A Couple’s Legacy of Natural History

Joel Rynning, a retired Coca-Cola executive in Atlanta, and his wife Ardath, known as Ardie, were passionate collectors of ornithological prints. They were especially interested in the way the art form of bird lithograph evolved from the mid-1700s through the era of James John Audubon and into the 20th century.

In the mid 1990s, the Rynnings heard about the extensive collection of natural history prints at the Frank H. McClung Museum of Natural History and Culture.

“They contacted us,” says McClung Museum Director Jeff Chapman. “They saw that we had a good program here, and they liked what we were doing.”

The Rynnings became McClung Museum members and, in 1996, they donated 292 hand-colored lithographs and engravings. In 1997, McClung installed Birds of the World: 250 Years of Color Plate Folios, the first of many exhibits mounted over the years featuring the Rynnings’ prints.

“We developed a meaningful relationship,” says Jeff.

In the early 2000s, the Rynnings gave another 75 prints. After Ardie’s death in 2005, Joel married Patti Larson. In 2008, the couple gave another 40 prints and set up a planned gift to ensure that future generations could enjoy the colorful plumage so well depicted by

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DID YOU KNOW?

UT adopted Smokey, a bluetick coonhound, as our official mascot in 1953, six decades ahead of the breed’s recognition by the American Kennel Club.

A COUPLE’S LEGACY OF Natural History

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Audubon, John Gould, Rex Brasher, and many others.

When Joel died in 2010, the Rynnings left McClung Museum another 114 prints and $250,000 to create two Ardath and Joel E. Rynning quasi-endowments—one for acquisitions and one to provide general operating funds. Since the endowments were created, they have helped McClung grow its collection of natural history prints and support many temporary exhibitions.

“The Rynnings loved what everyone loves about these works,” says Jeff. “They loved the sheer beauty and the artistic craftsmanship and technique that made it all possible. That’s what we continue to make available to our visitors, and they are never disappointed.”

Attention, Collectors!
How a Donation of Stamps, Art, and More Can Help Others

Like the Rynnings, you, too, can donate collectibles and other tangible personal property to UT if you have owned them for more than one year and they have appreciated in value. In return, you receive a charitable income tax deduction and avoid paying capital gains tax.

Example: Because Donna wanted to support UT’s students and programs, she decided to donate a beautiful painting purchased more than 30 years ago. Originally valued at $50,000, the painting is now worth $100,000. By donating it to UT, Donna avoided paying $7,500 in capital gains tax ($50,000 x 15 percent) and received a $100,000 charitable deduction.

TAX SPECIFICS
To claim a deduction, you must complete IRS form 8283 for gifts worth more than $500. If you wish to give a large gift and deduct more than $5,000, you must obtain a qualified appraisal first.

When donating tangible personal property—except in the case of a gift in your will—your gift must be used by UT in a way related to our tax-exempt purpose in order to claim a deduction based on the appreciated value of the gift. If we are unable to use the gift for a purpose related to our mission and choose to sell the asset, your deduction is based on the lower of your cost basis or the fair market value.

Support for UT can come in many forms. If you would like to learn more about how you can impact the future of UT with a planned gift, please contact the Office of Gift Planning at giftplanning@utk.edu or 865-974-2370.

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Would you like to extend your values by making a gift to UT that will last indefinitely? Consider establishing an endowment. It’s a powerful way to show your support, while also realizing tax benefits for your kindness.

To create an endowment, you make a gift that we carefully invest. Then, each year a small portion of the endowment is used to meet your charitable goals. The rest of the fund remains invested to keep it healthy and growing far into the future. Here are some typical questions and answers about this type of gift.

■ **What’s the best way to fund an endowment?**
  You can fund it today with gifts of cash or appreciated securities, or establish the endowment after your lifetime with gifts of retirement plan assets or life insurance benefits.

■ **Who decides how my endowment will be used?**
  You do. You may restrict your endowment to a particular cause or purpose, or you could provide unrestricted funds, which means our board can direct the annual funds to meet our most pressing needs.

■ **How can I be certain my wishes will be honored?**
  To ensure that your gift is always used according to your wishes, your charitable intentions are put in writing so there will never be confusion.

Visit our website, giftplanning.utk.edu, to learn more about how you can invest in UT’s future and leave a legacy for our students. When you’re ready, contact the Office of Gift Planning to get a jump-start on making your gift to UT.
How to Make Generosity Affordable

Protect Your Financial Security Today by Giving a Gift Tomorrow

Supporting UT should never come at the expense of your family’s financial security. As health care advances extend our lifetimes, you may worry about outliving your retirement savings.

Perhaps that concern has kept you from being as charitable as you want to be. Yet there’s a way you can touch the lives of our students without making major financial sacrifices.

**THE BENEFITS OF GIVING AFTER YOUR LIFETIME**

Planning an estate gift to UT is a meaningful way to fulfill your Volunteer legacy. Because most planned gifts are given after your lifetime, your current lifestyle isn’t affected. Plus, many are easy to make. The most popular gifts—beneficiary designations or including us in your will—can be made by signing a form or adding a sentence to your will.

No matter the size, your gift makes a difference. Your generosity supports UT while giving you the joy of making a powerful impact on future Vols.

**Select the Gift That’s Right for You**

Making a gift to UT is more affordable than you may think. Contact the Office of Gift Planning at 865-974-2370 to learn about beneficiary designations and other gifts that preserve your financial security and benefit UT students.

GIVE MEANINGFULLY TO UT

There are many ways for you to create a meaningful future impact at UT. Learn how to customize a gift to us today in our new guide *Mix It Up: Combine Your Giving*. You can create a lasting tribute to someone special by making the gift in his or her name. Learn the details in our guide *Give from the Heart with a Tribute Gift*. Simply return the enclosed reply card for your free copies.