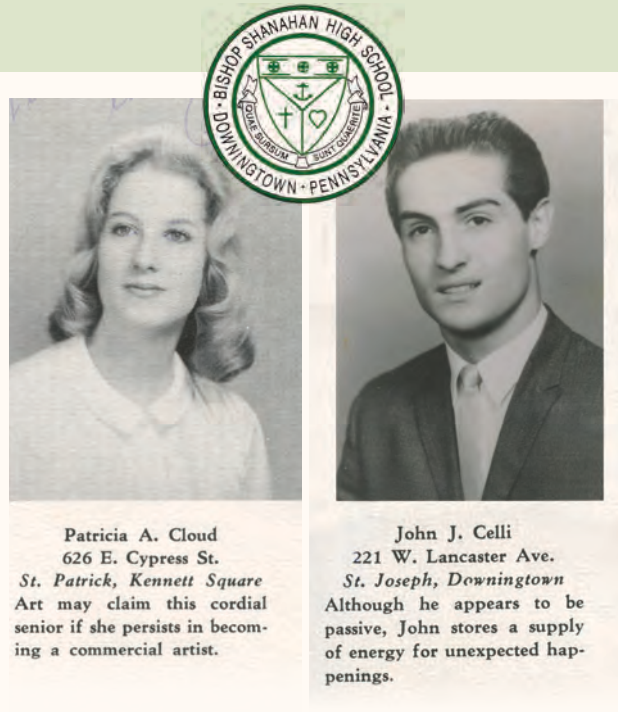


PATRICIA C. & JOHN CELII, JR. FOUNDATION
established 1999



Much has happened to John and Pat Celii in the five decades since their 1961 graduation. True to Bishop Shanahan's school motto, together they **"seek the things that are found above"** in a variety of facets. "Life is about risk—strategic, calculated risk," intones John Celii. Adds Pat, "It's also about family...having an incredibly strong support system so that you can take chances, and share the rewards if they come your way." Fortunately, the rewards came our way," explains John, "because we're lucky. Damn lucky. However, we made many sacrifices and worked hard to make that luck happen."

John and Pat finish each other's sentences. They seem to read each other's mind. It is clear that these high school sweethearts are still very much in love after five decades. They live in a gorgeous 19th century gentleman's farmhouse restored by the best architects and builders around. Lovingly decorated by Pat, her flair for artistic design shows in every nook. And their philanthropy is inspiring. "Philanthropy began with restoring our home," jokes John. "And it readily extended to the community around us," explains Pat.

- He was on the baseball team...She was his cheerleader.
- He was from Downingtown...She was from Kennett.
- He was from a small family...She had relatives too numerous to count.
- He was a "class clown" whose mother begged Reverend Kehoe to accept him at Bishop Shanahan High School and to "straighten him out"...She was a diligent student and volunteer church organist, who later discovered that the Shanahan nuns yearned to recruit her to the Sisterhood.
- In his senior year book, his friend Buddy noted, "If you ever succeed in life it will be a surprise to me..." In hers, it said, "Art may claim this cordial senior."
- Opposites attract...It has been an incredible journey.

Of course it wasn't always easy. After the high school sweethearts married in 1962, they lived in the tiniest apartment in Downingtown. John toiled at night school earning his BS in Accounting and Finance at St. Joseph's University while working full time. John left home by 7 a.m. and returned after 11:30 p.m., while Pat raised their two beautiful daughters, Jacqui and Stephanie. "I often wonder how we made it work," remarks John. "Family," answers Pat knowingly, "The kindness of grandmom and our parents. And lots of patience...a strong sense of deep commitment...and dreams...and taking chances...and hard work."

"Yes...family...Thank God for my mother in-law," laughs John. "She paved the way to get me a first interview which turned into an extremely successful 20 year career." John first worked in Avondale at F&M Scientific, just as Hewlett-Packard Co. acquired it from Frank Martinez, Aaron Martin and Gene Bennett. "It was a terrific experience...being on the ground floor of a strategic move like that." Soon after, Hewlett-Packard recognized John's natural-born talent, work ethic, and hands on experience. "Moving to HP's corporate headquarters in Palo Alto, California at the dawn of the computer industry was huge!" exclaims John.

