

DONOR PROFILE:

# HONORING A MOTHER'S LASTING MEMORY



Rosalie Bell



AS A YOUNG BOY, Brian Bell experienced the generous outreach of his mom, Rosalie and his fire chief dad, Arthur, as they opened their modest Crabtree home to people who had nowhere else to go, or had fallen on hard times.

It was commonplace for a new face to appear at the family's dining table, including celebration occasions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, and Rosalie was never slow to extend the hand of help and support to friends and neighbors.

His parents' acts of kindness, especially those of his mother, were etched vividly on young Brian's memory. "We didn't have a great deal as a family, but mom was always giving to others," he recalls. "She would always share what we had; people would show up and she would always look after them."

As he grew older, Brian also became very aware of the sacrifices his parents had made for him and his sister, Terry and three brothers, Arthur, Michael and Dennis. "Mom's focus was her family and raising five children," he said. "She stayed home to make sure that she was there for us and that we had everything we needed. Both of my parents were high school graduates, and they were very proud to have put each of us through college."

When Rosalie passed away in 1999, aged 61, following a long illness, her children considered ways that they could honor her lasting memory. Then Brian, the youngest, heard a donor with The Pittsburgh Foundation talk about his fund during a presentation hosted as part of the Leadership Pittsburgh program.

"It seemed such an appropriate way to keep my mother's memory alive," he said. "The presentation was revealing to me because I'd always thought that only the wealthy could start funds at the Foundation, but I learned that we could start small and build the fund over time."

Brian, supported by his siblings, created the Rosalie Fund in 2006 as part of the Foundation's fund for public giving, and following steady contributions over almost four years, the family reached the \$10,000 minimum for the fund to become fully established in January this year.

The Rosalie Fund is now qualified to award grants, under the guidance of its advisors, Brian and his sister and brothers. "I think we will want to focus our grantmaking largely on children's causes, because this is something about which our mother cared so deeply," said Brian, who works as an

Analyst for the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. "But we will continue to contribute and add to the Fund as and when we are able to in order to maximize our grantmaking capabilities."

Brian now has a family of his own and lives with his wife, Sheila and their two children Parker, 6, and Selina, 2, in Churchill. "I'm at the stage of my life of having children of my own and I appreciate all the more how difficult it is to keep doing the right thing for my family," he said.

"My mom taught her children well and I still want to please her and make her proud. I know that the Rosalie Fund will continue to do that for many, many years to come."



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