There are many reasons to develop a philanthropic fund. It’s a way to leave a legacy of a loved one, mentor future generations and give back to your community. For Erich Bloxdorf, all three of these reasons hold true in the establishment of the OWL 0737 Fund through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

The fund honors Bloxdorf’s mother, Judith Reimer Ross who passed away from cancer in September 2011.

“I think my mother would be very proud of the fund being started,” Bloxdorf said. “She would encourage everyone to get involved in the community. She would encourage people to use their time and talents to give back to the community and leave it a better place than it was.”

Bloxdorf will oversee the fund with his wife, Mary and daughters Corie and Allie. He has also invited his seven siblings from his blended family to join in the fund. The donor-advised fund will be able to help many of Ross’ interests, including her love of animals, especially dogs. Ross was particularly fond of Golden Retrievers.

“Her granddaughters, my wife and I were very close to her,” Bloxdorf said. “To be able to create a legacy in honor of my mother was very important to us. I think it would bring her great joy to have this giving back to the community.”

The fund’s unique name comes from a combination of the family’s nickname for Ross and her birthdate.
“We called her the ‘Owl’ because she was so wise,” Bloxdorf said.

Ross lived in the Springfield area since 1967. She was active in the community including serving on the Board of Directors of the Springfield Art Association and the Springfield Symphony Guild. A devout Catholic, she attended St. Agnes Parish.

“Springfield and this community have always been very good to me and my family,” Bloxdorf said. “All the things that people do and the community spirit is very important. If we can leave a legacy, and not always in money but with time and talent, that is important. That is part of being in a community.”

Along with his mother’s example, the philanthropic spirit was also established by mentoring Bloxdorf received soon after he began working in Springfield from Guerry Suggs. The two worked at the 1st National Bank of Springfield.

“He put a priority on helping the public and giving back. That was always instilled in me,” said Bloxdorf, who served on the CFLL Board from 2003-2011. “I think it’s very important.”

For more information on donor-advised funds contact the Community Foundation at www.CFLL.org.