John traveled extensively for business, coast to coast many times over, delving into both Finance and Marketing with Hewlett-Packard. John went on to become VP of Finance and CFO at 3Com Corporation, then headed up Mergers & Acquisitions at Convergent Technologies, and served as President of Convergent Dealership Systems. "I rarely saw the family. I was on the road so much. I knew that Pat was raising our daughters almost single-handedly. But I loved the thrill and the pace and being in on the ground floor while the computer industry was developing in Silicon Valley in the 1980s, and Pat knew that."

"I could see how much he thrived..."there was no stopping him. We missed him terribly, but he was so, so good at what he was doing. We had to help him live his career dreams," Pat adds wistfully. Sometimes the family lived on the East Coast. Sometimes on the West Coast. Sometimes on both coasts, simultaneously. "We did what was right for the family, for each of us, and the kids. They were great years; and at the same time, they were very trying years."

Finally they had enough. John retired in 1990 at age 48 and "relaxed a spell." "If you can call it 'relaxing,'" jokes Pat. John spent the next three years in Chester County with his family. His days were filled with fishing, collecting cars, and playing high stakes poker. John created his Standardbred Racing enterprise—the one that fostered their pride and joy, Badlands Hanover. "Badlands was a world champion Standardbred racehorse, and is now a very successful sire. It's a thrill to own such a gorgeous, strong, powerful animal."

Out of the blue in 1993, the corporate world came calling. "It was a startling offer, and we said 'no' right away. But the recruiter circled back a few more times and wouldn't quit. So we set forth a ridiculously steep set of conditions to chase them away ... and to our surprise, they were met." After much heart-felt conversation, John re-entered corporate life as CFO of a start-up company, Grand Junction Networks. The high-stakes, calculated gamble paid off. Grandly. Grand Junction was eventually acquired by Cisco Systems, and John headed up Cisco's East Coast merger and acquisition team.

In 1998, John retired for the second and final time. He and Pat settled back in Chester County, at long last, together full-time.

In 1999, Pat began a massive restoration of their newly purchased 1839 historic Chadds Ford home, "Keepsake." She strove to protect the home's historic and architectural qualities, yet fill it with modern amenities. The project involved restoration of the original 1836 house, reconstruction of the 1850s smokehouse, construction of a major addition, a linking building and two new outbuildings, and extensive site landscaping.



No detail, inside nor out, escaped Pat's loving attention. Architect John Milner explains, "Pat was instrumental in the interior design, including salvaging and acquiring antique architectural materials, furnishings, fabrics, and decorative arts. A true labor of love, Pat's fine interior decoration complements the period architecture and stays true to its Brandywine roots."

Knowing that a project is only as good as its general contractor, the Celii's give exceptionally high marks to Spencer Abbott Builders. John notes proudly, **"They did a superb job,** exercising great skill in managing the construction process and all aspects of the execution." Collaboration out-of-doors was also critical to the home's picture-perfect presentation. Jonathan Alderson Landscape Architects reconfigured and redesigned the entire site to make the three separate parcels of house work together, with terraces off all the main rooms, new gardens, screening from the road, and a realigned driveway. Every tree, every shrub, every flower, every pathway, every statue was lovingly and carefully selected by Pat.

As their home was being restored, **John shared his extensive knowledge** and expertise by serving on several high-tech companies' Boards. And John remembered where he came from, first serving on Bishop Shanahan High School's Advisory Board, and later joining the Chester County Community Foundation Board of Directors.

While serving on Bishop Shanahan's Advisory Board, John and Pat began to realize that **the Celii family could use their hard-earned wealth to strategically help others.** The Celii family created a scholarship fund to benefit Shanahan students. Also, they became leadership donors to Bishop Shanahan's capital campaign, with a special gift to build and decorate the Celii Chapel. "We needed to honor my mother and Reverend Kehoe," explains John, "because our lives would have taken far worse turns if they hadn't pushed me."

