

## Ula Weller Leedy Scholarship, Class of 1935



The FHS Alumni Association is pleased to announce that a fully endowed scholarship has been established to honor the life of 1935 Fredericktown High School graduate, Ula Weller Leedy.

As the first born of John and Mae (Burkholder) Weller, Ula's bright eyes were an early indicator of her intelligence. She could read by the time that she was 3 years old and, when she went to school, she was immediately placed in second grade. With her kind nature, Ula helped teach other students in the one room schoolhouse to read. Completing 12 years of school in 11 years, she graduated at age 16 and hoped to become a nurse, only to find out that the nursing school required matriculating students to be 18 years old. Since education was important to her, Ula enrolled in The Mount Vernon School of Business. Following graduation, she worked in the offices of Gregg Manufacturing in Fredericktown, a company making lamps and furnishings. She handled accounting functions. Her employment continued after her marriage to a neighboring farm boy, Chester Leedy, until they started their family of three daughters: Bonita, Barbara, and Barrie.

She worked with her husband on the farm and, occasionally, part time in the community in various capacities. When her husband experienced ill health as a farmer, they mortgaged the farm and purchased *The Rose Garden Nursing Home* in Mount Vernon. Together they combined their skills to operate this business for many years. She was the administrator, managing the daily operations of hiring, scheduling, supervising, purchasing, accounting, and regulations. While she was not the nurse that she dreamed of being, she worked with nurses to provide care for the residents. Ula showed her compassion when she often stayed late holding someone's hand who was ill and had no family or who was transitioning from this life into the next. This caregiving business was a combination of her one-time desire to be a nurse, as well as using her education and experience in business and management.

Ula Weller Leedy was an active church member, who lived her faith. As a capable, kind, loving, nurturing mother, family was very important. As the oldest in her family of origin, she looked after her 4 siblings. Family visits were frequent and fun and laughter were the order of the day. A caring, generous person, she daily sent extra money to school with two of her daughters to pay for milk for children of one of her classmates who lived in less fortunate circumstances.

Ula Weller Leedy (5/16/19 - 11/16/88) was an educated woman for her time and she used her education for herself, her family, and her community. Mrs. Leedy's education provided a career for her and enabled their three daughters to graduate from college and have careers (two in education) that helped support their families. To honor her memory and her recognition of the importance of an education, the Ula Weller Leedy Scholarship was established by her daughter, Bonita Leedy Birkel, and is part of the FHS Alumni Association Scholarship Endowment and awarded every year.