Walter Hanson has given a charge to his family: Keep giving.

His descendents will have the forum to accomplish that goal because of the recent formation of the **Hanson Family Fund** through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

The fund will be established through the estate of Hanson and his wife Sue. It is created as a donor advised fund, with the Hanson’s daughter, Karen Pletsch, and their grandchildren, David, Amy and Jonathan, serving as advisors to the fund. Hanson’s two great grandchildren may also play a role in future decision making.

“We can bring the whole family into the giving decision,” Walter Hanson said. “It’s very important to make it a family affair. It’s a good way to leave a legacy that involves children and grandchildren. I’m enthusiastic about the idea.”

The 89-year-old Hanson founded Hanson Engineering in Springfield more than 50 years ago. He retired in 1986, but still maintains an active calendar. Throughout the years Hanson has been involved with numerous charities and other organizations throughout the county. The fund is expected to continue that approach, working with numerous charities instead of focusing on a few.

“I suppose throughout the years we have given to 25-30 local organizations and many of the recipients of our giving will continue to benefit the same,” Hanson said. “I think it’s a very, very good idea, a very good way to give for the benefit of the community.”

It is the diversity of organizations benefiting from the Community Foundation’s work that helped affirm Hanson’s belief in the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

“What has impressed me so much is the fact that they print the name of the organizations they support and the list looked very good to me,” Hanson said.

He also is excited that the Springfield area has an organization capable of establishing and maintaining charitable funds for future giving.

“I think (Community Foundation Executive Director) John (Stremsterfer) and this organization is something Springfield really needed. I’m glad it was formed and is operated very well,” Hanson said.

Hanson, who moved to Springfield from Champaign in 1951, is uniquely aware of the Community Foundation’s work through his daughter, who serves on the Community Foundation’s board. Pletsch is also the founder of Hanson Information Systems.

“As soon as she got involved in this, she thought it was the best organization she had ever been involved with in as far as giving was concerned,” he said.