

DONOR STORIES

LAWRENCE J. & IRENE M. BRADLEY “The Bradley Family Fund”

Lawrence J. Bradley, born in Clare, Iowa, on November 14, 1910, and Irene M. Lang, born in Manson, Iowa, on May 23, 1915, came from ancestry that immigrated to the U.S. and Iowa from Ireland and Germany.

Each family had a rich culture that they were eager to maintain, and each struggled to achieve the American dream. As was quite common at the time, Lawrence and Irene each achieved education up through the 8th grade, Irene in the little red school house in Manson. Irene never lost her love for learning; she loved to write and create stories and poems and memorized poems. She would often recite poems, even up to her last days. Lawrence had a mind for creation. His latest inventions could often be found within his garage. After their schooling, Irene was called to work on the farm and Lawrence began to find work outside of the home to help his family.

Lawrence and Irene's love of music was a shared bond. Their children recall many evenings dancing and singing as Lawrence played the harmonica and Irene the piano. Musical renditions were often followed by homemade fudge or popcorn. Both also took part in a square dancing group, where Lawrence played the fiddle.



**Irene & Lawrence
Bradley**

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Lawrence and Irene's paths first connected at a community picnic. They were married on August 1, 1935, during the depression era. After a very early wedding ceremony, Lawrence left his young bride to go to work later that morning. He would not dare to miss a day of work as there were many in line that would take his job if he was absent. The couple celebrated nearly 60 years of marriage before Lawrence's passing in June 1993. Irene lived in the home they shared up until a few days before her death in November 2009.

Lawrence and Irene had eleven children and at the time of Irene's death their legacy included eighty-nine grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. They taught their family the importance of faith in a generous and merciful God and the unbreakable bonds of family. The Lawrence J. and Irene M. Bradley Family Fund was established by their family as a lasting memorial and benefit to Rockwell City's Meals on Wheels, an organization in which Lawrence and Irene volunteered prior to using the services themselves. The fund will also benefit the Rockwell City Iowa Public Library and be used to buy large print books, which were enjoyed by Irene.

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