The Fletchalls Were Quietly Generous to Education

Paul and Madeline Fletchall lived quietly in Paul’s native Posey County, Indiana, raising their children in church and youth activities, running the phone company, ensuring the quality of their schools, and assuring that friends and clients had sound financial advice and the resources to thrive.

The couple married in 1940 and during World War II, Paul was in the U.S. Navy, assigned to various stateside bases. They raised their two children, Tom and Janet, modestly in Poseyville. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin School of Banking, Paul rose to president of Farmers Bank and Trust in Posey County. The bank was acquired by Citizens Bank of Evansville, now Fifth Third Bank. He retired in 1985 after 45 years with the bank, and was a lifelong member of the Indiana Bankers Association, which he served as president.

The Fletchalls invested in the Poseyville telephone company, a stockholder-owned enterprise with Paul, as president, handling the business issues and Madeline, as treasurer, overseeing the customer payments. Active in the Indiana Independent Telephone Association, Madeline earned the 1987 “Pioneer of the Year” Award from the Indiana Telephone Association, and she became the first person in Indiana to win this national award for her care, cooperation and efforts to further the objectives of the association. As with her work for the telephone company, Madeline was fastidious about most things in her life—her home, her fashionable appearance, and her hobby of flawlessly painting ceramic figurines.

Both Paul, raised in Posey County, and Madeline, raised in southern Illinois, were from large families. Madeline had to forego her education after she lost both parents when she was a young teenager. As many Depression-era children, she stayed with relatives until she was able to support herself, moving to nearby Evansville, Indiana, to find work. Paul graduated from Robb Township schools in Posey County, and then entered banking after military service.

According to son Tom, his father enjoyed golf and would slip over to Evansville’s Helfrich Hills Golf Course for nine holes at daybreak, allowing him to be at the bank by opening hours. His son also remembers that he was a man of routine. He enjoyed coffee in Poseyville continued
with friends each morning before work, which kept him abreast of new ideas for community improvement and earned him a reputation as someone who encouraged and supported local residents in their businesses. For 14 years, Paul was a member of the Board of Education of the Metropolitan School District of North Posey County, and served as its president.

The Flecthalls were active in the American Legion, enjoyed dancing, and according to their son Tom, “traveled a fair amount for meetings related to their school board, banking and telephone company responsibilities.”

“The impact of their commitment is still felt today.”

The couple eventually moved to Solarbrorn Pointe Retirement Center adjacent to the University of Southern Indiana. They were close friends of Russ Neathery, a staunch supporter of USI. He knew the Flecthalls were generous people who cared about education, and encouraged them to join him in helping USI students achieve their academic goals. Because Paul and Madeline enjoyed active lifestyles and were young at heart, they knew there was a possibility of a long life and wanted to ensure they had sound income while fulfilling their philanthropic goals. In 2007, they created a charitable gift annuity through the USI Foundation, receiving income from their gift during their lifetime.

After their deaths—Madeline in 2010 and Paul in 2013—their annuity created the Paul C. and Madeline S. Flecthall Deans Scholarship, a full-tuition scholarship which brings talented high school graduates to the University of Southern Indiana. The impact of their commitment to their community is still felt today, and because of their far-sighted generosity, will be felt by USI students in perpetuity.

Wills and other estate plans
A gift in your will or other estate plan to the USI Foundation can result in significant tax savings to your estate and will benefit students pursuing higher education.

Your annual gifts can continue forever
USI depends on loyal friends and alumni who make annual gifts which help underwrite scholarships and enhance its educational programs. When a benefactor dies, then that support ends.

Continue your commitment to support higher education by including the USI Foundation in your will. You can create a permanent legacy. Here is how to accomplish that:

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<th>With a bequest of:</th>
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*Assumes an average annual rate of return of 4.5% on bequests received by the USI Foundation.

Concerned about the level of your Social Security income? Would you like to have more income and help USI at the same time? Call the USI Foundation and ask how you can do both with a charitable gift annuity.

For more information or other gift-planning ideas, contact the USI Foundation.

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Leave A Legacy® is a community-based effort that encourages people from all walks of life and all income levels to make gifts from their estates to the nonprofit organizations of their choice. This program is sponsored in Evansville by the Partnership for Philanthropic Planning through the Evansville Area Fundraising Council.