The stories pour out of Rob Kashmer. The memories. The good times. The love. The thoughts about his late wife Lori.

The stories often revolve around her charitable work and her thirst for knowledge. Stories of her helping put together local trivia nights or volunteering at schools in Pawnee. Stories of her fondness for Jeopardy or the file box full of letters from charities she donated to. Her legacy lives in these memories.

But her legacy won’t be limited to memories. It will now be part of a future generation of students thanks to the establishment of the **Lori L. Kashmer Scholarship Fund** through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

“She was just an amazing person,” Rob said. “I needed to find a way that she would be forever remembered.”

The fund will provide one substantial scholarship per year to an area student. The scholarship selection will be overseen by an advisory board. Kashmer and other family members hope to be part of the process and maintain a focus on need as well as grades.

“The focus is more on people in need,” Kashmer said.

Lori passed away at the age of 48 in 2005. The couple were high school sweethearts and had lived in Sangamon County for 11 years. There was little doubt that Rob would use charities and education as the cornerstone for creating a lasting tribute.

“This was important because they are the things she felt were important in life,” Kashmer said. “There are so many qualities, but two of the best were her appreciation for knowledge. She loved to learn things. The second thing was she liked to give to charities and help people.”

Lori did much of her charity work anonymously, but this time Rob wanted to honor her memory in public.

“There are times in life that I don’t want her to be anonymous,” Rob said. “I want people to know her. People need to know. It’s that simple.”

The fund will benefit from Rob’s employment at H.D. Smith, a national company based in Springfield. The Walnut Foundation, the charitable Foundation of H.D. Smith, matches charitable gifts by employees twice a year.

“That is their focus, that belief that they would like to help with the family interest, that we are one big family,” said Kashmer. “If it is important to me, it is important to them.”

Kashmer initially considered creating his own charitable organization to coordinate the fund, but after meeting with the Community Foundation, he entrusted the Foundation to administer the funds.

“When I had my first meeting, I felt this was the right place to be,” Kashmer said. “It is a very special organization.”