

BOLHOUSE, BAAR & HOFSTEE, P.C.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Choose Your Legacy

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Throughout our firm's history of writing newsletters, we've addressed many estate planning issues and how to leave a legacy through your estate plan. We've also addressed giving back to the community, and leaving a legacy in that regard. Over the last several years, we've been touched by many tragic stories and worked with many people sorting through their grief and wanting to leave a legacy of a loved one who passed on all too soon.

My wife and I were at the airport getting ready to fly to Sarasota for the Game Day USA All American baseball games that our son, Bryce, was playing in, when we received a note that our friend Matt Chatfield, an Ottawa County Sheriff Deputy, had passed away from cancer that morning – Thanksgiving Day. Bryce and Matt's son have played baseball together and against each other at Georgetown Little League and our family grew to love the Chatfield family over the years, as have many others in our community.

To honor Matt during the Christmas season our firm proudly displayed blue lights along Wilson Avenue. Many others shone their blue lights, wore their blue ribbons, and wore their "Chatty Strong" T-shirts and bracelets. Our community loved Matt – because Matt first loved our community. While Matt never coached Bryce, he watched many of his games, and always had a positive word of encouragement for him.

So as we waited in the airport, we turned to Bryce and told him he needed to be "Chatty Strong" for the All-American tournament. And he was – even hitting a home run. When the tournament was over, Game Day USA gave all the kids a black marker so they could sign the helmets of each of their teammates. When Bryce got off the field and gave us his helmet, he had written "Chatty Strong" on it – in blue. How he found a blue marker is beyond us, but it was so fitting. You see, Matt left an impression on a 10-year old boy, one that won't be forgotten by a Mom and a Dad. He left a legacy through his actions and through his words. So while it is important to leave a legacy through your estate plan, think about other ways you can leave a legacy for your family, friends and community.

Remember, you can give more than money. You can give time and talent, and sometimes that is the best legacy of all.