Given some time to ponder what to accomplish next, John and Pat once again realized the import of Shanahan's motto to **"seek the things that are found above."** For years, those near and dear to them had fought battles to cure chronic illnesses. While some won, others lost. The Celii family decided to focus their abundant talents, energy and resources to help others who face health issues.

They thought about starting their own family foundation. However after discussing ideas with their CPA and trust attorney, they found an easier method to achieve their philanthropic goals. John explains, "We decided to join an existing organization that was already up and running, and that had expertise in grant making activities. We reviewed what the Community Foundation was trying to accomplish, and we readily concluded that it could facilitate our philanthropic objectives."



"Seek the things that are found above."

—Colossians



"We have maintained a very good relationship with the Community Foundation since we created our donor advised fund in 1999," John says. "They have made many good suggestions relative to where we could make a difference in the community. They have allowed us truly to be 'donor advisors' and make our own decisions regarding grant making. Once we make a decision, we inform the Foundation staff, and they make it happen! Pat and I are very happy that we decided to join forces with the Community Foundation to achieve our gifting strategies."

The Celii family makes grant decisions based on logical analysis combined with heartfelt passion. One of their first major health grants focused on **thyroid cancer research.** All too familiar with thyroid issues, the Celii family knew that 12 million Americans have thyroid nodules that require medical evaluation; that 33,000 Americans are annually diagnosed with thyroid cancer, which afflicts women three times more than men; and that SE PA and New Jersey have among the highest rates for thyroid cancer in the U.S. The CCCF Celii Medical Research Fund provided critical funding for the Penn Thyroid Center, which in conjunction with Abramson Cancer Center of the University of Pennsylvania provides a full range of diagnostic and treatment options for thyroid cancer, including surgery and external beam radiation, and long-term follow-up. Integrated with Penn's world-class Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes, and Metabolism, and the Abramson Cancer Center, the Penn Thyroid Center coordinates translational and patient-oriented research, providing innovative partnership with basic science discovery.

The Women's Specialty Care Center at Chester County Hospital is another shining example of the type of philanthropic projects that the Celii family finds rewarding. After touring and learning about the hospital's many worthy projects, the family realized how much women's health resonated with each of them, in a big way. They decided to make a six-figure challenge gift to incentivize other leadership donors.

In 2009, the Specialty Care Center opened its doors to women. Pat quietly explains, "The Center is especially designed to create a calm, coordinated, patient-centered environment. **In too many places, women are left in the dark about the details of their health care,** and the system is fractured and communicates poorly. So much needless running around and worry, at a time when a woman needs to focus her energies." The innovative, state-of-the-art Center expertly addresses women's needs related to breast care, gynecologic/oncology, urogynecology and genetics counseling.



Additionally, The Celii family has funded Chester County Hospital's **DaVinci Robotic Surgery technology,** and the hospital's **Emergency Room** renovations. We've been in E.R.s far too often," Pat explains.

As John and Pat look to the future, they are clear that **family philanthropy is a cornerstone.** "We remember when we didn't have two nickels to rub together," says John ruefully, "and we know what it's like to feel helpless even when you have love and resources around you."

"Our daughters and our granddaughter have started to pave their own way in the charitable world, and we are proud of them." Pat explains, "They care about different things than we do, and that's O.K. Actually, it's great. They are their own women, and they are generous, caring, daring and strong. We look forward to the journey as they become even more involved with the needs and aspirations of the world."

John and Pat Celii's life journey is something of a **"rags to riches story."** The Celii family has many options regarding what to achieve with their wealth, and how to execute their objectives. As they continue to **"seek the things that are found above,"** the Celii family continues to make a positive impact in their community, generously giving their hard earned wealth through strategic, empassioned grantmaking; and volunteering their time to make the world better.



"We want to give to those who are medically and economically challenged. We each can make a positive community impact by giving and volunteering. Do both!"

