Saul Morse and Anne Morgan actively attempt to engage in a variety of philanthropic efforts. In order to improve that ability, the husband and wife have established the Morgan Morse Family Fund through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

“The Community foundation really becomes the place to go to see what the greatest needs are and then try to fill them,” Morse said. “It’s a way for me to hear from the people on the street level, those involved in the community agencies to know what they need. … The Community Foundation allows us to take a broader look at what is needed in the community.”

The family has a wide-range of charitable interests including working against domestic violence, Habitat for Humanity, people with disabilities issues and those surrounding the Jewish religion. The ability to continue supporting a wide-range of issues makes the donor-advised fund ideal.

“The breadth of topics that can be helped with (a donor-advised fund) is absolutely a plus,” Morgan said.

The clearinghouse grant aspect of the Community Foundation also could open up a new list of causes that family wasn’t aware of needing support.

“I really like the idea that we can help the community and meet desires of philanthropy through donor-advised funds,” said Morse, who is currently board chair of the CFLL. “It lets us see what community needs. … It’s a way for us as a fund to think about what we are giving too.”

The Foundation’s ability to serve as a clearinghouse is also important during difficult economic times. Its existence provides a one-stop shopping experience for those searching for ways to support the community and
those in need of support. The combination relieves the burden from all involved and the city and county public offices that might otherwise have to pick up the slack.

“There are many needs in a community that can’t be met or some of us might not want the government to meet them,” Morse said. “We would prefer community support itself. The Community Foundation because of its role tries to connect people to needs so that they can support those needs.”

The difficult economic times also emphasizes the importance of community involvement. As state or federally funded grants dry up, community members can fill the void.

“It is very important to me. I came from a family that didn’t have a lot of money,” Morgan said. “I have felt this is part of what you should do. If you are lucky enough to have discretionary income, you need to do something that is community building.”

Morse and Morgan along with their children John and Libby will decide what activities to fund. The options provided by a donor-advised fund is a draw for other family members involved in the project.

“We’re hopeful the fund will be something our children will handle in the future,” Morgan said. “Having it be open to what they want to do that is a real plus in being able to engage them in a way that is different than giving a grant for a scholarship.”

John is currently in law school and Libby is in undergraduate college. If they decide not to return to the local area, the fund’s existence will help them remember their roots.

“It’s a connection to the place where they grew up,” Morse said.

For more information on donor-advised funds or funds that have been created, please contact CFLL.