



Donor Stories

Wally and Helen Fair

"Wallace and Helen Fair Memorial Fund"



Wally and Helen Fair



Wallace Francis Fair was born on April 9, 1921 in Jesup, Iowa, the only child of Walter and Stella (Keefe) Fair. The family moved to Elma, Iowa when Wally was four years old.

Helen Pauline Frantzen was born on October 26, 1920 in Alta Vista, Iowa. She was the ninth of ten children born to Joseph and Rose (Stalzer) Frantzen.

Wally attended Immaculate Conception Academy in Elma and graduated in 1940. He was always tall for his age and was a natural to play basketball for the I.C. Knights. After graduation he had dreamed of going to school in Chicago to become an electrician, but his parents asked him to stay on and farm with them and, as an only child, he did.

Helen graduated in 1939 from St. Williams High School in Alta Vista. She was artistic and musical, playing the piano "by ear." Her sisters said that she could hear a song at a dance, go home and sit down at the piano to play it. She excelled in her studies and, at one point, planned to be a teacher.



They met in Alta Vista at a dance in the school gym.

They were married at St. Bernards Church in Alta Vista on a brutally cold Monday, March 1, 1943.

And they remained dance partners for the next 72 years.

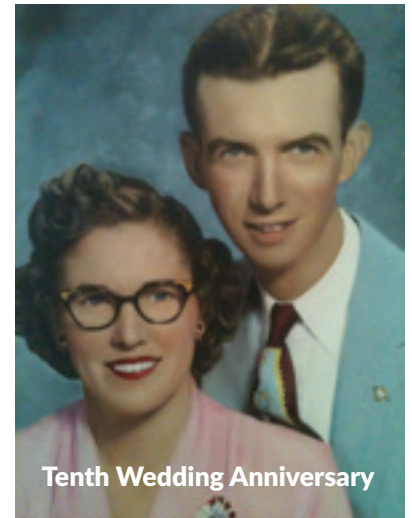
Six children were blessed to have them as parents: Joyce Frances (b. 1944), Leo Joseph (b. 1946), Linda Rose (b. 1949), Patrick Michael (b. 1953), Marylee Elizabeth (b. 1957) and Jean Marie (b.1959).

Wally and Helen farmed their entire life on "the home place" that was 1 ½ miles north of Elma. Together they grew the operation to more than 300 acres and raised cattle, hogs, chickens, corn and soybeans.

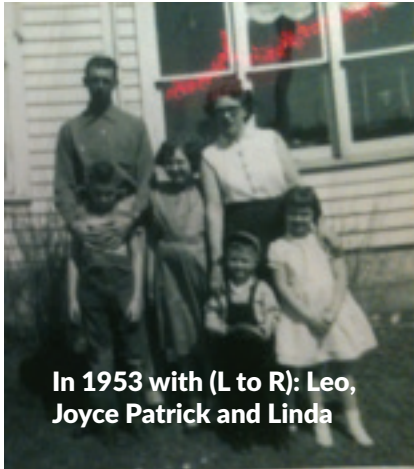
An Endowment Fund with the Elma Area Community Foundation

Their marriage was a true partnership. Helen was not afraid of hard work. We're told that when she was a young girl she could pick 100 bushels of corn a day by hand! This work ethic stayed with her throughout her life. In a typical day she sewed, cooked, baked, gardened, cleaned and sold eggs for grocery money. She also helped on the farm when and wherever needed. She was just as comfortable on a tractor as on the dance floor in high heels (and she loved her high heels!) In her leisure time she enjoyed crocheting, quilting, crossword puzzles and Sudoku.

Wally was not only a successful farmer but also an astute businessman, salesman (Funks G!), carpenter, electrician and mechanic. If something broke, he fixed it – often devising a creative solution.



Tenth Wedding Anniversary



In 1953 with (L to R): Leo, Joyce Patrick and Linda

He was a good steward of the land, staying abreast of new conservation practices, rotating crops and planting trees. He was well respected and his reputation for fairness and honesty earned him seats on the boards of the Agricultural Stewardship Council (ASC) and People's Savings Bank in Elma. He also served as a Grand Knight and 4th Degree member of the Knights of Columbus. As they grew older, Wally became the primary caretaker and housekeeper. He learned to cook, wash dishes, grocery shop and vacuum – skills that maintained their independence for many years.

Throughout their lives, Wally and Helen worked side-by-side and took care of each other, setting a wonderful example for their family, friends and community.

Wally and Helen balanced their hard work with great friends and fun times (as seen below!). Their home was often the final stop on Saturday night where everyone would gather for scrambled eggs, toast and "last call!"



Wally and Helen enjoyed being together whether playing cards, league bowling, fishing, or traveling with friends (including trips to Alaska and Hawaii.) There was nothing they enjoyed more, however, than having their family gathered around them. Their children and grandchildren have many treasured memories of holidays and family celebrations in their home with an abundance of food, drink, laughter and love.

An Endowment Fund with the Elma Area Community Foundation

Wally and Helen were pillars of the community. They colored dozens of eggs for the K.C. Easter egg hunt at the Elma Park; filled hundreds of brown paper bags with apples, peanuts and candy canes for Santa to distribute at the KC Hall, cooked and served countless meals in the Memorial Hall for various organizations, and were always there for their friends and neighbors in time of need. In later years, as their physical health declined, they continued to support local Elma businesses and activities with their patronage and financial support.

Wallace died on February 15, 2014 at age 91 and Helen followed on May 15, 2015, at age 93. They were preceded in death by one son, Patrick (d. 1976) and survived by five children: Joyce Regan, Leo Fair, Linda Parshley, Marylee Campion, Jean Nelson, 18 grandchildren and 36 great-grandchildren!

Psalm 128: "Blessed are All who Walk in His Ways. May the Lord bless you from Zion; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. May you live to see your children's children."



Wally and Helen were extremely blessed and lived to see their children's children's children.

Out of appreciation and love for their parents and all that they taught them about the importance of family, faith, loyalty and generosity, their children established the Wallace and Helen Fair Memorial Fund in their honor to continue support of the community that Wally and Helen lived in and loved.

Thank you, Mom and Dad.



L to R: Linda, Joyce, Leo, Jean and Marylee



L to R: Jean, Marylee Linda, Leo, Joyce celebrating Wally and Helen's 65th Wedding Anniversary in 2006.

