It brings a smile to Susan Wilson’s face when she thinks of the sign her friend Garland Brown had hanging on his wall: “Dogs welcome, People tolerated.”

‘Gar,’ a longtime employee at the Illinois State Board of Education, was active in sports, including softball and golf. But it was his love for animals, and particularly his companion ‘Sugar Bear,’ a nine-year-old Shih Tzu-Poodle mix, that truly stood out.

To continue that love for animals and to share it with the rest of the community, Brown decided to establish an endowment fund at the Community Foundation, appropriately named the Garland Brown and Sugar Bear Brown Fund for Animals.
Brown passed away in August 2019 after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease.

“It was his ardent wish that Sugar Bear Brown be well taken care of after his lifetime, and be remembered,” Wilson said.

“He was able to accomplish this through the Community Foundation.”

Roger Rutherford, Brown’s attorney, saw Brown’s clear love for animals and his passion for creating meaningful change for the humane treatment of animals.

“It is rewarding to have a client articulate goals and to be able to see that vision evolve into a successful estate plan focused on potentially multi-generational giving implemented by the Community Foundation,” Rutherford said.

Brown’s fondness for dogs allowed him to closely follow the work of the Animal Protective League (APL) and to generously support its mission – an organization dedicated to caring for ill, injured and abused homeless animals and coordinating the adoption of those animals by responsible pet owners.

His generosity will allow APL to support its mission for decades to come.

“I am so looking forward to working with the foundation on Gar’s behalf,” Wilson said. “As his good friend, when I mentioned to him that the Community Foundation would be a great fit for his wishes, he immediately had me follow up on it. Thanks to the foundation, his wishes will be fulfilled, and as his trustee, that makes me very happy!”

For more information on making a bequest or how to donate to the Garland Brown and Sugar Bear Brown Fund for Animals, please contact the Community Foundation at 217.789.4431 or visit CFLL.org.