



Tipp City... "It's Personal"

Trailblazer

LEGACY DONORS

Roger Presley didn't arrive in Tipp City until later in life, but through hard work and a love of the outdoors, he's leaving a mark on the community with a nature trail and a legacy gift for its long-term care.

Presley, who lived in several states before moving to Tipp City in 2005, has used his time wisely.

His will directs his estate to the Tipp City Foundation's Warren E. Miltenberger Parkland Fund. This fund, founded in 2008, supports the upkeep of the outdoors by partnering with the City of Tipp City for upkeep, maintenance, and preservation of public parkland and natural areas.

He spent countless hours over more than three years working to clear the trail along Freeman Prairie and the Great Miami River. The effort was initiated to help him deal with the loss of his mother some two years ago. Presley said he spent a year cutting honeysuckle and cleared many areas of brush, roots and trees by hand.

The project was done "out of the kindness of my heart so people have a place to go. It is just being there with nature and watching 25 animals running down the trail," he said.

Presley's efforts were recognized in early 2019 when the Tipp City Council, on the recommendation of the Parks Advisory Board, named the path the Roger Presley Trail.

Tipp City Manager Tim Eggleston said Presley "has done one heck of a job."

Presley's legacy gift's goals include providing funds to replant trees along the trail, upgrade the trail rail, and provide any needed benches and mile markers.

"I want to make sure the trail is properly maintained forever. I never knew it was going to be what it is. I just needed to keep myself busy," Presley said.

"My goal is to make it better and better. I want to help kids plant trees so their grandchildren will have a place to come back and see the trees. The mulching, the signs, that all can be done. It can't be done if there isn't money," he said.

Heather Bailey of the Tipp City Foundation said Presley's legacy is unique. "After a lifetime of living in many states, it is our area's natural recreation spaces that he has chosen to reward with his final years' energy and life savings. What greater gift can a person give to a community?" she said.

Presley said he chose the foundation as the home for his legacy after picking up a copy of the foundation annual report and talking with a person familiar with the foundation and how it works.

"I asked how I could will my stuff to the foundation and keep the legacy going. I am looking at all of this hard work and asked, 'Why throw it away, walk away and do nothing?'" Presley said. "The legacy is to keep the trail for people who need it to know who they are, keep them down to Earth, to help balance their minds."



Tipp City Foundation

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