We are so very grateful to our generous and visionary donors.

We're proud of our stewardship of these funds that have allowed for the support of so many worthwhile projects in Perry County. We're equally proud that, as the Foundation has grown, we have expanded our reach into the community. We've formed the Circle of 100, a group of women working hard to build an endowment aimed specifically at improving life for women of all ages; we are a partner in the 4-Communities Project, which is working to develop a community resource center with the



New Board Members

The Perry County Community Foundation welcomes 5 new board members. Naomi Mulzer, Stephanie Walsh and Jeanne Wittmer joined the Board in May while Denny Graves and Matt Labhart joined the Board in July. We thank them for their commitment to the Foundation!



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A Legacy... ■ Continued from front page

went to work at seven in the morning and rarely returned before six at night. He worked every Saturday morning and was frequently called in at night and throughout the weekend. I once asked him how he was able to give so much of himself to his work in a factory making motors. (I was struggling with the same question in my work at Alcoa making beer and food cans). He said his work allowed him to support his family which was his mission in life. Also, he said, helping General Electric succeed helped keep jobs in Perry County which supported his mission of family. And so, you can see how with his motivation and with his passion, a man without a college degree was able to earn a place of leadership in his field.

Finally, Dad's involvement in the community was extraordinary. What made him do it all? It was this simple: he saw a need and he strived to fill that need. He didn't sit back and complain and say someone should do something about that. Again, it all goes back to his motivation of love for God, Family, Community. That was how he became a Boy Scout leader. He had four sons who he wanted to prepare for life as Christian adults. He thought Boy Scouts was a great avenue to help do that. They needed a leader so he became one. I was in the Tell City Band and we needed to raise money. The Band Boosters needed a leader to help to do that so he became the president of the group. He saw that some kids couldn't afford to go to college so he worked with other Jaycees to start Dollars

for Scholars program. He saw that Perry County's tax basis was being reduced by the continued purchase of land by the federal government so he went to the State House to fight for limits of those purchases. He saw the county needed infrastructure to attract businesses so he got involved in county government and eventually served on the County Council for nearly 20 years and also as the president for several years. During his tenure he helped get the infrastructure of roads, a hospital, sewer lines and eventually even a railroad, in place to support industry and growth in the county. Again, I can go on and on.

How then, do we honor such a man? How do we carry on his legacy of giving? As his family, we decided to start The Gerald D. Thomas Fund for the Youth of Tell City to continue that legacy in some way. Dad's dedication to the youth, especially the Boy Scouts, Marching Marksmen, and Tell City School Athletics were well-known to all of us. More than anything, he wanted every child to have the opportunity to participate. With this fund, we hope to create funding to help children who otherwise would not be able to afford to participate in these activities have the means to do so. The fund will be used to pay for uniforms, camp fees, and athletic shoes for these children. We believe this is a cause that will help the community and families by helping develop strong children. We believe we can continue Dad's legacy of giving through this fund.

By Karen Thomas Lyons

Retiring Board Members

In June, Kaye Kleeman, Candy Boerste and Karen Werner-Bender retired from the Perry County Board of Trustees after 6 years of service. Michelle Lynch retired from the Board of Trustees after 3 years of service. We thank them for their support and dedication to the Foundation!



WHAT'S NEW

E-Newsletters

Want the latest news on what is happening with the Perry County Community Foundation? The Foundation will be making more information available electronically. Four e-Newsletters are available for donors and professional advisors.

COMMUNITY MATTERS features the latest news about the Perry County Community Foundation and issues relating to Perry County.

PERRY COUNTY WOMEN FOR WOMEN features the latest news about issues facing women and girls in our Community.

GIFT LEGACY features articles on Social Security, Healthcare, Washington events and other timely information of importance to donors.

GIFT LAW features the latest news from Washington, tax law updates, PLRs, Case Studies and timely articles of interest for planned giving professionals.

Please visit our website at www.perrycommunityfoundation.org to sign up.

Giving Made Easy!

The Perry County Community Foundation has made giving even easier! Donors can schedule their gifts from their checking or savings account to the Foundation through our Direct Debit Authorization Program. Donors can choose the amount, frequency, fund and purpose for their gifts with this program. To sign up for easy giving, please contact us at 547-3176 or e-mail: sallyh@perrycommunityfoundation.org.

New Funds!

John Williams
Memorial
Scholarship Fund

Gerald D. Thomas
Fund for the Youth
of Tell City

Grant Cycle!

Our grant cycle is now open. Please visit our website at www.perrycommunityfoundation.org for requirements and instructions or call us at (812) 547-3176. Grant proposals are due on September 23, 2009.

A Gift that Keeps Coming Back

Jennifer and Buck love cruising, but it has not always been that way. Jennifer took years to talk Buck into his first cruise. When friends asked Buck what he liked most about the cruise, he would say, "The ship brought us back." Today in retirement, Buck has come to like cruising, but no trip is complete until Buck chuckles to Jennifer, "At least the ship came back."



Cruising is not the only thing Buck likes for its reliability. A few years ago Buck and Jennifer funded a charitable gift annuity. The gift annuity gave them fixed payments for life at a payment rate that was full sail ahead. It included capital gains benefits since they funded it by transferring (not selling) stock to our cause. They were also buoyed by a good-sized income tax deduction. The best part of all, as Buck will tell you, is that the payments keep coming back.

Whether the seas are rough or calm, what are you counting on to keep coming back to you? Like Buck and Jennifer you can fund a charitable gift annuity with our organization. The payment rates are fixed and are higher than you might expect. The

income tax deduction is a friendly port in any storm, and the capital gains benefits are like a welcome breeze at your back. And just as Buck and Jennifer have discovered with cruising, you will never tire of the good feeling you have when the checks keep coming.

After a lifetime of payments to you, the gift annuity funds our important mission to make Perry County a better place to live. If you would like a no-obligation look at what a gift annuity can do for you or someone you love, check out the links on our website at www.perrycommunityfoundation.org, or call at 547-3176 or e-mail us at sallyh@perrycommunityfoundation.org for more information. We can help you test the waters.

For Good. For Ever. For Perry County.

Yes, I would like to help make Perry County a better place to live. A gift of \$_____ is enclosed.

I request that this gift remain anonymous.

Donor Information

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Please direct this gift to: Community's greatest needs Operating support for the Foundation

Other fund: _____ Please visit our website for our family of funds.

Complete and make checks payable to:

Perry County Community Foundation

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www.perrycommunityfoundation.org