Each year the paperwork piled up and the time crunched for Lucy Breitung. The decisions had to be made, the checks written and sent, the paperwork filed. It was all for a good cause – area charities – but the process was time-consuming. Breitung wanted to find a better method and she found exactly that at the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln with the establishment of the Ed and Lucy Breitung Family Fund through the Community Foundation.

“I wanted to give to charity and being by myself I didn’t want to have to do it each year, send out all the checks, take care of the records,” Breitung said. “This fund sounded like a simple way to do it and save the time and the organization.”

Breitung has tagged five area charities, the Springfield YMCA, the local chapter of American Red Cross, M.E.R.C.Y. Communities, the local chapter of the Salvation Army and Abraham Lincoln Memorial Garden, to receive grants from the fund this year. The designation allows Breitung to make sure certain charities receive something each year and the amount will be pre-determined to help focus the giving.

“We’ve always given to charity but it’s always been a hit and miss thing,” Breitung said. “This now organizes it, but instead of $10 or $20, you give an award for a certain amount and make it more meaningful. It’s more manageable.”

The Springfield YMCA has long been a valued part of Breitung’s life. Her husband, Ed, refereed in the YMCA’s soccer program for more than 25 years and her three boys, Mark, Eric and Bryan, played in the soccer program. Ed passed away in 2006. Lucy Breitung first considered naming the Fund solely after him, but decided to widen its interest and include her name on the fund.

“It is a wonderful way to honor him,” Lucy Breitung said. “(My children) really liked the idea.”

Breitung can change the grant recipients each year, adding to her fondness for the fund. Her three children, Mark, Eric and Bryan, can also adjust the recipients in the future.

“I like that it’s versatile,” Breitung said. “It’s perpetual. When I’m gone, my kids can manage it and donate where they want.”

The versatility may travel cross country. Two of Breitung’s sons live out of town and Breitung may eventually move from Springfield, where she has lived the past 31 years.

“The other thing is there are funds like this around the country. If I relocate, I can use the same account to give to charities in that part of the country,” Breitung said. “I just think it’s a great idea.”