

J.W. & Hazel Ruby

Leaving a legacy means more than just a name



Throughout their lives, J.W. and Hazel Ruby weren't concerned with making a name for themselves. Fame and recognition simply weren't appealing. They were more interested in the pleasant satisfaction that comes with providing help where it is most needed.

Hazel established a trust so her estate could continue those good works even after her death. J.W. and Hazel Ruby, who are both deceased, will never visit the Summit Bechtel Family National Scout Reserve to see the stunning J.W. and Hazel Ruby West Virginia Welcome Center, but their enduring legacy to the Boy Scouts of America and the people of West Virginia will live on for generations.

J.W. "Wes" Ruby was a common-sense businessman with an eye for opportunity and a legendary work ethic. In the 1940s, he bought Sterling Specialty Company, a brass plumbing fixture manufacturer, and relocated it to Morgantown, W.Va. By the time he sold the business in 1968, Wes was involved in ventures throughout the region, including agriculture, mining, road paving, poultry processing, feed mills and racehorses. Wes loved creating jobs and

helping people.

"Look at those kids," he would say. "They're having a chance."

When Wes died in 1972, Hazel succeeded him as president of their business holdings and dedicated herself to helping the community. She was always accessible; her door was always open. Friends and neighbors frequently dropped in to visit, and she always had something to share with them, such as fresh cookies or cut flowers from her garden. She was like a mother to the whole community.

Hazel cemented her legacy as a prominent community leader and caring philanthropist when, in the mid-1980s, the city of Morgantown found itself at a critical juncture. The city hospital, built in the late 1950s to serve the medical school at West Virginia University, was in severe disrepair and without any provisions for maintenance and upkeep. State support for the facility was nonexistent, because plans were in the works to build a new teaching hospital in Charleston, W.Va. The community was at risk of losing almost 400 doctors — most of the town's high earners — and was facing devastating, lasting economic consequences.



Donors, BSA leaders and local officials attend a ribbon-cutting at the dedication of the J.W. and Hazel Ruby West Virginia Welcome Center in 2017.

Inside the J.W. and Hazel Ruby West Virginia Welcome Center

Located along the southbound side of U.S. Highway 19, J.W. and Hazel Ruby West Virginia Welcome Center is every visitor's first taste of the Summit Bechtel Reserve. After parking their vehicles and registering, visitors are treated to exhibits that showcase the Rubys' story, including the couple's love for the great state of West Virginia and the heritage of Scouting. This public-facing facility also features a preview of the adventure activities found at the Summit Bechtel Reserve.



The welcome center features kiosks, video monitors, an interactive digital map of the Summit Bechtel Reserve and an augmented reality sandbox that can teach visitors about topography.

When Hazel heard of the potential community-crippling lack of funding for the local facility, she committed \$8 million — at the time the largest gift in state history. As a result, the city secured a bond to build a \$190 million state-of-the-art hospital. The pieces easily fell into place after that: The medical school stayed, the university blossomed, and the top earners and the intelligentsia remained in the community.

Today, the medical school at J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital brings in about \$2 billion every year in research grants and programming — a remarkable return on Hazel's initial investment.

Saving the hospital proved to be just the first of many large investments Hazel made in the community. While many of her gifts became public knowledge, much of her philanthropic work happened behind

the scenes and was never publicized. She seemed to get the most joy out of helping folks continue doing the good work they were doing and launching projects that would benefit the community.

Hazel was careful to ensure the trust she set up would continue to benefit the community in perpetuity. In the years since her June 15, 2002, death, the Hazel Ruby McQuain

Charitable Trust has contributed tens of millions of dollars to supporting community programs, including West Virginia University and the Summit Bechtel Reserve. Though Hazel was a humble and sometimes anonymous donor, the trust has made numerous gifts to honor her memory, including funding the Ruby Distinguished Doctoral Fellows Program for students in STEM fields at West Virginia University.

WHY WE GIVE

Because they cared about people from all walks of life.

WES AND HAZEL SUPPORTED organizations that could reach the largest numbers of people and help promote the same down-to-earth community-minded values that guided their own lives. Though they had no children of their own, the Rubys cared deeply about organizations that helped children grow up to be strong members of their communities. Every year, the trust would ask what help was needed at the local BSA council and then contribute to meet the need. Wes cared deeply about Scouting and thought the

Boy Scouts of America was a critical part of building the community.

Today, projects across the state continue to come to fruition because of the funds provided by the trust, and those projects — including the J.W. and Hazel Ruby West Virginia Welcome Center at the Summit Bechtel Reserve — have the potential to impact hundreds of thousands of young people in the coming decades. From J.W. Ruby Memorial Hospital to West Virginia University to the Summit Bechtel Reserve, countless

people are benefiting as a result of the Rubys' philanthropic legacy.

Wes and Hazel placed a premium on the importance of ensuring young people get the resources and opportunities they need to grow to be the best possible people they can be — for themselves, for their families and for the good of the communities around them.



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