

The Home Town I've Never Lived In Inspires Stacie

LEGACY DONORS

Stacie Blake Collins has never lived in Tipp City but considers it her home.

Those ties are strong, she says, thanks to the relationship her mother, the late Ellen Cotterman, had with the Tipp City community. It's also reflected in the ongoing commitment of Stacie's brothers, Adam and Bryan Blake, in the community.

With those connections, it made sense to Stacie to become part of the Legacy Society of the Tipp City Foundation.

Her gift will be directed to the Tipp City Arts Fund in Memory of Ellen Cotterman. The fund was established following Ellen's death by Ellen's children and Stan Evans, Ellen Cotterman's long-time companion, and his children.

"She loved the city and loved art. Being able to maintain that legacy in her name is very important to us. Mom had setbacks but she never stopped doing for others, and her ideals of community service and engagement have been instilled in us from the beginning," Stacie said.

She credited both of her parents with teaching her the importance of community service through their acts and not just their words. "I'm very proud of that legacy and now I see my sons Taylor, Maxwell and Parker are active in their communities, serving as volunteers and helping others," she said.

She also said the fund is relevant because it supports the arts, a part of Ellen Cotterman's being.

Stacie shared how her mother traveled to her home in Florida and held an art class for youth in a refugee program Stacie was leading. "She gathered supplies and on the appointed day, she led them all through an art class to create a painted piece. She even brought frames so everyone could leave with a finished piece to hang in their apartments," Stacie recalled. "The children were thrilled! It was a special opportunity they would not have had otherwise."

Stacie said the Tipp Foundation was a natural organization to serve as home for the Arts Fund in memory of her mother.

"I have watched Tipp City grow and change for nearly 35 years and have many fond memories of family events,

Mum Festivals, walks downtown and school and sports events of my brothers and nephews," she said. "I think it's a wonderful town and I trust the Foundation to make wise investments to further strengthen the fabric of the community. While I've never lived in Tipp, even my adult children see this as our home base and we all visit frequently."

Stacie is married to Tony Collins. They reside in Washington D.C. and St. Petersburg, Florida. She is employed by the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

Tipp City Foundation

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