

DONOR STORIES

MARVIN AND HELEN SCHUMACHER “Marvin and Helen Schumacher Family Fund”

Marvin Schumacher, son of Elmer and Ida (Schneider) Schumacher, was born March 10, 1936 and grew up in Denver, Iowa. Marvin’s parents are of German ancestry. He has two younger brothers, Leon and Norman and two younger sisters, Diane and Sharon.

Marvin attended Denver school, and immediately after graduation in 1953, enrolled at DeVry Technical Institute in Chicago, where he studied basic electronics for radio and television for two years. He then joined the Army for two years and served in Korea. The last six months of this was field experience in repairing microwave radio equipment. After his discharge from the Army, Marvin attended Wartburg College, then the University of Iowa, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering.

“We want our community to grow, prosper and be a great place to live now and long into the future!”

Helen Schumacher, daughter of Earl and Effie (O’Rourke) O’Connell was born November 12, 1938, and grew up on a farm northeast of Frederika, Iowa. Her ancestors emigrated here from Limerick and Wicklow, Ireland. Helen is the middle child of three sisters, Wilma, Catherine and Sharon, and one brother, Earl Dean. Helen graduated from Frederika High School and the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. In 1966, she earned her M.A. from State College of Iowa (now UNI).

Marvin and Helen married in 1959, and while he finished college, Helen taught business education courses in Tipton, Iowa. During the summers, Marvin worked at Iowa Public Service, John Deere and also at Schumacher Elevator Company.

They returned to Denver in 1962. Helen taught high school business and English in Bremer County high schools, and Marvin worked in the elevator business with his father and his Uncle Earl. In 1966, Marvin purchased the business from his father and uncle and has been President of Schumacher Elevator Company since that time. Helen started working in the business in 1978. Marvin is currently President and Helen is Vice President of the company. Their son, Jeffrey, is Vice President of Finance.

There were four employees in 1966; 66 employees in 1985; and today the company employs 165. Schumacher Elevator manufactures, installs, modernizes and maintains freight and passenger elevators. Over time, the business has grown, added new products, and expanded into other states and countries. Service branches are located in Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri and South Dakota. In 2000, the company consolidated its operations from six buildings in Denver to a new manufacturing and office facility located on the north edge of town. This move increased visibility for Schumacher Elevator and decreased considerably the number of calls and comments from those assuming the company was a grain elevator.

Marvin and Helen have three children – Jeffrey, Ann and John. Jeffrey and Karen and their children, Sam, Mitchell and Riley live in Denver. Jeff graduated from Wartburg College with a B.A. and later earned an M.A. in industrial engineering management and an Executive M.B.A. from the University of Iowa. He is a C.P.A. and Vice President of Finance of Schumacher Elevator Company. Ann and her husband, Michael (Adams) and their children, Ava and Evan, live in Tempe, AZ. Ann graduated from the University of Iowa with a B.A. and earned an M.B.A. at the University of Phoenix. She now sells real estate in the Phoenix area. John and Theresa live in Chicago with their son, Andrew. John earned a B.S. in industrial engineering from the University of Iowa, and he and Theresa are both employed by Accenture in Chicago.

In addition to working at Schumacher Elevator, both Marvin and Helen continue to be active in community and industry organizations. Marvin has served as a director of the National Association of Elevator Contractors and Master Builders of Iowa and on various association committees. He currently serves on elevator code committees at the national and state levels. He is active in Cedar Valley Manufacturers, Junior Achievement, Boy Scouts, Hawkeye Community College Foundation, Waverly Area Development Group, and UNI Entrepreneurial Advisory Committee.

Helen currently serves on the boards of North Star Community Services, The Larrabee Center, and Denver Dollars for Scholars. Both continue to serve on the Greater Denver Activities Capital Campaign Committee, which raised money for and built a library, City Center, Community Room and Athletic Complex in Denver. Marvin and Helen also serve on the board of the Bremer County Community Foundation.

They have been long-time members of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Denver, serving on church council and various committees and were sponsors of the youth group for almost 30 years.

Our interest in establishing a fund with the Bremer County Community Foundation came about as a result of serving on their board. We have made contributions to various organizations over the years and would like those gifts to continue. Workshops and training sessions conducted by the Community Foundation of Waterloo/Cedar Falls and Northeast Iowa opened our eyes to the benefits (and the ease) of establishing a fund. We want our community to grow, prosper and be a great place to live now and long into the future! The Schumacher Family Fund was established to help make that happen.

Marv & Helen Schumacher

*Historical vignette prepared by the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa.