

4-2017

## S.T.O.R.I.E. Time, Spring Semester 2017

University of Northern Iowa. Human Relations: Awareness and Applications (Spring 2017)

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# ***S.T.O.R.I.E. Time***

***Seniors Teach Others Real Intergenerational Experiences***



***GRATITUDE: Affirming One Another Through Stories***

*May Gratitude be a Guest of your heart and a companion of your soul.*

*UNI Human Relations Seniors & Western Home Communities Seniors*

*Spring 2017*

# *Dedication*

*Chris Bruess, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F28*

*Dedicated to*

*Juanita (Nita) DeVoe and Robert (Bob) DeVoe*



*Their time . . . becomes yours.*

*Their stories . . . become yours.*

*Their knowledge . . . becomes yours.*

*We might only be grandchildren,  
But they are more than just grandparents*

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## 1 Dedicated Don

Don Scheer has had a number of different jobs during his life. “I really like work and I would rather do that than most things” Don said. Don started working at a young age. He worked to provide for himself during high school. He worked at a lumber yard and an elevator. During this time, he would unload freight from train cars. Don spent his summers working on a farm with Jim. Don learned to appreciate work from his summers spent with Jim. As a farmer, Jim worked from dusk to dawn every day.

Don went to college at The State Teacher’s College. During college, he worked between Rath and John Deere. After graduating, Don was working with Rath. He decided he wanted to start working at John Deere. However, before John Deere would talk to Don, they needed a written note that said Don was no longer working with Rath. This was a large risk for Don. He and his wife were building a house and they were expecting their first child. Don took the risk and quit his job at Rath. Luckily, he was hired at John Deere.

Don worked through many different jobs at John Deere. He worked in the assembly, the foundry, the factory, and the corporate office. After some time at John Deere, Don became the manager of the industrial engineers. In this position, he was in charge of hiring new engineers. Don spent his days talking to students and picking if the students should work for them or not. Don liked his time working at John Deere. He believed that he worked with the best of the best people.

During his time working with the industrial engineers, Don created a program called, The Indirect Labor Improvement Plan. This plan was made to reduce labor cost in the factory. After the company saw how successful the program was, Don was promoted up the chain to John Deere Corporate Headquarters. Don worked to put his program into play in all of the factories. His boss was very happy with the work Don had done.

Don retired from John Deere, but that did not stop him from working. Don’s boss continued to contact him about helping him with projects. Don helped him out a few times. Don also worked for Habitat for Humanity. He helped to build houses for people. He also helped to build a deck and a porch for his daughter Kathleen. Don helped Kathleen and her husband farm their land. Don did a lot of the farming work with them. He enjoyed each and every one of these jobs.

Don learned that if you want something bad enough, you can do it. He learned this from all of the different jobs he worked. When Don wanted something, he worked hard to get it. Don has a strong work ethic. He remembers his time working with a lot of pleasure.

*Don Scheer, Western Home Communities Senior  
Kelsey Bahrenfuss, UNI Human Relations Senior IAI*

## 2 The Patchwork Quilt of Life

Walking into Marlene Engen’s home your eyes are drawn to the warm, maroon walls which are complemented by patchwork quilts found throughout the home. My attention was not brought to the quilts until Marlene mentioned she had taken a class in Florida to learn how to quilt. Marlene and her husband Lee used to have a home in a retirement community down in

Florida. They visited Florida for 5 seasons. While staying there, Marlene took classes ranging from harmonica lessons, all the way to creative writing. When she was telling of her times in Florida my eyes were wide with excitement, and my heart was full. Then Marlene shared how her life was shaped from her time in Florida and away from Iowa.

As she shared her memories of sitting by the ocean, reading devotions with Lee it made me realize how important it is to reflect on the life you have been blessed with. Marlene and Lee have experienced health hardships together, but every time it made them stronger. Florida was a time for them to fall back in love. Not to say they were not in love before, but to create a new form of an everlasting bond. It was time for them to rediscover love, and start a new, lasting journey in their grandchildren's lives. Marlene told Lee, "the ocean will always be here", and it was time for them to travel home to Iowa for good.

When Marlene talks of her grandchildren, and the lessons she bestows upon them, I am almost brought to tears. Tears of joy and admiration, because it reminds me of how my grandmother has taught me similar lessons. Marlene's pride and love for her grandchildren radiates when she tells of the memories she has shared with them.

When she speaks of love, it is unlike any description I have ever heard. Marlene defines love as a deep, abiding commitment to someone, which goes deeper than face value. We experience love when we find someone who will cherish and lets us be the person we are without placing demands. One day, Marlene wants for her grandchildren to experience this same feeling of love.

Love envelopes and radiates from Marlene. It has shaped how she has become as a person, and provided her with wonderful lifelong memories. Through reflecting on her life, she knows what lessons to grant upon her grandchildren, and others she meets.

Looking at the quilts around the Engen home made me realize how each stitch and patch came together to create one piece. This is similar to life. We have those relationships, journeys, and lesson that come into our life to shape us into the person we are today. Our journey in life is one patchwork quilt that tells a story and compliments the life we have lived.

*Marlene Engen, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Jessica Bolar, UNI Human Relations Senior IA2*

### 3 The Little Things

A crucial part of a good story is a lesson to be learned from it. As I meet with Lee Engen weekly, he tells many great stories that, whether he intends it or not, usually come with something to be taken away. One of the questions I asked Lee was what recognition or appreciation taught you about yourself. He remembered one interesting recognition that came with a lesson that is often forgotten by many.

Lee grew up in Decorah, Iowa. He said that he rarely received any academic awards because he spent a lot of his free time working to help his family. He recalled receiving several football awards, however, the recognition that taught him something that was neither related to his academics nor football. One of his favorite parts about growing up in Decorah was the municipal swimming pool. At the time, it was not common for towns for have swimming pools, so having a pool was pretty special.

Lee told me that he was not the best at diving, but still enjoyed going with friends nonetheless. In a nearby town, another municipal swimming pool had been built, so Lee was surprised when he was invited to demonstrate different things you can do with a pool for the people in that town. He went and had a great time; it made him feel good about his swimming abilities and he was happy to demonstrate the pool for people.

This is when he told me that you have to take the time to appreciate the little things in life. This is a lesson I have been taught before, but I always seem to forget in the midst of balancing schoolwork, my job, and a social life. I was glad to be reminded of this important lesson once more in the form of this story.

*Lee Engen, Western Home Communities Senior  
Joshua Carlo, UNI Human Relations Senior IA3*

#### 4

### Overcoming the Challenge

Since the very first day that I met Judy, I knew that we were going to have an immediate connection. No matter what goes on during the day, I know when I go to meet with her that all of those worries go away. There is something about how we connect with each other that makes our conversations mean so much.

One day, we got to talking and we got on the subject of Polio. We were talking about different hardships that each of us have gone through in life and she brought up a tough part of her life when she was at such a young age. This is a part of her that amazes me because she always she talks about it so graciously.

When Judy was 11 years old, she was diagnosed with Polio. Before this, I had never heard of this disease and now I feel like I was there with her through it all.

When Judy was diagnosed, she was transferred to the hospital in Rochester Minnesota. She was the first case in Blackhawk County and in 1948 there was no vaccine. This disease was very feared by the public and it was known to cause the inability to breathe along with weakness and paralysis of the limbs.

One of the consequences of this disease was being put in isolation. Judy was placed in isolation for 10 full days after being diagnosed. She doesn't remember much of anything that went on because her fever was so high. She does remember that at least one of her parents was outside of the window at all times. Through this crazy time of her life, she told me that she learned a lot about loyalty.

We talked a lot about how she felt like she came out of this as a better person. This helped her appreciate the goodness in the doctors and other people and she feels that "most people are pretty good." Hearing her say this spoke volumes about her and how she sees the world around her.

Judy is definitely a person that I am thankful to have met so early in life. Her kindness and graciousness is something that I wish to have as I grow older. Whether it is a small hardship or a large hardship, I will always remember to keep the positivity that Judy showed me through stories today.

*Judy Moody, Western Home Communities Senior  
Karne Croston, UNI Human Relations Senior IA4*

## 5

### Unending Love

The first day I met Jo, I could see right away that her family was very important to her. She had just gotten back from visiting her family in California for almost two weeks, and she told me many things about who she visited. She is proud of whom her children and grandchildren have become, and she is grateful to be able to tell the stories of their lives. Her love for her family shines bright like the rays of the sun, even on a rainy day.

She has stories of acceptance and hardship, which have shaped her life and the life of her family. From growing up in a small farm town during the Great Depression and World War II, to caring for her husband in times of bad health, Jo has been able to find positivity and gratitude in the adverse times of her life.

On the farm, her parents encouraged and pushed her to care about her academics and complete higher education. In her willingness to pursue her parents' wishes, Jo showed me that she cared deeply about her parents and wanting to excel in school. When her husband was in bad health, she cared for him and showed me the selfless love she had for someone that was so dear to her. When telling me about the things her children and grandchildren have done, she showed me the pride and happiness that her family gives her.

Jo's unending love for her family is something that I admire and is something that I strive to have in my life. Jo has shown me that it is important to find people that encourage you to be the best that you can be and that bring out the affection we all have inside us. To do this is to have endless gratitude in your life.

*Jo Ackman, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Rachel Ferguson, UNI Human Relations Senior 1A5*

## 6

### The Power of Stories

When I first met Margaret, I immediately saw how nice she was. She would always ask about my week and sometimes, if I was lucky give me a cup of coffee or two. I would soon find out how blessed I was to be matched up with such a generous woman.

After some time talking, Margaret asked if I ever used a kaleidoscope because she had an amazing collection. Margaret would show me all sorts of unique kinds of kaleidoscopes, big, small, fragile, heavy, and even an antique kaleidoscope from the 1800's.

Before meeting with Margaret I had no idea how these things worked and how beautiful kaleidoscopes could be. Inside all of them had their own little touch of uniqueness. Whether it was the "firefighter" kaleidoscope, the 1800's or even the very first kaleidoscope that she had first bought initially for her daughter, I could tell that all of the kaleidoscopes in her collection had a story with it.

Each kaleidoscope holds a memory that would soon turn into a story that I could see! Each one gave Margaret a smile and a sense of true gratitude. Soon I would find out that not only was I learning about how to properly look into a kaleidoscope, but I was learning that she was nice enough to share with me little memories and stories from her life according to the different kaleidoscopes.

I would always ask, “Why do you like collecting kaleidoscopes? What is it that makes them fun to collect?”

Margaret would answer with, “I could not really tell you except for I just find them beautiful.” This collection was an important part of Margaret’s life as stories were being created as she would accumulate kaleidoscopes along the way. After reflecting on a visit I had with Margaret, I soon realized that everyone in life communicates with others through stories as each person is constantly sharing pieces of their life to others and as others are sharing back. Stories are things that no one can take away because there will never be anything more important than someone’s stories. This is what Margaret was generous enough to let me be a part of and I am forever grateful.

If I had never met Margaret I would have never got to experience the great stories she shared with me. It is genuinely amazing that people like Margaret have a way of constantly sending out great vibes. I will always be grateful for the lesson I have learned from meeting Margaret, because she is a true example of a genuinely great person and I hope that I can be as great of a person as she is someday.

*Margaret Shay, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Will Gormally, UNI Human Relations Senior 1B6*

## 7

### **Life of Hard Work and Friendships**

The moment I met Connie, I was greeted with a big smile. The day was filled with many different stressors and feelings, but only after a couple minutes with Connie, my feelings were now calm. The way that she made me feel at home and was so willing to share her stories made the tension I was having just disappear.

She is the type of women that loves to share her stories and listen to others stories. She makes connections through just about anyone she meets. She is the person that if anyone would need anything from she would be there for them. She is the person who knows hard work pays off and will allow you to achieve anything you want to achieve.

She grew up having to work for everything she got in life. From such a young age, she knew that if she wanted something you have to work for it. She has gone through a lot to get to where she is now and that is through all the hard work that she has gone through. Growing up, she learned that she needed to do what was asked of her from her parents. She worked hard for her education and to get that she had very little free time, because when she wasn’t at school, she was working.

She is the person that values friendship with everyone that she has ever been friends with. Today, she still is friends with the same people that she went to high school with. She is very supportive of everything that her friends do and knows they are always supportive of her. One of her best friends is her younger sister, which she values and always will value. She really appreciates everything that her sister does for her to help her out. That is one reason why she is one of her best friends.

It is people like Connie who make this world a loving place. Her understanding for hard work and friendship is endless. I strive to be as hardworking and loving to my friends as she is to

her work and friends. To have a friend just like Connie would be a life full of endless love and support.

Getting to know Connie and a lot about her life and what it took to get to where she is now has really opened my eyes to how much hard work really pays off and that it doesn't just get handed to you.

*Connie Hansen, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Katie Henry, UNI Human Relations Senior 1B7*

## 8

### **Bold and Daring**

To whomever may be reading this, I would like try to a little experiment with you. If you would, please, picture a woman standing before you. She should be modestly dressed, possibly wearing a scarf and a comfortable looking cardigan. Notice how she walks, calm and elegantly, as if time is of no concern while she seems to know exactly where she is and exactly where she wants to be going.

If you look past the warm and welcoming smile that she is inevitably displaying, you'll notice her soft eyes indicating a sense of peace, confidence, and adventure. If you exchange even just a few words with her, you may quickly find yourself becoming acutely aware of her insatiable desire to learn and to explore all that life has to offer.

Imagine this woman holds in her hand a teaching degree, as well as a small pocket book that contains various appointments that are the written proof of all the lives that she touches. Seldom will you find a day in this book in which she has not generously devoted her time to others.

Finally, envision a woman deeply rooted in her faith, with an unshakeable foundation that would make even the world's greatest architects jealous. Now, ask her what her name is. Did she warmly introduce herself as Nancie Handorf? Did she graciously invite you into her home for a cup of coffee? If yes, then congratulations, our experiment was a success and you managed to conjure up the amazing woman that I was describing to you.

I myself have only had the pleasure of knowing Nancie Handorf for a brief period of time, but have come to greatly respect and admire her endearing character and her strong will to serve others. The numerous qualities that I have already attributed to her in this brief story hardly paint a full picture of this marvelous woman, but rather, only provide a mere sketch of who she really is. As is true with all lives, it is not paragraphs, but pages, that are required for such a painting.

If I had to hone in on one quality of Nancie's that seems to umbrella and inform all the rest, I would have to choose her daring nature to courageously embark into the unknown, void of fear and armed with curiosity. I am positive that her three kids and others who know her well would confirm this attribute. Perhaps one story that can be told that encapsulates this unique ability, is the story of her engagement to her late husband, James (Jim) Handorf.

Upon graduating from Oregon State University with a degree in Elementary Education, Nancie made the bold decision to move from her home on the West Coast, to Japan, where she would spend the next few years teaching in elementary classrooms on a military base.

While Nancie was teaching in Japan, she met Jim Handorf, a college professor and a military man who had transferred from Iowa to teach secondary level courses on the military base. After having spent a good deal of time together in group settings (though not alone), it became somewhat common knowledge that they were an “item.” While there was some semblance of a relationship established, Nancie found herself growing restless with the pace at which the relationship was progressing and desired a matrimonial commitment, as she was, as she puts it, “not getting any younger.”

While Nancie was sure that Jim would most likely eventually propose to her, she was done waiting and decided to take matters into her own hands by devising a plan that would hopefully push him into a decision making position. So Nancie, in a bold and dramatic gesture, applied for a transfer to another country and was granted permission to transfer to England. She then proceeded by telling all of her friends on the military base how excited she was for her new transfer, in hopes of the word getting around to Jim.

Finally, at dinner one evening, Nancie discussed this new placement with Jim and the breaking point had been reached. Jim’s response to Nancie’s (feigned) excitement about her new transfer was, “Well, didn’t you know that I was going to ask you to marry me?”

Nancie’s plan had worked; by relying on her ability to courageously embark into the unknown, she had given Jim the pressure he needed to finally propose to his future wife. They were married shortly after in Japan, where they also gave birth to their first child. When asked today if she would have left for England had she not received the commitment she was seeking, Nancie says that she thinks she would have.

Interacting with one another through conversation and the sharing of stories is a vital part of the human condition, for it satisfies our social desires in a way that no other activity can. The value in this form of communication is immense in its power to enlighten and connect one another through shared experiences. I feel truly blessed to have had the opportunity to get to know Nancie Handorf.

*Nancie Handorf, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Austin Jacobs, UNI Human Relations Senior 1B8*

## 9

### **She is Humble and Kind**

She is humble and kind.

When I met Susan her thoughtfulness for others was the first thing I noticed.

Tiny little vases with small flower arrangements are what she showed me.

Susan takes arrangements to people who are sick in the hospital or need uplifting.

She is thoughtful.

Instead of giving them something that takes up lots of space she collects tiny vases.

The flowers are a small token that can help cheer a person up during a rough time.

It is a priority for Susan to take time out of her week to help people feel loved.

She is well liked.

The people in her hallway know about her welcoming spirit.

They also think of her when they come across small vases that she could use.

Some people even give the vases back to her to reuse after receiving them as a gift.

She is gracious.

It is people like who Susan whom this class is all about.

Gratitude is being thankful, showing appreciation, and returning kindness.

Susan is all of the above. She is fortunate and gives to others unsparingly.

She is humble and kind.

Susan is an excellent example of somebody who puts others before herself.

She is content, happy, and doesn't need any recognition for generosity.

I want to be like her someday. I want to have appreciation, kindness, and gratitude.

*Susan Runkle, Western Home Communities Senior*

*Jessica Jansen, UNI Human Relations Senior IB9*

## 10

### **The Dedicated Student**

To be honest, I was quite nervous to meet Jean for the first time. I am not exceptionally well at making small talk and connecting with strangers. I even related the first meeting as feeling like a "first date". As our meetings went on, I grew less and less nervous and more excited to get the wonderful chance to have a heartfelt conversation with Jean.

One of the stories that stuck with me the most from my time talking with Jean was her time in school. I am an elementary education major and hearing what her educational experience was like growing up was extremely interesting to me. Jean went to school, kindergarten all the way through eighth grade, in the same one room schoolhouse. She described how the younger and older grades would get divided up and taught different lessons but all in the same room.

She had the same teachers for most her grades and thought that the majority of them were absolutely wonderful. Jean loved academics, and school was something that she excelled in. Jean graduated out of the one room schoolhouse to a high school where she then also graduated and attended Luther College. I found it very inspiring to hear that Jean finished high school and attended college. At that time it was not very common, actually less than 10% of women, attended college and graduated with a bachelor's degree.

In my time with Jean, I have come to realize there are many commonalities between the two of us. Jean was a passionate student who took her education seriously, and I have always been very similar. I value education greatly.

As a student, Jean said she never struggled, but when it came to the playground she was usually picked last for any game. I could relate to this in many ways. I was never athletic and as a shy, quiet student who kept to myself I was always the one standing last in line to be called.

We talked together how this was something that bothered us when we were growing up, but now realized as adults it was something that changed us for the better. Both experiencing the shame and loneliness of being left out, now know how important it is to include everyone, to take that step and invite others in who look lost and lonely. It is something Jean has been able to do as a pastor's wife, including everyone in the church to feel welcome, and for me as a teacher to do with all of my students.

*Jean Swiggum, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Anna Kircher, UNI Human Relations Senior 1C10*

## 11

### Family First

My time spent with Carl has been filled with great conversation and various insights to life. I have learned to count my blessings, take every opportunity in life I can, and that it is okay to fail. The most important thing I have learned from Carl is the importance of love and family.

During my second meeting with Carl, I walked into the living room to a giant vase filled with flowers on the coffee table. I commented on how beautiful the flowers were. Carl told me they were for their 58<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Carl then proceeded to tell me the story of how he met his wife, Evelyn.

The two met in Washington D.C. Both Carl and Evelyn were working for the FBI, and they were neighbors. One day Evelyn and her roommates locked themselves out of their apartment, knocking on Carl's door to seek help. The bathroom windows to both apartments were very close to each other, and happened to be open. Carl climbed out his bathroom window and through Evelyn's window to get inside the locked apartment. Carl coming to Evelyn's rescue was what began their relationship.

The two started dating and 18 months later decided to get married. At the time, the legal age to marry in Washington D.C. was 21. Carl was 20, and had to get approval from a judge to get married. Their wedding was held on February 7, 1959 in Washington D.C.

The day of their wedding, Carl was running late. On his way to the ceremony he was pulled over and received a speeding ticket. After a quick call to the FBI letting them know about his ticket, he was on his way again.

Once Carl arrived, the ceremony commenced. It was a short and intimate wedding. The celebration lasted only seven minutes. Guests were still arriving as Carl and Evelyn were walking out. That seven-minute ceremony turned into a life full of family, love, and memories.

Carl and Evelyn moved to Iowa, where they started their family and raised two kids in Cedar Falls. The two keep busy today with their granddaughter who attends Wartburg College.

Carl speaks greatly of his wife each time we meet, and says that he married the right woman. The things that have kept Carl and Evelyn together for 58 years is their support and love for each other. Carl's main goal in life is to be here for his wife, children, and grandchildren as long as possible. The more time I spend with Carl, the more I can see the love for his family.

*Carl Boice, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Allison Klenken, UNI Human Relations Senior 1C11*

### **Ambitious and Caring**

From the day Evelyn and I met, I noticed how kind and welcoming she was to me. I was immediately intrigued by her lively, interesting stories. We were able to talk nonstop for a full hour without realizing the time. This has held true throughout our whole time together. Hence, I am constantly looking forward to spending time with Evelyn and to hearing her story.

Ambitious and caring are two characteristics that are constantly weaved into Evelyn's story. One of our first times meeting together, Evelyn described herself as ambitious and caring for her "I AM" poem. The more I talked with Evelyn, the more I realized just how much she exhibits these traits.

Right after high school, she traveled to Washington, D.C. to work as a secretary for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). She even worked for J. Edgar Hoover, who was the first director of the FBI. While in Washington, D.C., she was experiencing new adventures and beginnings, including meeting and falling in love with her husband. From her days of living in Washington, D.C. and working for the FBI to her loving moments as a mother and grandmother, Evelyn is nothing short of ambitious and caring.

Throughout her life, she has sought to busy herself with the things that matter most to her, such as caring for her beloved family and friends, creating beautiful quilts, and pursuing her dreams. When Evelyn explained her determination and passion she had for business and secretarial work, I could instantly tell why the FBI hired her. She has so much talent and heart, which ended up making her a vital asset to the FBI. Evelyn's possibilities for success were and still are endless. Through her organizational skills and enthusiasm, she not only accomplished her dreams, but also, she was able to find the love of her life.

Evelyn Boice is truly the epitome of an incredible, ambitious, and caring individual, who touches the lives of everyone she meets. I am so grateful for the opportunity I have been given to meet such a genuine, loving woman. She has sincerely left a mark on my own story as well, inspiring me to never stop chasing my ambitions and to always care for humankind.

*Evelyn Boice, Western Home Communities Senior*

*Makayla Knight, UNI Human Relations Senior 1C12*

### **Rooted in Family & Community**

Barb Ubben is a strong woman. Her personality beams with toughness and love. From growing up on a farm, to raising her children alone, Barb has seen and conquered challenge. While getting to know Barb, I learned that she is most grateful for her upbringing. That of which taught her how to be a strong and loving human being.

Barb grew up on her family farm in Hudson, Iowa. There, Barb became rooted in family and community. Her sister was her best friend because the nearest neighbor was miles away and the closest neighbor was extended family. It was an expectation that Barb took part in helping on the farm. She and her sister had one chore which was to fetch eggs from the chicken coop. They did not like when the chickens would peck at their hands while reaching for eggs, so Barb and her sister needed to figure out how to solve this problem.

With some brainstorming, Barb and her sister would secretly take corncobs and wave them at the chickens in order to get the chickens to fly off their eggs. Once the chickens were gone, the girls would quickly retrieve the eggs before getting pecked. Not only did working on a farm help Barb learn problem solving, but it also showed her the stability that one gets from family.

Stability is key in her family, which is why family has always been a support. The strength that she learned to have at a young age from her mother, father and farming has carried her through the toughest of life. Only to overcome with a victory in meeting the love of her life and growing her family. After years of staying strong for her children, Barb can look back and admire her growth as a person and the constant of her family.

Learning how to love from her family, friends, and faith gives Barb the ability to spread her love to those she is around. The unbreakable bond that the farm brought to her family allows her to live a life where she knows how to take care of one another and be strong in the face of adversity.

*Barb Ubben, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Megan Leabo, UNI Human Relations Senior 1C13*

## 14

### I am Young at Heart

Even though I am old and grey  
And close in age to a century old,  
And lovingly tucked away in a place for  
elders  
I'm still me-age 18...  
I am young at heart.

I am teaching now  
And engaged for a year  
And I managed to save \$250  
We have a single day to marry...  
I am young at heart.

Married on my 18th birthday  
World War II is the horrific event.  
Now I'm a war bride on a red velvet  
upholstered train going West.  
Arizona is our goal and off to the Mohave  
Desert my husband goes...  
I am still young at heart.

We had a stipend of \$100 per month  
And I headed off on an adventure  
I wonder how we survived sometimes

With the memories I recall...  
I am still young at heart.

We at times shared homes with other  
couples  
Taking turns sleeping in the only bed  
The place was teeming with people  
Other servicemen and their wives...  
I am still young at heart.  
You stood in line  
To go to the movies or ride the bus  
It is so colorful, varied, and numerous  
patches  
Army, Navy, Airforce, Armored division  
The Timberwolves (my Tom), and  
parachutists...  
I am still young at heart.

We settle in and I get a job  
Montgomery Ward hired me on the spot  
Layaway is how the payments are made  
Then they took it home...  
I am still young at heart.

Tom's about 100 miles away training  
For the battle against Rommel in the  
Saharan Desert  
I'm lonesome without much money  
What do I do?  
I am still young at heart.

An advertisement for "Room and Board"  
appeared  
What a blessing!  
The Hansen family took me in and cared for  
me  
Ida loved me until her death, and my Tom,  
too...  
I am still young at heart.

Poinsettias grew on either side of the steps  
A lemon tree produced throughout the year  
We wrapped them in newspaper, a single  
layer would do  
In a shallow box under Ida's bed, of  
course...  
I am still young at heart.

Rommel is defeated  
The Timberwolves get their orders  
Colorado Springs, here we come  
The wives cannot go along, but travel  
separately...  
I am still young at heart.

There is no help or advice  
Each of us are on our own  
It was easy to move with only my cardboard  
suitcase  
It was all that I owned...  
Remember - I am still young at heart.

Off the bus and down the road  
I find a Motel  
I stop there until tomorrow  
When I can find a place to stay...  
I am quivering and young at heart.

What a beautiful place

Majestic mountains, trees, fall foliage, and  
Pike's Peak  
It is morning and I can do this  
I pack my bag, and it is cold outside...  
I am still young at heart.

I find a sign  
A brown house on a hill  
It is affordable, an upstairs bedroom  
I'll take it, I say...  
I am still young at heart.

This is where I will lay my head  
And my Tom, too, when he can  
But how do I let him know  
Where I am now...  
I remind you - I am still young at heart.  
We find each other  
Only God now knows how  
I cannot look for a job  
We are expectant and I am not well...  
I am still young at heart.

I shared the upstairs with 3 other wives  
Our husbands in all different stations  
We shared a bathroom and washed laundry  
in the tub  
Taking turns, we didn't fight...  
I am still young at heart.

The months go by and after much needed  
rest  
Training comes again - ALERT  
All the wives must leave  
Reassignment is now eminent...  
I am still young at heart.

The European Theatre of Action is looming  
The year is 1944  
I must return home to Iowa  
Reluctantly, of course...  
I am still young at heart.

No one knew until they were born  
That I was carrying twins

They were six weeks early, in critical  
condition  
We all nearly died, unfortunately...  
I am still young at heart.

There were shortages in care, due to the war  
My babies cried out, from their incubators  
My tiny girls needed me and I needed them  
We made it through by the Grace of God...  
I am still young at heart.

Battle of the Bulge, my Tom's a great shot  
A marksman and the best shot they had  
He came home on furlough because we were  
so sick  
His records were not to be found...  
I am still young at heart.

A mechanic he became, he figured it out  
The twins and I survived on \$3 per day.  
When well enough to care for the girls on  
my own  
I moved them by train, one by one...  
I am still young at heart.

We somehow held it together  
Through pneumonia and scorpions  
Moves and tight finances  
We will make it...  
I am still young at heart.

The newsboys shouted for all to hear  
Extra, Extra - read all about it  
The war was over we heard on the train  
We are thankful for that...  
I am still young at heart.

A lot I bought, for \$650  
80'x110' - this will be our home  
After winter thawed, on it we built  
We moved in when the twins were about  
2...  
I am still young at heart.

Through turmoil and loss we struggled along  
We made it through by God's Grace  
The life we lived continued on  
And here I sit and I reflect...  
I am still young at heart.

*Jean Thompson, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Kristen Miller, U.N.I. Human Relations Senior IC14*

## 15 No Shortage of Kindness

World War II began when Mary Mortensen was a freshman in high school and continued throughout her high school years. She has many memories of what life was like during these years of war in the 1940's, including the rationing of everyday items and prisoners of war. She knew many men who were sent to war, including her older brother. He was drafted right out of medical school and served on a Navy ship in the South Pacific. Back at home in Mount Carroll, Illinois, Mary and her friends and family felt some of the effects of war and did their best to get through that time of unrest.

Many things were rationed either because they were being sent overseas to the servicemen or because of restrictions on importing goods from war effected countries. There were shortages of many things during the war like rubber, metal and clothing, but food is what effected just about everyone on a daily basis. Mary remembers the ration books that each family received which included colored and numbered stamps for different items. The rationed items she remembers most were gas, meat, sugar, candy and pantyhose. The material for silk and nylon pantyhose was used in making ropes and parachutes. As a result, women like Mary and her

group of friends, whom were called the Four Roses at their high school, were left without this staple item to their wardrobe. Mary and her friends resorted to using makeup to cover their legs during the summer and winter. She says it was quite cold in the winter without their pantyhose!

Canned goods were easily sent to the servicemen overseas, so these items were limited as well. Mary worked at a canning factory with a friend over the summer, sorting through vegetables on a conveyer belt to remove stems. There was a German prison camp nearby and many of the men worked in the canning factory as well. She remembers seeing them during her shifts and thinking they were all very handsome and looked well taken care of. Mary knew of two American soldiers from her town that were taken prisoner in Germany and recalls that they looked very thin and unwell when they eventually returned. She could see that the German prisoners were well taken care of, but it was a different story for the Americans.

Mary is grateful that her family and friends effected by the war returned home safely and that she has these memories to share. She is a very loving and kind soul and cherishes her friends and family. No matter where her life has taken her, she always shows kindness to those around her and strives to befriend anyone she meets. She tells me that I brighten her day when I come to visit, and she does the same for me. She and I can discuss anything from football to the movies and we always lose track of time enjoying each other's company.

*Mary Mortensen, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Sarah Miller, University of Northern Iowa Student ID15*

## 16

### A Strong Faith

Struggles in life look different for everybody in the world, for some it's money, other's it is sickness, and others are facing things we cannot even imagine. But the important thing is not what your struggle is, it is how you handle it. Bernice King's life has not been struggle free however, she handles whatever life gives her with grace, compassion, and most importantly, faith.

When growing up, Bernice was not the *rich* kid in town. Even though she was far from it, she always had what she needed. That didn't come easy though. Bernice worked for everything that she had and that made her such a strong person. While other kids spent their summers hanging out together, Bernice and her siblings got jobs and learned the value in what they had. They worked on the family farm, milking cows (and yes, by hand) and raising chickens. When family emergencies came up, her parents looked to their kids to take up all of the responsibilities on the farm (plus go to school afterwards). The two sisters and brother did it with pride. They were pleased to be entrusted with such a responsibility. When Bernice wanted to get new skates and asked her mom for them, her mom told her to get her piggy bank and see if she had enough. She did, and those skates are something she will never forget. She worked for them. The value in hard work and perseverance is becoming less and less as technology continues to encroach on generations. However, hard work and perseverance are what made Bernice such the strong woman she is.

Anybody who has the pleasure and opportunity to know Bernice, does not leave her presence with their life untouched. She is somebody who goes out of her way to show how much she cares. As Bernice takes her daily walks around the Western Home Community, she never

hesitates to stop and say hi when she sees and open door. One of the biggest lessons Bernice has to pass on to the next generation is one on friendship. As Bernice will tell you, friends will come and go and they will all touch your life in a different way. Your friends are the people who are around you. They are the ones who stop in and say hi when your door is open, the ones who worry when they haven't seen you in a few days, and the ones who are always there to offer you a hug (which Bernice excels at). Your friend group will forever be changing. Some will lose touch completely, and others you will just start to see in passing. But that's okay. What is important is that you keep your heart open to the people around you and show them love.

Finally, if anything, Bernice has taught the people around her the importance of faith. She doesn't care what your religion is or what you believe in, but that you just have faith in something greater than yourself. Bernice continues to look forward to church on Sundays and bible study groups. She continues to build upon her own faith every day. She knows that: *You can make plans, but the Lord's purpose will prevail. ~Proverbs 19:21*

*Bernice King, Western Home Communities Senior  
Vanessa Nolan, UNI Human Relations Senior 1D16*

## 17

### **The Key to Happy Memories**

An unknown author once said, "It is not happy people who are thankful, it is thankful people who are happy." While this quote is fit for a Hallmark film, it holds a message I believe we could all benefit from if we simply took the time to ponder and apply it. There is a woman who, whether intentionally or not, lives as a wonderful example of this message of thankfulness.

Within her castle of books she holds a lifetime of stories, few of which are found between the covers that line her walls. The stories are her own and are told in a special corner of her book castle where a space has been made for friends and shared tea. Time flies in this corner as memories are shared faster than pens can catch paper, but not all stories need to be written down, and Berdena Beach knows this well.

Berdena grew up helping her parents on the farm, attending a one-room schoolhouse, and dreaming of what she could be despite social expectations. Her stories of her parents are lined with a thankful heart as she recalls the lessons they taught her about hard work and how to treat others. Looking back, she says the biggest lessons she learned from her parents were the ones she saw, not necessarily the things they said.

For example, she learned how to truly listen to people by watching her parents communicate and her love of books and education sprouted from seeing how often her parents read books and papers. Learning to listen and to value education contributed a lot to her becoming a counselor and getting multiple masters degrees.

Beyond her education, Berdena is thankful to her parents for teaching her how to treat others and live well. Some of these lessons came from seeing what they didn't do in comparison to others such as swearing, drinking, and judging others. She saw how their respect for others made people feel valued and she wanted to mimic that herself. These lessons especially stood out after she became a counselor and met some who were not as lucky to have parents like hers.

Berdena's story is full of lessons that she learned in hindsight. Not everyone can say they are thankful for the lessons their parents taught them, but Berdena says she is still learning from her parents as she remembers how they lived and applies it to her own life. This thankfulness has made her into the happy, lifelong learner she is today.

*Berdena Beach, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Lisa O'Neal, UNI Human Relations Senior 1D17*

## 18

### **IN MEMORY: Mary Helen Curtis**

I had the pleasure of meeting with Mary Helen 2 times at the beginning of the semester. From the second I met her, I knew we were going to be a perfect match. She had on a sparkly outfit that matched head to toe with a smile that reached ear to ear.

Throughout my time with Mary Helen I learned a lot. She told about how she used to be a Home Economics teacher, has children and grandchildren, and loved living at Windhaven. Even though she loved Windhaven, she told me in her **I AM . . .** poem that she was ready to go home. Salem, Iowa. Home. That's where she was from. It's where she grew up, where she met her friends, and where she fell in love.

#### **I AM . . . Mary Helen Curtis**

##### *Western Home Communities*

I am giving and thoughtful

I wonder what Gus will do in the future

I see my hometown and farmhouse

I want my grandson to find a job

I am giving and thoughtful

I pretend I am in my house in Salem

I feel like I am touching my daughter

I worry...No, I don't, well the direction of our country

I cry, I do not cry

I am giving and thoughtful

I understand that my family loves me

I say/believe my grandchildren will be great

I dream about my times following my husband in the service

I try to not be critical of other people  
I hope I have an 89<sup>th</sup> birthday on Sunday April 16<sup>th</sup>

I am giving and thoughtful

Mary Helen was a lovely lady who I had the privilege of getting to know. I will never forget our time together. Rest in paradise Mary Helen Curtis and welcome home.

*Kayla Ohrt, UNI Human Relations Senior 1D18*

## 19

### Legacy

“You leave a legacy not by writing books and articles, but by teaching.” This quote is one that has resonated with me since Jim Lubker said it to during one of our meetings. It contains such simplicity, yet there is such power in those words.

Throughout our meetings, Jim has shared stories about his life, including stories of those who have influenced him in a positive way. Those individuals who have had an effect on his life include teachers, friends, and colleagues, but all have left a mark on his life not by writing books, but rather by teaching him. They taught life skills such as how to work hard and persevere. They taught school subjects in a way that made it interesting and enjoyable. They encouraged him in difficult times and believed in him.

Jim is definitely leaving a legacy behind. He has gained a vast amount of knowledge throughout his life. In the few times I have had the privilege of speaking with him, my eyes have been opened to things I have never thought about. My mind has developed a new, deeper appreciation for ideas and people around me. He influences those around him with his kindness and wisdom, even if he doesn't like to admit it. He is humble and cares a great amount for others. It is due to these aspects that his legacy is present.

How do you want to be remembered? What might your legacy look like? My challenge for you is to do more than just write books and articles, but teach. Teaching does not happen solely in the classroom, but it can take place at anytime and anywhere. Share your knowledge with those around you. You never know the influence you may have.

*Jim Lubker, Western Home Communities Senior*

*Kassidy Sharp, UNI Human Relations Senior 1E19*

## 20

### The Maker

The first time I met Ron, I knew we were going to share common interests as we both are passionate for industrial arts. Ron greeted me at the door with a big smile on his face and at that moment I knew our meetings together were going to be meaningful.

Ron was born on a small, family farm in Audubon County, Iowa in 1933. His parents, Niels and Laura had 12 children, 9 boys and 3 girls. Although his family didn't have much, they lived a happy and healthy life. Growing up, Niels always encouraged Ron to pursue an education

carrier. Ron attended a country one room school house throughout grade school. After the passing of his father, Ron, his siblings, and his mother moved to Exira, Iowa, where Ron would graduate high school.

In 1951 Ron followed 8 of his siblings' footsteps and attended Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Initially, Ron wanted to achieve his science degree, as one of his older brothers inspired him to do so. However, Ron struggled with his math and chemistry courses, which caused him to change his major to industrial arts. During high school, Ron held great memories of his industrial arts teacher, Mr. Hooper, which encouraged this decision.

Upon changing his major to industrial arts, it gave Ron the opportunity to meet his greatest and most influential mentor, Willis Wagner. Ron graduated from Iowa State Teachers College with an industrial technology degree. The relationship between Ron and Willis placed Ron onto the right path to become a successful and passionate teacher for his students. Ron taught in high schools, and colleges including Nebraska, Oregon, Zimbabwe, Egypt, and UNI for the majority of his work.

Ron retired at the age of fifty-seven but still shows so much passion for his woodworking craftsmanship. Cad drafting was a big hobby of his as well, drawing up a house which he actually built with a good friend of his. His projects show the type of craftsman he really is, and I can tell he takes a lot of pride in what he does. Ron was very warm hearted and welcoming to me, I am very fortunate I had the opportunity for him to share his stories.

*Ron Bro, Western Home Communities Senior*

*Chase Shedenhelm, UNI Human Relations Senior 1E20*

## 21

### Traveling Teacher

When I first met Mary I was greeted with a warm smile. In her "I Am" poem Mary wrote, "I am polite and loving." These words describe Mary completely. She has such a kind heart and is so extremely polite. Being able to learn many different things about Mary and what she has done throughout her life has opened my eyes tremendously. Mary has taught in so many different places. She taught in Iowa for several years. She also had the opportunity to travel to Egypt and Zimbabwe to teach.

When Mary's husband Ron was offered a position to teach in Egypt, Mary went along. She was able to teach at a language school in a first grade classroom for three months. Mary had 24 children in her room, but only three knew English. The rest spoke Arabic. Mary had one student she could always count on to help her translate different things to the rest of the class. At the end of the year, Mary was to have her students do a program for the parents. She ended up having the children tell colors, shapes, count to 25, and sing songs all in English. Learning about how difficult it was for Mary to teach with the language barrier that existed was very eye opening, especially with how diverse schools are becoming.

After teaching in Egypt, Mary and her husband Ron went to Zimbabwe. Mary was also fortunate enough to find a teaching job in a private school for 10 months. At this preschool, she had about 12 children in her class, all of which spoke English. While talking to Mary about this period in her life, she was able to tell many different stories about the experiences she had.

Mary not only taught these children, but she supplied them with school supplies they might not otherwise have had available to them. Her loving and polite attitude was easily seen through this small act. Even though Mary does not teach anymore, she still travels to preschools around Cedar Falls and reads the children stories. Mary is so kind hearted anyone lucky enough to get to know her is blessed.

*Mary Bro, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Taylor Sorenson, UNI Human Relations Senior 1E21*

## 22

### **Thankful and Faithful**

Oh Cindy, what a humorous, warmhearted, and grateful lady she is. I absolutely adored Cindy the first, and every time we met together. She is immensely kind and caring, always wanting to know how you are and asking questions, making you feel comfortable. Cindy is very personable and not just with me, but with everyone she encounters. She is utterly genuine and very true to herself. I admire her truthfulness and saying what she thinks is right. Cindy is a very thankful person, which is a quality that I immediately connected to. We both seem to be appreciative of what has been given to us. She is grateful for the faith she has and gives that sense of faith to others.

In her "I Am" poem Cindy wrote, "I am thankful for my blessings. I worry about the feelings in people's hearts. I cry for those in need. I want to be the best person I can be." I believe that Cindy is the best person because of her selflessness when it comes to others and their hardships, the emotion and feeling she puts into helping others, and her gratitude for her faith and the faith she has in others. Cindy is very ambitious when it comes to doing her best. She always tries her best, even if she can't do exactly what she wants. She feels that if one door closes, another opens and something that you hope happens may not, but that is okay because there is always another way and everything happens for a reason.

She believes in keeping a positive attitude and having faith that everything will work out. I value her positive attitude and the presence it brings to our visits together. Cindy is someone who can always put a smile on your face and reassure you that you are cared for. I take pleasure in receiving the opportunity to know her and spend time with her. I appreciate her presence and think very highly of the several amazing qualities she has and shares with others.

*Cindy Glasener, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Miranda Struck, UNI Human Relations Senior 1E22*

## 23

### **Farm Life**

Barb Ubben is a Cedar Valley native. She grew up on farm, which was located between Cedar Falls and Hudson where Highway 20 goes underneath Hudson Road. Her grandparents lived on the next farm over, which is where PIPAC (Professional Insurance Planners and

Consultants) now stands. Even though she has not lived on the farm for years, she still has many fond memories of being there.

Some of the memories include Barb and her sister playing Nurse and Administrator under the shade trees on the farm, which is what they grew up to do for a living. They also helped grow plants and vegetables in the huge garden behind their house and feed hitchhikers in their front porch.

They once had a busload of basketball players sleep throughout their house when they got stranded in a blizzard. They woke up the next morning and fed them all breakfast before they left.

Barb remembers constantly bugging her dad to let her work on the farm. The thing she wanted to do the most was go out into the field with him to bail the hay. He always said it would be too heavy for her. However, one day he allowed her to help him bail straw. She loved being outside with her father.

Even though the farms are no longer standing, Barb still feels close to the farm and the happiness it brought her. She has an aerial view of the farm hanging up in her new home, which she can see every day. The house that she grew up in was moved to Janesville, while the corncrib was moved to a nearby farm. Barb can still see a part from her past if she wants to.

Barb and I immediately connected when we met, because I also grew up on a farm. In our short time together, I have learned how to cherish my memories of growing up on a farm even more and not to take it for granted. We both had the desire to live in town when we were younger, but we never would have given up the farm life. It's a good life.

*Barb Ubben, Western Home Communities Senior  
Shea VanLangen, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F23*

## 24

### A New Friend

“Reading brings us unknown friends.” Mysterious words spoken by a French novelist and playwright named Honoré de Balzac echo in my mind as I sip my new favorite iced tea. I settle into the subtle spice of Cherie’s secret recipe and think back to the first time I visited her on a blustery February day. Her house smelled like baking banana bread and reminded me of home and we talked so long that I was nearly late for my one o’clock class but I did not care because I knew I was in the process of gaining a friend. I needed to get that recipe.

Cherie is a reader. The kind of reader that fell in love with stories as a child, who listens to audiobooks on her iPhone, and who perks up when she finds another reader to share titles with. She actually reminds me a lot of myself. This feels strange to say because I am a disheveled college student with twenty dollars’ worth of library fines while Cherie knows how to make her own yogurt and who knows how many steps she walks every day (the number is 7,000). Nevertheless, I see certain traits in myself magnified in her as her wisdom and experience has shaped her into a woman that I can only hope to be like somewhere down the road.

One of these experiences has stuck with me through the last few weeks and I actually find myself thinking back to it with a smile on my face quite often. This story reminds Cherie of the word “acceptance” and was brought to the surface when I asked her to describe an influential person that she has come across in her lifetime. “Ahh . . .” she began as I watched her settle into her kitchen chair and the memory of seventh grade.

“Well, when kids my age began going to boy/girl parties, I started a project with my school librarian.” She began to paint the portrait of Mrs. Flora, the kind school librarian with boxes and boxes of books that needed to be read through and determined if they should remain in the school library or not. Cherie was the reader for the job.

One eventful day at school, one of her classmates discovered that Cherie was a “speed reader”. He watched her bookmark zip from one line to the next and immediately accused her of pretending to read. However, to the surprise of him and all of her classmates, she proved that she was in fact retaining everything that she was reading . . . she was just doing it a lot faster than other students her age. Thanks to this mysteriously acquired skill, the growing relationship between her and Mrs. Flora, and hours spent pouring over books in the library, Cherie was able to read around five hundred books and assist in the development of her school library.

Cherie gathered more than a lot of extra reading time during this project. She grew as a human being within the safety of the school library and learned from Mrs. Flora that “it is okay to be different.” As she remembers back to this time, I can see that this experience has followed her through her years of being a teacher and college professor, the raising of her two children, and now her role of being my new friend.

“Reading brings us unknown friends”. Those words roll through my head one more time as I take the final sip of my tea and I can only feel immensely grateful that I have gotten to know Cherie.

*Cheri Dargan, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Molly White, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F24*

## 25

### **From the Darkness We see the Light**

Have you ever had a moment in life where it felt like you hit rock bottom? Have you ever had something terrible happen where you began to question God or question why bad things happen? I’m sure most if not all of us have had some experience like this. For Lyle Erlanson, that experience is what set him on a new path which he has taken with enthusiasm every day of his life.

In early December 1979, Lyle Erlanson was divorced from his wife. Just like many others who have gone through divorce, Lyle felt hurt and dealt with it the way he knew how which was to ride his motorcycle. After a few days of riding his motorcycle and scrapping foot pegs, Lyle crashed going around a corner he had taken too fast. Lyle describes this moment in vivid detail as he tells how it seemed as if someone had reached down and cradled him and saved him from death.

Lyle knew then he had put off long enough what needed to be done. In that moment, Lyle turned to God and said, “Yes Lord! What do you want from me?” From this moment forward, Lyle’s life would not be the same. He turned over a new leaf and began diving into God’s Word.

Within the first few weeks of reading the Bible, Lyle began to realize the Lord wanted to use him if he would allow himself to be teachable. After 18 months of soul searching and walking with the Lord, Lyle asked for forgiveness of things he had done in the past to some people and began to move forward as a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ. Since then, Lyle has been a part of numerous Bible studies both at church and at John Deere where he worked for 34 years until his retirement and his move to Western Homes.

Lyle currently attends mass and is a part of a Bible study which takes place at St. Patrick's Church here in Cedar Falls. Lyle believes it is his mission to reach all of those around him with the love and the peace that only Christ can bring. As his mission continues, Lyle continues to have a passionate heart for others and looks to the future with hope and faith in Jesus Christ as his guide on this journey we call life.

*Lyle Erlanson, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Caleb Wubben, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F26*

## 26

### **Learning for a Lifetime**

If you were to look up the word “life-long learner” in the dictionary, you would most likely find the name Berdena Beach. Berdena has a curious and caring spirit that is evident from the moment you meet her. She possesses a drive and hunger to learn and discover as well as a passion to share her knowledge with others.

Holding four advanced degrees, Berdena pursued higher education at a time when women were not as welcomed in that world. She did not let social pressures prevent her from pursuing her passion for learning. I was blessed to have the opportunity to attend a positive psychology class at Western Home with Berdena. While I was only able to attend one class period, it was such a joy to sit with a group of women who desired to learn and expand the abundant knowledge they already possess.

Throughout her life, Berdena has been dedicated to helping families in need through her work as a counselor. When talking with her, she immediately makes you feel loved, cared for, and welcomed.

Small talk does not last long for she cares much more about who you are as a person than what you think about the weather. Sitting with her in her living room, time flies by because we become so engrossed in conversation, sharing memories, experiences, hopes, and dreams.

I am abundantly blessed by my new friendship with Berdena. She inspires me to never stop learning, to pursue my dreams, and to care for those around me. Those who have the opportunity to spend any amount of time with Berdena know what a blessing she is to everyone. Her curious and caring spirit is infectious and you can't help but feel the desire to share in her excitement and passion for learning and for others.

*Berdena Beach, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Hannah Carlson, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F27*

## 27

### **Moments**

There are certain moments in a person's life they will always remember. Each of these moments have a certain significance to the person. These moments help shape who we are; they give us a cause for direction. When I first met Don Tamisiea, we had an hour discussion touching on certain moments in his life. We started from a young boy and went all the way through his retirement.

One story that Don decided to tell me was when he was a student at Iowa State. Don went to Iowa State from 1952-1956. While in college Don had a few jobs. One job that stood out to me was when he was a waiter of sorts in a girl's dormitory.

Don thought it would be a good idea to carry 12 small bowls of applesauce on a waiter's tray out to this table of girls he was waiting on. He was trying to show that he was the best at whatever he was doing, and that so he was going to give it maximum effort. When Don left the kitchen holding this tray filled with bowls of applesauce, he went through a set of swinging double doors. That is when Don realized someone had spilled something. Don didn't see the spill, he could only feel it, as he started slipping on what was a large puddle of water.

Don, as the resilient man that he was, didn't want to fall. He also let me know that each dish you broke you paid for, so he really didn't want to fall. With his quick thinking and reflexes, Don decided that it would be a good idea to just set the tray against the wall and hold the tray against the wall as he fell to the ground. A rush of embarrassment went over him. Don knew he didn't break anything, but he did this in front of a room full of college girls.

That feeling of embarrassment is not rivaled by any other feeling in this world, but all it took was one moment for it to all change. Don heard clapping, and as he looked up he was getting a standing ovation from the girls in the room. The moment that Don would have thought to be the most embarrassing moment of his life was switched to something of triumph in the blink of an eye.

Everyone's lives are made up of tiny little moments that combine into a story. The story will have some good parts, and will have some bad. The most important thing that you can do with these moments is to use them to shape that final story of yours into the version that you want. This moment from Don could have been viewed in other different ways and different lessons could have been taken from it. Each moment whether big or small can have an impact on your life; you just should be the one to decide how it will affect you.

*Don Tamisiea, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Chris Bruess, UNI Human Relations Senior 1F28*

## 28

### **Mountain of Courage**

Rebecca is an outdoorswoman. She can sense the presence of God and all His beauty best when she is high in the Rocky Mountains around Estes Park. Rebecca has climbed plenty of mountains in her lifetime: stunningly difficult ones and sensationally exciting ones alike. The story of how she conquered one certain mountain, however, I hold particularly close to my heart.

Rebecca was a soon-to-be graduate at the University of Iowa with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and a teaching certification in the social sciences. She only had to complete her student teaching requirements before she could walk across the stage at graduation. One day, as she was preparing to student teach, a professor in the department pulled her aside to impart his advice.

You see, Rebecca began to lose vision as a young college student. Even though this greatly affected her ability to read text on a page, she found ways to adapt to the new circumstances throughout her university years. She fought the doubts that she and others had

about the lack of vision. When this professor came to her, he planted a great mountain of his doubt right in her path.

The professor suggested that she should abstain from student teaching. He knew that he could not deny her the opportunity due to the White Cane law which protects the rights of people with disabilities, yet he was worried that the high school students might take advantage of her vision loss. Rebecca left with genuine concerns about his comments. Why hadn't this come up until now? Why did people see her disability differently than she did? She gave it serious consideration for a week, and made a decision.

"I owe it to myself to find out whether or not I could teach," Rebecca told her professor. She didn't know how it would go, and he didn't either. Whether it went very well or not, Rebecca could live with the results, however she could not live with not knowing.

Months later that same professor came to observe several of her lessons as a student teacher. Right after class, he met her in the hallway with tears in his eyes. "Not many students can teach so well that they have me wanting to participate in the lesson. You did. You've taught me an important lesson, Rebecca." Rebecca thinks this became an example of a person viewing her abilities rather than her disability.

Rebecca owed it to herself to find out. She conquered a mountain full of doubt which soon turned into a life full of courage. Not long after, she had received her master's degree from Iowa and started teaching as one of the most cherished professors at the University of Northern Iowa, serving education students with "ahead-of-the-times" pedagogy and spirit. She has left a legacy of compassion, care, and courage on my heart, and in her mountain I can sense the presence of God, oh so clearly.

*Rebecca Barrionuevo, Western Homes Community Senior*  
*Brianna Bell, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A1*

## 29

### **A Journey for the Ages**

As I walked into the Western Home, I did not know what to expect. I knew I was meeting a man named Bud and hearing his story. I was excited to hear what Bud had to offer. I had a weird feeling that hearing Bud's story will offer me wisdom for my future. As I entered his room, my perspective on life changed in a good way. What can I say, I was inspired by Bud's story.

Bud was born in Cresco, Iowa, but moved to Ridgeway, Iowa. He eventually moved to Minnesota and finished high school there. When Bud was young, he was presented with his first hardship; his father passed away. This was a tough task for Bud to adjust. When high school came, Bud was presented with another hardship. He was drafted and had to serve his country during World War II.

Bud joined the Navy and worked on the top deck. He was in fire control and shot the weapons that were on the ship. When the war ended, Bud was able to travel around the world.

The ship went to Singapore, South Africa, India, and finished in Philadelphia. Bud was able to travel around the world and see various countries.

Adjusting after the war was a struggle for Bud. He wanted to be an electrician, but finding a job was difficult. He eventually found a job and developed a relationship with his soon to be wife.

As Bud grew older, he still was an active member in helping people who served the military. Bud attended a convention in Louisiana for veterans. He represented Iowa and was the State Commander for Vets. His next convention was in three years and they had to decide where the location is. Bud advocated for Des Moines, IA and it was chosen. Because of Bud's determination and helping out Veteran, he was presented the key to the city. This is a big honor where few people have received this award.

Bud is an inspirational person whose story needs to be heard. Ever since he was young, Bud was presented hardships. Bud never ran away from those hardships and faced them head-on.  
*Bud Fosse, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Nolan Burns, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A2*

## 30

### Even the Little Details

Nancy is kind and considerate. Nancy and I had a unique God moment when we first met each other. At our meet and greet, Nancy noticed that we both attended the same church at one point in time. As we talked more, we learned that we had both been on a similar mission trip to Kenya through that church! From our first encounter, we were both able to see how God cares about even the little details and was able to pair us together this semester!

A few years ago, Nancy's church was sharing about their yearly mission trip to Kenya and that they were looking for members of the church to go. When the trip was shown, it said that all ages were welcomed. As Nancy contemplated the trip, she thought surely they didn't mean that. Nancy then applied to go on the Kenya mission trip and was accepted as one of the team members! Sure enough, that summer, she would be in Kwambekenya Kenya.

This trip was eye-opening. 410 Bridge is the organization that the church and the community paired with to help each other out. The organization is based on the verse 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." Using God's gifts is exactly what Nancy did on this mission trip. Kind and considerate are two adjectives used to describe Nancy; while in Kenya, Nancy was able to share her love for others. She opened her heart and always had an open ear to hear other people's stories. One family that touched Nancy was a mother with several young children. This mother worked hard and out of the little that she had, she welcomed Nancy and her team into her home while sharing a treat with Nancy and her friends from Prairie Lakes Church. Nancy and her friends were given treats but generously offered them to the children since treats were special and rare for them. This kind gesture brought smiles to the children's faces.

Reflecting on the trip, Nancy was able to see the many blessings in her life. Traveling to a third world country is eye-opening. Nancy was able to see the school, the church, and many other parts of the community that she visited. Lives were touched and changed during this trip. God was able to work and show how we are all his children. Relationships were formed even

though there was a different culture, language, and many other differences. Smiles are contagious and everywhere in Kenya; there may be few “things” in Kenya but there is certainly a large community that lives as a family with love and compassion. The Kwambekenya community is rich in relationships.

Sharing similar experiences has allowed Nancy and me to open up about a trip in our lives that many other people do not always understand. We have been able to share pictures and stories about how God worked in and through our trips. Muchai was one friend that we had both met in Kenya. He was a kind, gentle man who made both of us feel welcome in the beautiful country of Kenya. Being paired with Nancy was certainly God at work in even the little details of our lives! Nancy’s heart has been touched by the people in Kwambekenya and Nancy has certainly touched my heart in our few visits.

*Nancy Colvin, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Ellen Cannon, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A3*

### 31

#### Through Someone Else’s Eyes

When first meeting Alice, she was very polite, shy, and collected. Throughout our time together, I’ve gotten to see the many different, beautiful sides of Alice Hansen. My favorite stories to hear about are the silly pranks that she would pull on her husband, Jim.

On the wonderful holiday of April Fools, Alice was conjuring up her next trick for Jim. The night before April 1st, she decided that she was going to loosely baste the fly of his boxers together. Alice knew that Jim would take the top pair of boxers, so that was the pair that she was sure to select. Around 10 the next morning, Alice got a phone call. “Okay, funny business!” Alice knew exactly what he was talking about, and together they just laughed.

Sometimes, Alice would tie knots in Jim’s pajamas. Other times they would have a sock fight before going to bed. Alice always says, “You have to add zip to your life!” I think this is an important aspect that we all need to remember in our lives.

Alice wonders what she’s like through someone else’s eyes. Now, when I look at Alice, I see a God-loving, caring, fun, and respectful woman. In our short time together, she’s shown me how precious life really is, how important it is to keep the ones you love close, and that you always need to have some fun. It has been a true honor to be able to share such precious time with such a remarkable woman.

*Alice Hansen, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Jasmine Clausen, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A4*

### 32

#### House along the River

Along the river, on the west side of Cedar Falls sits a beautiful house and not long ago did this house belong to Neysa and her family. In 1968, her husband, Marv, the architect and a crew made up of only men built the family house that sits there today. Neysa believed that the dark wood that was used, made the house feel like a men’s club.

After several years, they expanded the eating space to accommodate the many grandchildren, which have now totaled to 12 and the 20<sup>th</sup> great-grandchild is currently on the way. The ten-foot table was a delightful place to sit around and chat with the many family members. Marv would frequently hide eggs in the house for the grandchildren to find just like living on a farm, which led to unfound eggs that the cleaning ladies would scavenge up.

After Marv passed away in 1991, Neysa decided it was time to lighten up the house to make it feel more like a home. She wanted friends and family to put their feet up, stay awhile, and feel welcomed. When asking the opinion of an original member of the crew, he decided it would be okay to paint the original wood, which is exactly what she did. Neysa also changed the kitchen completely by changing the dark wood to a pine wood.

Doing these projects of remodeling and redecorating, Neysa had the idea that she could do this at the Western Home Communities and has like it immensely.

*“Our house had a heart and a soul and eyes to see us with, and approvals and solicitudes and deep sympathies; it was of us, and we were in its confidence, and lived in its grace and in the peace of its benediction. We never came home from an absence that its face did not light up and speak out its eloquent welcome—and we could not enter it unmoved.” –Mark Twain*

*Neysa Klepfer, Western Home Communities Senior  
Kylie Cornwell, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A5*

### 33

#### Memories of Love

When I first met Barb Davis, I was immediately greeted with a tight hug and inviting smile in the middle of Panera. Right from that moment, I knew that she possessed strong feelings of love – which she shows and reminisces on throughout our time together. Barb first knew love because of her parents. She reflected deeply on the great love her daddy had for her mother and that allowed her to view love as a feeling so indescribable towards her companion for life, Dave. Although Dave has passed, it is quite evident that Barb and Dave shared so much love for each other throughout their many years together.

They loved to travel together. Even though they had different tastes and different habits, Barb and Dave still respected one another because of the strong love they held together. When they would travel together, Barb and Dave could sit in silence because they both liked it. They didn't even have to say a single word. Each other's company was just enough and it meant the world to Barb to just simply be by her companion.

Barb and Dave had rules when they traveled together. They made a point to switch drivers every two hours and to never argue. Barb described it as possessing different roles in the car, each to fulfill the other. It's like they were on two sides of a scale, balancing each other out with each of their strengths and weaknesses, just like a loving marriage should be.

The driver for the time being also got to control the radio, no matter what their taste of music was like. Barb enjoyed classical music, but Dave did not; however, that fact did not bother Dave because he knew his role in the passenger seat was to navigate and to let Barb focus on driving. Then they would switch and Barb would then switch roles into being the best navigator

for Dave while Dave focused on getting him and Barb to their destination. Their balancing acts in their marriage is what portrays their deep and everlasting love for each other. Of course Barb and Dave had different tastes and styles, but that's what made them love each other even more. They learned through life together how to balance and value their marriage, and to me, that's all that counts.

As a strong woman of faith, Barb has taught me the importance of trusting in the Lord and not being afraid to get on your knees when times are tough. Even though Barb has experienced some road bumps in life, she always knows when it's time to give it up to the Lord and let Him do His work. She possesses the great value of patience; for she knows the plans the Lord has for her, even when life gets tough.

I remember one particular visit with Barb that was so powerful because she said that she "sees Christ everywhere." She is able to reflect through Him in order to remember the great love she still shares with Dave even though he has passed. God is so good and has allowed Barb to see Him working in her life in order to form memories of love.

*Barb Davis, Western Homes Communities Senior  
Brette Correy, UNI Human Relations Senior 4B6*

## 34

### **An Admirable Lady**

When I met Pearl on the very first day, I immediately felt the most calming feeling. I knew our time together was going to be something particularly special. Talking with her is so soothing; it is so down-to-earth and natural. Pearl is certainly one of the sweetest ladies I know. Her gentle voice and wholehearted hugs are enough to make anyone feel warm and welcome.

One of Pearl's hobbies is to do crafting. What makes this hobby extra special, though, is the time she has spent with her family while doing so. Pearl, her husband Dick, and their daughter Kim used to either host craft shows in their home or attend them in the UNI Dome or even in Missouri once a year. She used to make lunch cloths and stuffed animals, such as penguins and snowmen. Today, Pearl thoroughly enjoys making cards. I was fortunate enough to receive one of her personalized designs for my birthday. Pearl has genuinely had fun with crafting over the years.

In this short amount of time I have had with Pearl, she has easily become someone I truly admire. She is a woman who is honest, kind, and has extraordinary faith. Her appreciation for life and dedication to living happily is what I strive for. I feel so lucky and blessed that I was the one chosen to meet and get to know this phenomenal lady. I aspire to be the woman that Pearl Hanson is some day.

*Pearl Hanson, Western Home Communities Senior  
Jami Dahlby, UNI Human Relations Senior 4B7*

### A Living Storybook

When we first met, Jack informed me that he loves to talk, but sometimes people say he talks too much. Through our visits, however, I have learned he is a man of many more talents. He is a gardener, a teacher, a marriage officiant, an army veteran, a brother, a husband, and a father and grandfather. Besides his family, Jack is most proud of his work as a journalist. When asked what he wants to be remembered by, Jack responded, “. . . probably for one of my scoops, one of the stories that I was lucky enough to tell”.

At the young age of 16, Jack began his journalism career with his self-published newspaper, *The Sophomore Stinker*. This publication was cherished by both students and the community as a witty and light-hearted news source.

Jack eventually worked his way up to writing for the *Waterloo Courier* and *Des Moines Register*. During his years in these positions he had the opportunity to meet people and hear stories that few people ever get. A hostage of the Iraq-Iran war, families victim to murder, and many more stories lie in his collection that he has not only been fortunate enough to hear, but share with the world.

What amazes me most, however, is not the stories Jack has heard or shared but how the stories have shaped him. My time spent with Jack has been full of conversations of hardship, friendship, memories, and lessons learned.

These conversations have enlightened me to two special qualities in him: optimistic and humble. Jack does not view his hardships in life. He believes that there were people out there who had it worse than him, a belief that was reaffirmed when listening to others’ stories, and that a challenge often makes you grow as a person. However, Jack is also not quick to boast about his accomplishments either. He is proud of the stories he’s told, in fact much of our time was spent sharing his favorite ones, but claims he owes it to luck that the story was brought to him in the first place.

These qualities have made Jack the man he is today, and continue to impact his outlook on life. The world could learn a lot from people like Jack, those who have experienced the ups and downs of life and still had the courage to follow their dreams. I am grateful for the time we have shared.

*Jack Holveson, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Abby Dickinson, UNI Human Relations Senior 4A6*

### The Color of Acceptance

Roberta is an educator, a friend, a rebel, and an inspiration. On one of my visits with Roberta, she told me a story about high school. Going to high school in the late 50’s and early 60’s she saw discrimination first hand through segregation of blacks and whites. She did not like the segregation happening in her school and decided to stand up the best that she could. She and her friends would switch clothes before school and wear each other’s clothes for the day.

Although it seemed small, this caused an up-roar from her teachers, as this was just not done and unacceptable behavior. This was her rebellion. She would visit and make friends with whomever she wanted both inside and outside of school.

Growing up in the Maywood area she saw integration of blacks and whites. Her grandmother lived in the north end, an area that was integrated with blacks and whites. She didn't see color, only people and friendship. She grew up knowing that skin color didn't matter.

Throughout her life, Roberta made it a point to fight the segregation and discrimination that she witnessed. As an educator, she did her best to be a culturally competent and diverse teacher. She would seek out workshops and other continuing education courses to study diversity and culture. She sought insight from other professionals on curriculum and fought to change curriculum that was discriminatory. She worked hard to be an advocate for all of her students.

Even now she is an advocate for diversity. She pushes for new culturally inclusive lyrics in old songs. Roberta's fight against discrimination and segregation has been life-long and has made a difference in the lives of those that she has touched. Roberta continues to educate, continues to be a friend, a rebel, and an inspiration.

She has taught me about cultural acceptance, how to be a true friend, how to stand up for what you believe in and has inspired me to push myself to stand up for what I know is right.

*Roberta Simmons, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Staci Eversmeyer, UNI Human Relations Senior 4B8*

## 37

### Life on the Stage

George Glenn is a longtime resident here in Cedar Falls spanning over 51 years. His passion of theatre turned into a career. He directed plays and taught acting/theatre classes at the University of Northern Iowa for 34 years.

He has not always been an Iowan. He was educated in Illinois through his undergrad and graduate years. George first attended a small liberal arts school Shimer College in Chicago that has been there since the mid 19th century. George made great relations while at Shimer College including with the school chaplain who promised George that he would perform his wedding when the time comes. George was actively involved in plays and theatre during his college years at Shimer and later Northern Illinois.

One particular play George was involved in at Northern Illinois attracted a young woman. A backstage romance of the play "Taming the Shrew" grew between a young George and Sandy. The romance led to long lasting marriage. Sandy claims that it was the blue tights George wore that really attracted her in.

In November of 1963, George and Sandy were married in a small wedding in Illinois. George's school chaplain fulfilled his promise and officiated the wedding. Chicago was the decided location of their honeymoon. Few knew the location of the honeymoon, one being George's sister Susan.

The first stop of George and Sandy's secret honeymoon was at Watertower Inn, a famous old time Chicago restaurant. During their meal a woman approached George and Sandy at their table and spoke directly to George.

"George where were you last night? I waited up for you all night." George was bewildered and completely caught off guard. What could his brand new wife be thinking of her

new husband? Was their marriage doomed from the start? The woman continued to grill George and his confusion grew along with awkwardness. On and on she went until finally the laughter a few tables away was too much to not notice.

George's sister had let it slip the location of the honeymoon to his friends who had surprised George how only great friends can. George and Sandy made it through this awkward encounter and turned it into marriage of 54 years and counting.

I think this story really shows the many connections George has made throughout his life and the great friends that have made his very eventful life even a little more entertaining.

Theatre brought George and Sandy to Cedar Falls after his years at Shimer and Northern Illinois University. In 1966 Dr. Glenn was an instructor of theatre here at Northern Iowa. They have resided here since. Together they have had 3 kids and 9 grandchildren spread throughout the state of Iowa and all seeming to be either a teacher or a lawyer.

Thank you George for opening the curtain into your life. We shared a lot of stories on the stage and on the basketball court!!

*George Glenn, Western Home Communities Senior  
Joe Frost, UNI Human Relations Senior 4B11*

## 38

### Circle of Memories

*"Friendship grows ever so gradually and leaves a circle of memories that fill out the years of our lives,"* quote by Len Froyen. Mary Lou's circle of memories clearly show the love she has for her friends and family. Her kind, fun, and genuine personality creates a friendly environment that makes me look forward to our meetings every week.

Whether she is sharing memories of fun times she has had with some of her closest friends or describing tough times she and her family has gone through, Mary Lou always has a positive attitude and a smile on her face.

When I asked her about any hardships or difficulties she has had in her life, she told me she doesn't feel like she had any. She then explained that while certain situations were horrible and difficult to deal with when it happened, a person has to move on and learn from the situation. Situations that most people would consider a hardship, Mary Lou views them as experiences in which she gained something from.

Time has healed the pain from those hardships and has created a deeper love for the people in her life. While listening to Mary Lou's stories, it is clear that she values her relationships with her family and friends.

She remembers listening to the radio while sewing with her mother and looking up to her older sister who started college when Mary Lou started kindergarten. She also remembers the many friends of her father, who kindly helped out her and her mother after her father died when she was four years old. She spent a lot of time with her next door neighbors, a couple who were both teachers at her school and who walked her down the aisle at her wedding. She also tells stories about her friends from college and her two closest friends growing up, who she hung out with separately because they didn't get along.

Last but certainly not least, Mary Lou has shared photos of her husband, her three girls, and other family members. All of these friendships have gradually created many wonderful memories for Mary Lou throughout the years, and have turned into inspiring stories.

*Mary Lou Snyder, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Cassie Ginther, UNI Human Relations Senior 4B9*

## 39

### **Anatomy of an Accident**

Monday, May 10th, 1948 - the USS Spikefish, a Balao-class submarine, departed the Long Island Sound filled with naval trainees. Bob Robinson, 19 years old at the time, the Yeoman aboard the ship, responsible for correspondence, protocols, and records. On this day while the submarine was submerged, Bob was one of four on watch, Bob and another as lookouts and the other two responsible for radar and manning the helm. Suddenly, the ship took a sharp downward turn, hitting the bottom of the sea at 105 feet.

The front of the ship had dropped, so the sailors looked to the front for the problem. They opened the Forward Torpedo Room door to see a water wall filling the room. One trainee panicked, running the wrong way where another sailor had to grab him and drive him through the water wall to safety. In an effort to isolate the flood, they sealed the door to the room. However, one sailor was left behind so the door had to be reopened to get him out. Now that they had found and isolated the problem, measures had to be taken to resurface the sub.

Because the ship lacked buoyancy, the crew had to get rid of extra weight. To do this, they released over 48,000 gallons of diesel fuel into the water. This got the submarine up to the surface. However, because of the water in the Forward Torpedo Room part of the ship was still under. They needed to pump it out.

To pump out the water, the sailors needed to be on the deck of the ship. Unfortunately, the water was 45 degrees and at that temperature all of the diesel fuel had gelled up, making the surface slippery. They tied ropes to themselves and the ship to prevent slipping away, got to the torpedo hatch on the deck, “dogged it down tight” to stop more water from flooding in, and pumped the water out. Everyone was safe and the ship made it back to port. One of Bob’s responsibilities as Yeoman was to get the mail, and upon getting off the ship to get it, he remembers an exchange between the Commodore and the Captain of the ship, with the Commodore saying “Well Jake, you got em’ all back alive.”

Another responsibility of Bob’s was to type up the ship's log, detailing the incident, and he has in fact written and given a speech about that day, “The Anatomy of an Accident.” What had happened in the Forward Torpedo Room was the torpedo hatch on the deck that they had to “dog down tight” had not been properly closed. The submarine was in port the previous two weeks and over that amount of time, many things get moved around and when the torpedoes were loaded, they had forgotten to tighten the hatch.

The trim tanks of the sub, which maintain the depth and stability of the ship, build pressure inside that blew open the loose hatch. However, it is not the sole fault of the person who forgot to tighten the hatch. Many people were supposed to check the hatches before sailing off, and every single one assumed that the previous person had properly checked and tightened it.

Had this accident happened in deeper waters, every sailor aboard would have perished. But, their training paid off and they knew how to handle the problem, and everyone made it out safe. The sailor responsible for the hatch was the same person who saved the trainee in the Forward Torpedo Room, earning himself a commendation to go along with being reprimanded for the loose hatch.

*Bob Robinson, Western Home Communities Senior  
Corbin Hatterman, UNI Human Relations Senior 4C11*

## 40

### **The Man in the Red Suit**

We should all attempt to be a little more like Richard Congdon. He has a saying, “You must give more to this life than you take.” He is a firm believer that we are put on this earth to make a difference. His life’s work has been built around that idea and he does more to give back than most people dream of.

There is a saying that not all heroes wear capes. This saying applies perfectly to Rich’s life. In his case the heroic symbol is a red suit, white beard and a big belly. Rich and his wife Rita, have been Mr. and Mrs. Claus in the Cedar Falls area for some time now. Their ability to make a difference is outstanding and truly a motivation to me as a future educator.

In meeting the couple, I was quick to learn their passion for life is truly immeasurable. I can’t begin to explain the impact they have made in the lives of others. Rich’s constant work in the community and in his church makes him a hero in my eyes and in the eyes of many Cedar Falls children.

The high school sweethearts are what we all strive for in a relationship. Their love for one another is strengthened day by day and it is easy to understand why they are each other’s best friend and biggest fan. Prior to Rich’s career as the big man in the red suit, he was a successful business owner.

As an accomplished printing company owner, Rich was constantly taking risks. He expressed that in order to be the best he had to take risks. Whether it be buying a four-color printing press or buying out a competitor, Rich was always willing to put his business on the line. Risk taking is one thing Rich and his wife both believed in.

When Rita was offered a new teaching position or had an opportunity for something new, Rich encouraged her to go for it. He believed in his business and in his wife so it was often a no brainer to take the leap or encourage his wife to do so. Rich expressed how risk taking impacted every aspect of his life.

It put a bind on him emotionally as well as financially. He spent a lot of his time at the office and worked hard to keep his business successful. He gained a lot of respect in the printing world through his passion, integrity and success. Rich kept one thing constant throughout his career, he took the risks necessary for a successful business, and made time for his wife and kids.

Rich is such an inspiration to me. His selflessness is truly honorable and I hope I can one day make the type of difference he has made. I also admire his passion for life and his lifelong partner, Rita.

In our interviews, it is amazing to see how strong their love for one another is. Their harmless banter can turn any bad day to good. There were some risks in Rich's life that went well while others failed but there was one risk in particular, where Rich hit a grand slam. I learned in about five minutes of talking with Rich and Rita that taking the big risk of asking Rita to be his wife had the most valuable payoff Rich has ever experienced.

*Richard Congdon, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Chad Jamison, UNI Human Relations Senior 4C12*

## 41

### Inspiring the Next Generation

“If there is one thing I want you take from this experience, it is to give back to your community.” This quote from Mrs. Rita Congdon demonstrates the precise feelings of restoring my drive to volunteer that I have embodied throughout my conversations with her. By seizing opportunities to give back to one's community, Mrs. Congdon believes an individual will be able to fully appreciate the life they have been given.

As Mrs. Congdon took me for a ride through her eventful life, she discussed her role as an educator and the love she had for her students and their unique personalities. Mrs. Congdon chuckled to herself as she explained she was the favorite teacher of her school; being requested by numerous parents of children begging to experience her contagious personality on a daily basis.

After retiring from the profession, Mrs. Congdon continued and still continues to give back to her profession by volunteering at Lincoln Elementary School every Monday morning. Mrs. Congdon has the privilege of listening to children read; a task she thoroughly looks forward to every week. Mrs. Congdon added to her love of giving back to her community when she and her husband became the Mr. and Mrs. Claus of the Cedar Falls community.

Being Mr. and Mrs. Claus, Mrs. Congdon and her husband are able to travel around their community and re-establish their love for participating in events that bring smiles to their faces and warmth to their hearts. This opportunity allows for them to touch children's lives by giving them hope, happiness, and something to believe in. As Mrs. Congdon reflected on her time as Mrs. Claus, she expressed that not only has the opportunity changed the children's lives, but her own as well. She explained the joy she feels in her heart as she sees the smile on a child's face and how this feeling created in her heart allows for her to see just how much of an impact she is making in her community.

As a senior at UNI, I have never felt more compelled to give back to my community than I do currently from listening to the stories of Mrs. Congdon supporting the community in which she was raised. Her love of life, exuberant personality, and willingness to given back to her community inspired me to restore my love of volunteering and will continue to motivate generations to come.

*Rita Congdon, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Kelsey Kaasa, UNI Human Relations Senior 4C13*

### Her Happy Heart

When I first met Marilyn, she instantly greeted me with a smile and a hug, just as if I was her granddaughter. I was more than worried when the day finally came to meet her, and getting lost in the hallways of the Western Home only added to my worry. Marilyn and I shared hellos when we walked to her apartment and then sat and instantly connected. Within the first ten minutes it felt like I had known her for years. She shared her stories and I shared mine.

Her love for her family, especially her late husband, is so strong. The way she talks about the relationship they had and how much they cared for each other instantly reminded me of my own grandparents. She isn't afraid to show others how much she cares and is more than willing to do what she can to make others in her life happy.

The second time I visited Marilyn, we completed the "I AM" poem. I thought that I had already found out so much about Marilyn's personality from the first day, and this poem only unfolded more about her. Her humor showed once again when she stated, "I pretend I am not old," and her caring heart showed when she said, "I hope people live the life they want to live." Although I have only known Marilyn a short time, these words have been something I think about each day. She has taught me that it is okay to put yourself first and to do what is best for you.

Just when I thought she could not make me feel more welcome into her life, Marilyn was very considerate and thoughtful toward my sister and me. She sent me home with a batch of cookies that she had made herself. She takes time to think about others and does whatever she can to bring them happiness, which is why I am so honored and grateful that I was chosen to hear her stories these last few weeks.

There needs to be more caring, loving, welcoming people in this world like Marilyn. She is kind to all and makes you feel important. I will take what she has taught me about life and the key to happiness and cherish the memories that we have created through telling our stories. I could not have anticipated the connection that I have with Marilyn but am grateful for it.

*Marilyn Roseberry, Western Home Communities  
Macey Kintzle, UNI Human Relations Senior 4C14*

### Inspiring Dreams

During one of my many enjoyable visits with John Falk, he once said that, "Millennials need to dream bigger." Throughout his life he has worked hard, accomplished many things, and has acquired numerous skills.

Listening to his stories from his childhood, his family life, and his time working at Goodyear has taught me multiple things about life. This motivated me to look into what my own dreams are and what I hope to achieve. John started in the automotive business by helping his dad fix cars and was able to move his way up the ladder where he became a valuable member of the Goodyear team.

During this time, John was not afraid of tackling a challenge and figuring out a way to get the job done. In the teaching profession, there will be many hurdles and hardships that I will be

faced with and have to battle. John's life has shown me that it is possible to make it through the difficult times and that it is important to learn and grow from those experiences.

John has also demonstrated the significance of being involved in the community. Whether that involves being an active member on a school board or volunteering at events, John is still a contributor to society to this day. When I enter the teaching field, I plan on attending many school functions and making it a huge priority to be a part of the community just like John has done and continues to do.

Not only has John influenced my decision to spend time helping the community, he has also taught me how to accomplish my hopes and dreams. Some of my dreams include having a family, being a positive role model to my students, and being a successful educator.

Just like John was able to get his basic knowledge of automobiles from his dad and grow in skills from other hands on experiences, I hope I am able to use the knowledge I gained from attending the University of Northern Iowa to accomplish my dreams. This is one of the countless reasons why I have valued the time I have spent listening to John's stories, engaging in conversation, and the impact he has had on me pursuing my dreams.

*John Falk, Western Home Community Senior*  
*Tessa Leibold, UNI Human Relations Senior 4C15*

### **A Life Worth Living**

During our life, we might not have money, possessions, but we always have time. We have these sayings, "I wish I had more time." or "I wish I spent my time on different things." Time is valuable to each one of us. I had the pleasure of hearing Jim Peterson's story. After meeting with Jim each week, I left with a feeling of amazement. It was inspiring to learn what Jim dedicated his life and time to.

Whether in his childhood or adulthood, Jim spent his time at work. At the age of 12, Jim was already working on the farm. Jim learned the importance of a good work ethic. Mornings came early to milk the cows, and nights went late plowing the field with horses. His transitioning from the small country farm to California, because of his enlistment in the Navy, was a shock of scenery; but Jim's attitude of work never faltered. Jim spent four years in the Navy during the Korean War.

Leaving the Navy, he headed back to Cedar Falls. Jim spent his time in Cedar Falls working while trying to earn a degree. Jim moved jobs during his lifetime, but his work always involved maintaining and creating computer programs.

As Jim continued his work and moving into retirement, he devoted his extra time to serving others. Jim volunteered his time in a variety of ways. He volunteered his time working with *Meals on Wheels*, which is a service that delivers meals to the homes of people who are unable to go out and purchase their own food. Jim also did volunteer state income tax return for others. He continues to help setup community meals at his local church, and provides rides to Iowa City for those dealing with cancer. Jim was nominated and received an award for volunteerism from the Black Hawk County mayors.

As Jim spent time working and serving others, he always had his family at his forefront. This past February marks 64 years of marriage to his wonderful wife, Ruth. Jim has a big family of kids, grandkids, and great grandkids. Jim devotes his time to attending their events whether it is their sporting events, musical concerts, or club events.

Through Jim's story, he has taught me the importance of relationships over material things. His actions have shown me that dedicating time to serving others is worth the while.

*Jim Peterson, Western Home Community Senior*  
*Timothy Logemann, UNI Human Relations Senior 4D16*

## 45

### We Need Women

Mac Eblen has made many achievements in her life as a woman, in a world ruled by men. She attended teaching college for four years, right after she had finished high school. She taught at the University of Wichita in Kansas for many years.

Then one day, she and her husband, Roy, made the decision to move their family to Cedar Rapids, Iowa. It was tax day in the middle of April in 1957. Mac and Roy loaded up their three kids in the backseat of their Pontiac station wagon and hit the road. They called themselves "pioneers in the opposite direction," as they were headed east instead of west.

Mac expected that it would be easy to get a teaching job in Iowa, but it proved to be more difficult than she had imagined. She made a trip to Cedar Rapids before the move to inquire about available jobs, and was disappointed. There were no available positions at the desirable college level, so she set up a meeting with the hiring office for the Cedar Rapids public schools.

She showed up with her resume in hand and gave it to the big man that was interviewing her. He read it over and gave her a strange look. He proceeded to say "this says your age is 32, Mrs. Eblen, is that correct?" He told her that he felt she was too old for the position, and that the only available position was in the high school, which he believed would be far too difficult for her to adjust to, coming from the college level. She was told that a man would more than likely be the one to fill this position.

This frustrated Mac, because she knew that she was capable of filling the position. She told the man that she had done a good deal of internship and student teaching in many age groups, but he wasn't impressed. So she went back home, feeling defeated.

A short while after, a new high school was being built in Cedar Rapids. Guess who they needed? Mac Eblen. The man from the hiring office called Mac and asked her to come fill one of the positions at the new high school. Mac accepted his offer confidently and proved him wrong. She ended up teaching at George Washington high school for two years before moving to Cedar Falls.

Mac's message to women is to never give up and never let anyone shake the confidence that you have in yourself.

*Mac Eblen, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Kianna Lyall, UNI Human Relations Senior 4D17*

### Oh, Yes She Can

Just out of high school, Ruth Ann landed her first teaching job at a country school house in rural Iowa. The only tools in her “teaching toolbox” were the knowledge from the teacher training classes she took and a quick lecture from her mother. Be strict. Don’t let those kids walk all over you. Despite the short training she had, Ruth Ann knew she was a teacher, she knew it all along.

The school house was too far away from where she lived, so Ruth Ann lived with a family whose children attended the school. They were good people and took good care of her. Ruth Ann felt compelled to do the same for their children in return. She was determined. She was bold. She was ready for this opportunity. Ruth Ann walked into the farmhouse on the first day of her new life as a teacher and took a deep breath in.

The man of the household gestured her over to the table where he was sitting. Ruth Ann hesitated, but then sat down across the table. He made small talk and then told her about his children that she would be working with. He started off by saying, “Mary Anne can’t learn. She will never graduate.” Remember, Ruth Ann was determined. She nodded her head, but then thought to herself, “Oh, yes she will... Oh, yes she can.” She would prove him wrong.

The next morning, Ruth Ann blossomed into a teacher, one that was just the right amount of strict. She was thankful for her mother’s advice, as her students shared with her all of the awful pranks the students had pulled on their previous naïve teacher. Ruth Ann worked tirelessly with Mary Anne in hopes that she could pass the test to graduate from the eighth grade. They did drill after drill and lesson after lesson.

Finally, the time had come. Ruth Ann awaited the results like a small child waits for morning to come on Christmas Eve. Finally, they arrived. Mary Anne passed. She graduated. Most importantly though, she learned. “Oh, yes she can,” Ruth Ann thought.

Just as she touched Mary Anne’s, Ruth Ann would go on to touch lives through her teaching and her activism in her community. She has surely touched my heart and I have only known her for a short time. Her stories share of a time that only I can imagine and her relentless determination, unwavering boldness, and resilient faith are traits that I admire and yearn to possess.

*Ruth Ann Gooden, Western Home Communities Senior  
Jamie McKenna, UNI Human Relations Senior 4D18*

### Her Optimistic Compassion

Meeting Evie has been such a blessing to me as a busy body in my most stressful semester of college. The first day I met Evie, I knew we’d become the best of buds. She greeted me with a warm smile and joked with me all the way down the hallway. She opened her door and I immediately felt a sense of relief. I was calm and comfortable with no worries at all. We got to know each other and shared life stories. Evie is the type of person to make you appreciate the life you live and the people you spend it with.

Spending most of her life teaching, Evie has developed an optimistic and compassionate outlook on life. She always sees the good in people, no matter how bad things can get.

When I arrive at Western Homes for our weekly visit, we spend the first 15-20 minutes talking about teaching. She shares her experiences with me and I tell her about mine. In fact, I've gotten some of the best advice from Evie. The best being, "I always made sure to use the three F's when teaching which are: firm, fair and friendly."

Evie was a child of 10 and lived life to the fullest through schooling, work, and relationships. She was married and loved to travel with her husband (who was also an educator). They dedicated their lives to bettering the lives of others and Evie continues to do so to this day. She has so many wonderful friends at Western Homes and never fails to keep a smile on her friend's faces.

Together, we worked on creating an "I AM" poem to get to know each other on a deeper level. Evie's poem was so inspiring. Her first line reads, "I am compassionate and driven." When I asked her what she meant by driven she said, "I am driven to change the lives of others and know I can do so." I nodded and agreed because she was beginning to change mine.

In a world with so much negativity, Evie believes that there is good out there. Despite what the U.S is going through right now, she has faith in this generation. She tells me, "I am scared for the future but then I am humbled because I know this generation is going to change the world for the better." Where other people have doubts, she keeps the faith and remains optimistic.

If you have the chance to meet and get to know Evie, do it. She will change your life for the better and show you how important it is to remain optimistic. There's too many people and things to be thankful for and happy about. Why should waste time being sad and negative? Go out there and change the world and if you don't think you can do that, change someone's life just as Evie does every day.

*Evie Boardsen, Western Home Senior*

*Ali Miller, UNI Human Relations Senior 4D19*

## 48

### Chats with Pat

I looked forward to my visits with Pat every week, because every time I visited, I learned something new about her. I have enjoyed learning about her family, her childhood, and her journey. I have found that Pat and I have many things in common. For example, we are both from the southeastern quadrant of Iowa.

When Pat moved to Iowa from the Chicago area in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, she lived in the small town of Lovilia, Iowa, which is about an hour south of my hometown of Montezuma. I learned that she has driven through Montezuma in recent years when she was traveling to visit cemeteries on Memorial Day. She recalled stopping at an ice cream place in Montezuma almost every time she passed through. I went on to tell her that I worked at the Dairy King all through high school, and that I remember working on Memorial Day quite often. We like to think that I served her ice cream a few years back, even if neither one of us remembers the other.

I enjoyed hearing Pat talk about her childhood. She had many interesting stories to tell about her family, her friends, and her schools. Pat was born in Chicago during the Great

Depression and went to Kindergarten-second grade in the city. She remembers the polio epidemic well and recalls having kindergarten cancelled for weeks at a time to keep the children from contracting the disease.

As a child, Pat loved to read. Her father taught her how to read before she started school. Pat's father worked at an exclusive hotel in Chicago and met a lot of famous people. He knew Shirley Temple well and even got Pat an autographed picture addressed to her from Shirley, which I thought was really cool!

Pat started third grade in Morton Grove, a suburb of Chicago, where she had her favorite teacher. She remembers getting dressed up to go on field trips to the theater, which was one of her favorite things about school. Pat went on to graduate eighth grade from Morton Grove, and started high school there before moving to a farm in Iowa.

We discussed how she was still in contact with her favorite teacher when she went out for her first teaching job, how she went back for her bachelor's and master's degrees, and how I am about to start graduate school. Pat was there to listen to me as I worried about getting into all of the graduate schools I applied to, and she was there to celebrate with me when I learned of my admittances. She is a great listener, a great teacher, and a great friend. It has been a pleasure learning about her life.

*Pat Taylor, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Halley Ogan, UNI Human Relations Senior 4D20*

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### **Her Contagious Spirit**

The first conversation I had with Loretta made me realize how much I was going to enjoy this experience with her. She was able to show me so much of who she is in such a small amount of time. Loretta is a genuine, kind-hearted, and such a caring person.

The moment I walked into that room to meet her, I had an instant and permanent smile on my face. She came with such a welcoming presence and made me feel comfortable as we talked about anything and everything. The conversations we hold with one another have me leaving with a fresh, new, and better perspective about life than I ever have before.

Some of the smallest and most simple statements Loretta makes really touches my heart and makes me think deeply. Even though she may not know it, she has given me some of the best advice possible.

For example, when we held a conversation about hardships in life, we were talking about how important it is to evolve, adapt, and change during certain situations. Loretta said, "God accepts you as you are, but expects you to change."

I will always remember this conversation because I love change. I love seeing new things, meeting new people, and experiencing things I never have before. I feel Loretta and I are very similar in this aspect. She has such an open mind, doesn't judge people based off of their decisions, and is so forgiving.

Loretta is a woman of courage, strength, and optimism. She has been through many obstacles and hardships in life but always seems to come out with a positive outlook no matter what the situation. I feel honored and grateful to know Loretta and hear her inspiring stories. If anyone gets a chance to know her like I do, they will understand the person she is and will feel her positive energy and spirit just as I did.

*Loretta Dykes, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Abbie Provost, UNI Human Relations Senior 4E21*

## 50

### Lura's Story

Spring of 2017 - Lura decides to take a UNI senior under her wing for 10 short weeks. During this time that UNI student's life was changed. Lura is a blessing to this earth. She is kind, she is gentle, and she is loving.

A story from Lura:

In February 1973 Lura took one of the most memorable trips of her life alongside her husband and sweetheart Louis. The pair traveled to the Holy Land with their minister, Worthie, and his wife, Helen. All together there were about 45 people that made the long trip to one of the most known parts of the world.

The journey began at a big island under Israeli where they stayed the night and then took a boat to Lebanon the next day. Lura remembers Louis getting sick on the boat ride, however he still wanted to retire to Lebanon. While on the boat, they ate strawberries that they had picked before boarding. Once they arrived in Lebanon they took a bus tour of the area.

Their next stop was in Jerusalem for three days, where they visited the garden of Gethsemane. The roots system for the olive trees has been there since Jesus lived. She was very fascinated by this. They also experienced where Jesus prayed before He was crucified. They saw many places that the Bible speaks of and Jesus had been.

They also went to Bethlehem and visited the cave that Jesus is said to have been born. Lura remembers having to swoop down to enter through the door. Like Jesus' birth, His burial spot is also very famous and another spot the group visited, the Holy Sepulcher. As this is the spot some believed He was buried others believe He was buried in a cave under a hill not far away.

The last event that Lura spoke about was receiving communion at the Garden Tomb. This trip to Lura was like no other, it brought the Bible to life for her.

Lura and Louis loved the land so much, in October of 1992 they made their way back to experience it all again. This time the couple visited the Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Sea of Tiberius, and Jordan. While telling the story of both trips Lura showed me many pictures that were a story by themselves. While on the second trip Lura and her group participated in an event she remembered long past the end of the trip, riding donkeys. It's the small events like these that become a lifelong memory. Lura has been on many adventures within her lifetime and her life was far from dull, but the memory of riding a donkey stood out.

This to me symbolizes youthfulness and to remember to always have fun. Lura has shown me that it is not about the things, but the memories that you gain. Enjoy things while you can and never stop dreaming.

All things work together for good to them that love god.

(ATWTFGTTTLG)

Romans 8:28

*Lura Treloar, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Abbie Schares, UNI Human Relations Senior 4E22*

## 51

### **Mother, Teacher, Wife, Marie**

When I think about mothers, I think about happiness, forgiveness, and lessons learned. I feel comfort, warmth, and pride because a mother's love endures all. Marie Stigliani was born to be a mother. Since giving birth to her first daughter, she has devoted every decision towards the well-being of her children. Never laying a judging eye, always encouraging her children to follow their dreams, and promising to be there every step of the way are just a few examples of how Marie has set the bar for other mothers.

In 1986, Marie packed up her three children and moved to a small house in Vienna, Austria to support her husband in his new job offer. As excited as they were to begin this new journey, two weeks in a nuclear power station in the Soviet Union produced one of the world's worst nuclear explosions, Chernobyl. In other words, it wasn't the warm welcoming the Stiglianis were hoping for.

While her husband worked hard to provide for their family, Marie handled everything on the home front. She would manage the cooking, cleaning, and childcare while he was away. Unlike today, families stock up shelves and refrigerators with food, but Marie would walk to the grocery store every day to buy fresh food to prepare a home cooked meal each night. She spent every moment of every day fulfilling the role of mother, wife, chef, and housekeeper.

As time passed, Marie's family started to grow. Towards the end of their time in Austria, Marie and her husband had six children to love and care for. Once the children turned three, they would go to a school in Vienna until they were six years old. As they began to consider moving back to the United States, Marie's daughter started to develop nightmares about going back to school, so to ease her mind, she decided to homeschool her children. Even though she was very busy fulfilling the multiple roles at home, Marie decided to add one more job to her resume, teacher.

Once her daughter turned seven, Maria enrolled them in a school in Baltimore, Maryland called Calvert. They sent her everything she could imagine to help her kick start homeschooling. They supplied her with paper, pencil, exams, lesson plans, texts, etc. She spent her days waking up in the morning to prepare breakfast, intense studying from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., preparing lunch, providing time for outside play and extra curricula's, then moving on to cleaning the house, preparing supper, and ending the day with prepping for the next day of studies. Within this busy schedule, Marie somehow found time to reading to all her children.

As time went on, teaching her children became more complex due to separation of age and levels of knowledge. Marie started to block off subjects and tend to the educational needs of each child. While she would work with her older children, the younger ones would want to listen and vice versa. It was very important to Marie that each child receive individual attention and devotion.

After seven years of homeschooling, the Stiglianis moved back to the United States and the children all attended public schooling. Even though challenges arose, Marie found great pleasure in bonding with her children on a level not all parents could. The experience was one that she will never regret, and would do it again if given the opportunity because in the end no one is going to care more about a child than their mother.

Marie is an outstanding mother, who has always put the wants and needs of her family before her own. Even when life seemed difficult, she woke up every morning, put a smile on her face, and became the role model every child deserves. Even to this day, Marie lives a life that embodies the true meaning of motherhood.

*Marie Stigliani, Western Home Communities Senior  
Molly, Schimp, UNI Human Relations Senior 4E23*

## 52

### **Educating a Future Educator**

From the moment I met Betty, I was smiling and learning. With Betty's smile and positive perspective of life she allowed me to learn more about myself, the world, and most importantly her. Betty taught me just what her father had taught her, that hard work and education are extremely important.

Betty told me that her father is the smartest person she knows with only a 3rd grade education. He pushed her and her siblings to high standards. Being a woman, Betty's dad still held her to the standards of the boys, she was expected to do all the things they did. Betty's father raised and her siblings to work hard to become educated people being going to college and getting a successful job.

Betty did just that, she worked hard at for pre-medicine and engineering at Iowa State University which lead her to become a science educator at 35 while raising children and being a wife. Betty started her first day of teaching the first day her daughter went to kindergarten. Betty spent her life doing things for other people. She told me that she feels compelled to be doing something for someone else. After anything Betty goes through in life, she never seems to lose sight of the future and positive things in the world.

One piece of advice Betty gave me that will stick with me forever was what she says to start every day. Betty prays and says "*God please let me put a smile on someone's face today.*" That to me meant the world because I think all of us get so caught up in being busy with life that we forget the importance of making someone smile and just being positive. I think if more people took this advice the world would be a more positive place.

Talking to Betty has truly changed me. After losing my grandma to cancer in August. I truly have found a relationship similar to that in Betty. She has giving me new insight on many things and has sparked my love for teaching even more through her teaching experiences. I am forever blessed to have met and talked with Betty Goettsch.

*Betty Goettsch Western Home Communities Senior  
Karly Schneeberger UNI Human Relations Senior 4E24*

## 53

### **Strength from God**

Meeting Bernie Huss was a blessing in disguise. Her positive attitude and love for people is contagious. Learning about Bernie's life story gave me a new perspective on my own life. Her strong faith has gotten her through her most difficult times and she wants to witness to others to help them in their darkest moments.

One of Bernie's favorite verses is Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." This verse has helped her through countless medical problems. Although she is in physical pain most of the time, she never complains. She gets her strength from Christ's presence, which is always around her.

Bernie wants to be remembered for her Christian faith. She accepted Christ into her life at age 35 and it changed her life forever. In her "I am poem," Bernie describes herself as friendly and caring. She worries about people who don't have Christ in their heart and she hopes to have the opportunity to share Jesus with everyone around her.

Bernie's strength and positive attitude is inspiring. She cares about other people and wants to help others in any way that she can. I am blessed to have the opportunity to get to know Bernie and her life story. She taught me to make the most of each day and be a light in this world. I hope to have the compassion, strength, love, and joy that Bernie brings to those around her.

*Bernie Huss, Western Home Communities Senior  
Ashley Smith, UNI Human Relations Senior 4E25*

## 54

### **One of a Kind**

Daryl Cameron has been calling Waterloo, Iowa his home since the year 1940. Daryl has always been a strong willed and hard working person which started at a very young age. He gives this credit to his father. Growing up, starting at the age of 8, Daryl was expected to work. Daryl would go to work with his father daily and help pour cement. After coming home, he would then go to the neighbor's house and retrieve buckets of clean water for their family. This was just a normal day for Daryl, working hard for his family and to help others around him. After graduating high school at 18 years old, Daryl chose to go on a new and challenging adventure of his own, joining the United States Airforce.

Daryl was very excited for this new adventure. He was sent to San Antonio, Texas where he attended a 6 week basic training course. Daryl said this was one of the most challenging, fun, and rewarding experiences that he was a part of. After hearing stories of the experiences he went through in basic training it didn't take long to realize that Daryl is one of the toughest men I have ever met. Unfortunately, Daryl was discharged because of a slight medical problem and wasn't able to continue his time in the Airforce. This broke his heart. Even though Daryl was very disappointed, he accepted it and moved on to working at Deere's in Waterloo for the next 20 years.

This is the one story that Daryl always seemed to bring up when I would spend time with him. It was very obvious that he had a passion for wanting to be in the Airforce and to serve this country. Just that alone made me thankful, but mostly I was thankful for how he has taught me to keep fighting for what I want and what I believe is important.

Daryl has taught me that not everything will go your way and that sometimes you may fail or have setbacks. He has taught me to think that maybe a setback or a failure to me, is actually what God has planned for me. There has been many moments in my life where I have fallen down and don't feel like I can get back up and keep fighting for what I want. Where the stress of school, work, and relationships in my day to day life make me want to go to my room and never leave. He has taught me to fight back against these setbacks to reach my dreams and follow what God has planned for my future. And for that, I am so grateful.

This experience has taught me a lot about myself that I never would have known without meeting my good friend, Daryl Cameron. For anyone who has the opportunity to hear this man's story and to witness his amazing personality and sense of humor, you won't want to miss it. Daryl Cameron is definitely one of a kind.

*Daryl Cameron, Western Home Communities Senior  
Katie Tapke, UNI Human Relations Senior 4F26*

## 55

### **Your Biggest Fan**

When I first was told I would be participating in the "S.T.O.R.I.E. Time" program, I thought that it would be something that I would not particularly enjoy. Not because I don't liking talking to others, but because I didn't know how I was going to make a once a week hourly visit anything meaningful towards the person I was assigned, I thought we'd run out of things to talk about, and I didn't think the person would genuinely enjoy having me around. Every time I had been told about the "S.T.O.R.I.E. Time" program, I thought and felt pressured to do so much to make sure I could be a good aspect of this person's life. However, I learned that those fears and pressures were irrational after the few first minutes of meeting my friend, Don Walton.

I would like to think that I have been a positive character in Don's story, but I know that he has been one in mine. From the minute I met him, he welcomed me and made me feel like more than a stranger, and as our visits progressed, I felt more like family. Don has told me about his loving wife, Rita, his five kids, and friends all throughout his life. Though Don has many enjoyable and thought provoking things to talk about, he shows interest in me and makes me feel valued which really reveals who he is as a person.

Don is your biggest fan. Every time I have heard Don talk about someone, it has been positive, encouraging, and loving. The traits he has are something that we should strive to possess because in a world where there is so much negativity that surrounds us, we need someone to be positive, we need a supporter. Coming into “S.T.O.R.I.E. Time” I thought that it was going to be an obligation to see someone for an hour every week, but that hour turned into a time where I could be myself and feel important, and I owe that all to Don.

*Don Walton, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Connor Tomke, UNI Human Relations Senior 4F27*

## 56

### **Once a Teacher, Always a Teacher**

Faye is a woman who has always had a passion for learning. Growing up, Faye attended two different country schools. She told me that she gained so much from country school. One of her favorite memories was putting on a Halloween party for the whole community at the school. Faye recalled that planning the party may not have been direct school education, however she believes that this process allowed her and her peers to work on collaboration.

Early on in her education Faye’s family made the move from Brooklyn to Grinnell, where she would continue to go to country school. After graduating high school at the top of her class, Faye decided to continue to pursue her love for education by attending Iowa State Teacher’s College.

After college graduation she began teaching at Aplington, where she taught for 1 year before becoming pregnant with her first son. Between having three sons, a husband, and being a teacher Faye managed to get her three degrees from three universities without having to leave town; receiving her bachelor’s degree at the State College of Iowa, and lastly her master’s degree in education at the University of Northern Iowa. Faye showed immense perseverance by pursuing her education and making it a priority, despite the challenges she was faced with outside of the classroom.

Faye was able to teach for a total of 30 years; 2 years in Dunkerton, 10 years at Cedar Falls Lincoln, and completed her last 17 years of teaching at North Cedar in Cedar Falls. One may say that teaching and education has always been and will always be a huge part of Faye’s family. With her mother attending Normal school, Faye being a teacher, and now two of her granddaughters are teachers. Faye’s passion for education continues to resonate through the halls of Lincoln elementary, as she volunteers weekly to listen to second graders read. It is educators like Faye who inspire me to continue to pursue my dream of becoming a teacher.

*Faye Rohwedder, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Kelsey Waughop, UNI Human Relations Senior 4F28*

### What a Blessing Old Age Can Be

Meri Jo is a very soft and kind-hearted woman. She wants to in all her power, help every person and animal in need. Her love for the elderly is truly inspiring. This love for the elderly did not however come to her all her life.

It all started when she worked in the beauty shop as a hairdresser at Mallard Point. She made such strong bonds with the people that came in to visit her to get a fancy hair do. She not only did their hair but she would do fashion shows with them. They would venture out to different stores to pick out their favorite outfits for the show. All the people would be so appreciative of her and would want to give her money or a gift but she would not accept. They were blessings to her.

The friendships she made with the elderly clients that visited once a week quickly turned into family. Some of them had no one else to see them and couldn't be happier to pour out their hearts to the kind-heart hairdresser, Meri Jo. Her love for the elderly didn't stop there.

Meri Jo became a receptionist at the Western Homes. One day out of Meri Jo's surprise she met Bud, an old friend from when she was eighteen years old. And of course Meri Jo's love for the elderly grew bigger. Meri Jo then started to care for her good friend. She now visits Bud and some residents every day.

She would never go alone. Madi, Meri Jo's dog always trailed along. Madi would cry at Meri Jo's door begging to go with to see "her people". Meri Jo jokes that the residents didn't care if she came; they wanted to hold and pet Madi. Meri Jo has to take a break some days because she too remembers that she is old. But that sure doesn't stop Meri Jo from looking forward to visiting everyone. She says it lifts her spirits.

The love Meri Jo possesses for the elderly is eye opening. She knows that it doesn't matter where; everyone needs a special someone to take care of him or her. Meri Jo's love for the elderly has taught her that the smallest things mean the most, it doesn't take much to make someone's day, and it doesn't cost a thing to give a little kindness. Everyone needs a little of these three things in their life. Meri Jo is in the works for making the world a little brighter place for the elderly and everyone else that crosses her path!

*Meri Jo Petersen, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Megan Wessels, UNI Human Relations Senior 4F29*

### The Strength of Faith

Bernie is such a sweet and strong woman that has shared many life moments with me. Many of these moments are happy moments, and many of them sad. One thing that stands true to all of her stories is that they all taught her something along the way. I am thankful that she is able to share these lessons with me, so I can carry them with me for the rest of my life.

One of the things that Bernie has shared with me, is her personal struggle with her physical health. Bernie's physical capabilities have deteriorated over the years, and she isn't able to do what she once was able to do. This has been a very difficult thing for her to come to peace

with, because it holds her back from things that she loves doing, like traveling and spending time with friends.

But, Bernie did share with me the one thing that has gotten her through this rough time in her life, and many others: her trust in God. Bernie wasn't raised a Christian, but always felt a connection with God.

Around the age of 35, Bernie asked Christ into her life, and was introduced to a whole new world. She was fascinated by the Bible, and at one point in her life was a part of 5 Bible studies at once. She started going to church every Sunday with her daughters, and her husband Tom joined them about 6 months later.

She has met many friends through her participation in her Church, and even sought a career at her church as the Volunteer Services Coordinator. She says, that God is always present in her life: moment by moment and day by day.

There is a Bible verse that she lives by, and it has gotten her through her toughest days: *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* Philippians 4:13

*Bernie Huss, Western Home Communities Senior  
Marissa West, UNI Human Relations Senior 4F30*

## 59

### A Life of Wisdom

"My favorite place that I have traveled to was wherever I was at the time." This quote describes my friend Calleta and her life undoubtedly. Throughout my visits with Calleta, I have noticed that she is always living one day at a time and has lived this way her entire life. She does not live in the past, nor does she yearn for the future. She is admirable because she is satisfied and pleased with the life that she has lived. These are emotions that not all people experience in the later years of their life.

Through her stories and our conversations, I have learned that a person needs to take each situation that faces them head on with a positive attitude. When she tells me of the hardships that arose throughout the span of her life, she tells of how she was able to push through because that was what had to be done.

She doesn't complain or reflect upon her any of memories negatively, she simply tells of what happened and how they were able to move past. I enjoy listening to the stories of the life Calleta has lived, she has wisdom I could only dream of.

I take in the stories of life during and after the war and of the life that she lived with her family. I listen to how she used to teach and of the children that were her students. I admire that Calleta earned all the way up to her Doctorate degree, but did not write her thesis because she had no desire to leave her classroom. I hope to have a love for teaching and for my students as she has throughout her career.

I want to be a person like her, a person who loves the people who are around her. A person who is realistic about life, yet optimistic about all that comes with it.

*Calleta Koefoed, Western Home Communities Senior  
Camryn Amsberry, UNI Human Relations Senior 6A1*

### The Impact of a Seamstress

Joyce Hufferd has a passion for adventure and helping others. Each time I have the opportunity to meet with her, I can easily hear her love for being spontaneous, trying new things, and going new places. She has many exciting stories and has been gracious enough to share some with me. One of her stories told about a trip to Nizhyn, Ukraine.

While in Ukraine, Joyce used her vast knowledge from being a seamstress to help women use their ideas and talents. She taught the women in Nizhyn to market their handmade clothing and to pass on their skills to younger generations. Joyce's ideas for the women were endless. She showed them how to display their clothes in the store in order to promote their products.

Joyce also encouraged a women's center. This would be a place where the women could go for support and learn educational and current information. The women would meet and talk about topics such as current events, women's health issues, raising children, nutrition, and more. Having a women's center would encourage leadership and the women would be able to share ideas and concerns.

I am positive that Joyce left a lasting impression that will inspire the women for generations. Her work in Nizhyn encouraged women to think creatively and seek opportunities for themselves. They will pass this wisdom onto their children and grandchildren.

*Joyce Hufferd, Western Homme Communities Senior*  
*Emily Bainter, UNI Human Relations Senior 6A2*

### Her Healing Love

The moment I met Rita I was greeted with the liveliest smile and a kindhearted hug. The day had been filled with numerous stressors, but after a few minutes with Rita my tensions were calmed. I cannot quite put my finger on it, but something about her can calm an entire room. Maybe it is her transmissible laugh or, perhaps, it is her ability to listen and connect to anyone she meets. It took no time at all for me to see she is filled to the brim with love and possess the most genuine of intentions. She is in tune with what she seeks to achieve in life and works through love to make it happen.

She had dedicated her life's work to healing all she can. In her "I Am" poem Rita wrote, "I am compassionate and strong. I say I do my best when I work through love. I dream of healing the world." Her words hold great power and meaning because she is a woman of action. Although she is retired from nursing, she has never stopped caring for those she loves. I am lucky enough to say I am one of those people. She has shown me how to walk into each day with

grace, love, and joy. Just by spending time with her I have grown into a better person. The moment you step foot into her house, you feel as though you are home.

It is people like Rita who make our world a loving and safe place. Her patience and understanding is endless. I strive to be as poised as she is. To have a friend like Rita is surely to fill your life with boundless love.

*Rita Sommer, Western Home Communities Senior  
Chambray Burk, UNI Human Relations Senior 6A3*

## 62

### **A Different Kind of Advocate**

Bev has always had something different about her. She was born into a hearing world that she couldn't respond to. She was eventually diagnosed with a severe to profound bilateral hearing loss that would progressively get worse as time went on. As a child she used hearing aids with the aid of lip reading to take in her environment. As her hearing deteriorated over the years she became a candidate for cochlear implants (CIs). The surgery included putting 22 electrodes in the inner ear or cochlea so the nerve inside the ear can carry a signal up to the brain to be processed.

Before the surgery, she had to have an X-ray on her ear structures and shortly after the image was taken her doctor and many others were crowded around to see a rare sight. Bev's cochlea had formed abnormally and left her with only about half of the structure. She then became a different kind of cochlear implant candidate and after many consultations, on November 15, 1990, she underwent the surgery that changed the way she interacted with the world.

In 1991, Bev was invited to share her journey and how her life has been altered in the Greater Omaha Self Help for the Hard of Hearing (GOSHHH) newsletter. She wrote about the programming or hooking up procedures and how they were adjusted to her liking over the span of a couple of months. Her world changed in the sense that she had to discover and identify a plethora of new sounds such as running water or the computer printer at work. Because of the discoveries of these new sounds, her speech was getting easier to understand and she thrived in her workplace.

Shortly after receiving the implant she was motivated to exchange information with others in her situation. She shared her story with many people and presented on CIs for a continuing education program. Her taped presentation reached the hands of people from the University of Iowa, the President of the Lions Club in Italy, a professor's graduate class at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and various physicians in rural hospitals. She helped guide anyone interested in considering a CI and was excited to do so.

She found the benefits in self-disclosure and participated in research studies to know as much as possible and what new things were developing, ultimately leading her to being the president of GOSHHH. She is a true advocate for cochlear implants and motivates others with her passionate desire to help hard of hearing people. She is truly an inspiration and asset to not only the hard of hearing population, but also to the hearing world she lives in.

For being paired together only because of a major and hometown, Bev and I have been a perfect match. I am a speech-language pathology major so all of her CI stories are very interesting to me. After initially meeting her she told me about her job at Methodist Hospital in Omaha which is where I would like to live and work someday. I've also dreamed about working at Mayo where Bev has now retired from. After talking we found that we are both Nebraska Huskers fans and not Iowa fans. With all of these similarities it is very easy to talk with her and continue to learn about each other's lives.

*Bev Fish, Western Home Communities Senior  
Meredith Camerer, UNI Human Relations Senior 6A4*

## 63

### Living Life Over

As one of the original founders of Cedar Falls' Koch Construction, Karl has lived his life through a few key values he learned growing up with his aunt and uncle in Denmark. His work ethic and integrity have taken him far in life.

Recently he has taken a backseat role in the company and currently enjoys visiting the shop in the mornings and working on his own personally community craftsmanship projects. He has built many projects that he donates to community auctions for various causes. He's taken in different apprentices since he started the company in 1950. Over the years, he believes he's learned as much from them as they probably have from him.

One of the greatest lessons I have learned from Karl is that we can't change what has happened in the past. He has told me about certain times he regrets what he has done in life and how much he wishes he could go back and relive and change those moments.

In his "I AM" Poem he thought, "I worry about things I said that I shouldn't have said" and "I want to live my life again with the knowledge I have today." I think these two lines are things all of us wish we could do. It's useful to reflect on our life and think about the decisions we've made. It's even better to look back and ask yourself if it was the best decision you could have made. If not, remind yourself that while you can't go back and change your actions during that moment, you can use that knowledge later in life and make sure you don't repeat that moment.

Meeting Karl couldn't have come at a better time in my life. In the few short meetings we've had together, he has made me realize how good we have it, even if things don't go our way all the time. Most importantly, he's taught me that we don't get the time we spend worry about life's ups and downs back.

*Karl Koch, Windermere Retirement Community Senior  
Tyler Comisky, UNI Human Relations Senior 6A5*

### All Children Learn Differently

I got the privilege of getting to know a lovely lady named Maurine Kemmerer. Ever since first meeting Maurine, we have connected through our faith as well as our love for children. We both love being with young children in the early preschool and kindergarten years. We love being able to teach them new skills that they will need later in life. Maurine has taught me through our time together that all children are different and they all learn in different ways.

Maurine has been in the schools in the Cedar Valley and the surrounding area for twenty-four years. She was a teacher for eleven of those years. The other thirteen years she was pulled out of teaching in the classroom and became a classroom consultant. She has had children from preschool to sixth grade that she has worked with. Out of all the experience that she has had, she has enjoyed working with the preschool age children specifically in the special education classroom.

Maurine knows how important play is for children and how much children can learn in this way. She has found that play is connected to language development in children. She also found ways to teach children many skills through their play. Maurine is frustrated with how the times are changing and children are not getting much time to play in schools today. Not all children learn through sitting at a desk and being told what to do. Some children learn through being creative with art while other learn through building. Children all learn differently.

I have learned much from Maurine that I will be able to use when I go into teaching my own classroom in the future. It is important to get to know all of your students and the way that they learn best. Maurine enjoyed the beginning of the school year where she got to know each of her students' strengths and weaknesses. This is not something that you figure out right away it takes time and many tries to find what works best.

She says that you must be reflective on the school day to learn how to better help students. It is also important to build a relationship with the parents in your room and have them as part of the problem-solving team. It takes a team of people working together to help children learn because all children learn differently.

*Maurine Kemmerer, Western Home Communities Senior  
Amber Drilling, UNI Human Relations Senior 6B6*

### Youthful Passion

Ms. Jo Grover is a woman of many talents, and many passions. Throughout our journey together, Jo and I have covered a variety of topics, but a true hobby of hers was made evident to me when the conversation shifted to her passion for the young pop singer, Adam Lambert.

As a spry, 84-year-old, Jo Grover proudly boasts that she has been to see Adam Lambert in concert a total of eight times, in more than four different states. One of her fondest memories lies with her travelling to Hawaii to see Adam in concert, spend some time with friends, and treat herself to the vacation of a lifetime. While her concert adventures have taken her across the country, Jo's true blessing is the many friends and fellow fans she has met along the way.

Jo affectionately refers to her fellow Lambert fans as "family", who have thankfully been brought together through the blessings of social media. Between her multitude of friends in

Iowa, California, and Minnesota, there is always someone willing and available to attend a concert with Jo to see her beloved Adam perform.

When asked to describe her experiences with Adam, Jo can't help but display her giddiness and excitement as she describes the passion she has for his many talents. Jo's concert adventures have been anything but ordinary; filled with exclusive backstage passes, meet and greet opportunities, and up close interactions. As Jo would describe, Adam is a sweet, kind individual, who takes the time to personally thank you for your support. During one of their meet and greet experiences, Adam is said to have put his arm around Jo kindly, and notice the small details of her thoughtful personality.

As a young adult, Jo claims she could have never pictured herself at these concerts, let alone travelling across the United States to show support for her favorite performer. The love she's developed for this young man's talent, the vast number of friendships she's developed, and the countless memories she's made, are something she could have only dreamed of. Jo is currently looking forward to attending more of his concerts in the coming months, as well as supporting Adam in his newest role; touring as the lead singer for the British rock band, "Queen."

*Jo Grover, Western Home Communities Senior  
Madison Gavin, UNI Human Relations Senior 6B7*

## 66

### **It's Now or Never**

I had the pleasure of meeting with Sue Hoffman about once a week during the spring. When Sue and I would meet, we both lost all track of time. We would plan to meet for about an hour, but it would last much longer than that just because we had so much we could talk to each other about. When I spend time with Sue, I was so engulfed in our conversations that all of my worries and the weight of the world just disappeared.

Sue's parents ran her hometown's local café and she loved to play Elvis' songs on the jukebox. She was, and still is, his biggest fan. She told me all about the songs that she likes of his and showed me all of the Elvis collectables that she has. She really wants to be able to visit Graceland as a destination that is on her bucket list.

Sue has an endless love for her children and grandchildren. You can see the joy on her face and the light in her eyes when she begins to talk about them. I could tell the first day that I talked with her that her family really means a lot to her. I learned so much about them, so I feel like I have known them forever even though I have never met them.

Anyone with an interest in Elvis or singers from that era, they would have a great time talking with Sue. Anyone with interest in the past and hearing about it was like, Sue would be the

person to talk to. Anyone with time available to have an experience of a life time just through conversation, Sue would be the person to talk to. That person is me!

*“If I told you my story, you would hear victory over the enemy.  
And if I told you my story, you would hear freedom that was won for me.  
And if I told you my story, you would hear Life overcome the grave.*

*Oh, to tell you my story is to tell of Him.”*

*-My Story by Big Daddy Weave*

*Sue Hoffman, Western Home Communities Senior  
MaKaya Henniges, UNI Human Relations Senior 6B*

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### Family Devotion

My first-time meeting with Sue, I knew she had a strong commitment to family. Every story that she shared with me showed me how much she was involved with her family. I could see how much it means to her to be with and help her family. Sue recently took a trip to Washington D.C. with her daughter’s family. She also continues to help in her daughter’s daycare several times a week. She does whatever she can to be part of her family’s life. Her devotion to family shines through. With this devotion to family comes compassion. She cares deeply for the people in her life. She wants the best for them and wants to do the best she can for them.

One story that she told me was about when her family was just starting. She and her husband had two children. When her oldest daughter was four and a half, Sue decided to stop working for a while in order to spend time with her children. She said that she wanted to be there to watch her children grow up.

When her youngest daughter was six, she returned to work again. Sue also talked about her trips to Arizona and Colorado to visit her brothers and her daughter. All of these things really show how much family means to Sue.

Through Sue, I have learned even more how important family is to us. Family should be cherished and we should strive to be a part of their lives. Family will always be there for us, and we should always be there for our family.

This is something that can be incorporated in the classroom. Create a classroom climate where everyone feels welcome and like they can talk and help each other. Show students that they have a family that they can lean on if they need help or guidance.

*Sue LeQuatte, Western Home Communities Senior  
Colin Hubbard, UNI Human Relations Senior 6B9*

### **Adventures with Jane**

From the outside looking in, one would think that Jane Mertesdorf lives a tranquil life. When I met Jane in her simple yet delightful home, my first impression was that she is reserved, proper, and quiet; even Jane describes herself as “shy.” However, as I have gotten to know Jane, I have learned that she is far more adventurous than she appears at first glance.

In my few short weeks with Jane, I have particularly learned about her adventurous nature by talking about her past career, travels, and dog. Jane was once a professor at UNI (originally in the Department of Physical Education for Women and, later, the combined male and female department). Additionally, Jane helped establish the official women’s softball team and coached the team to win their first national championship.

Outside of her profession, Jane has traveled extensively and continues to travel with her family and the Western Home. She is looking forward to her next trip to New Orleans! While Jane is extremely connected in the Western Home community, her best friend is her Bichon Frise, Annie.

Though Jane was apprehensive about having an animal, she agreed to take Annie in when her previous owner could not properly care for her. Now, Jane and Annie enjoy afternoons on the sun porch, taking walks around the neighborhood, and eating the meals Jane specially cooks when Annie doesn’t want to eat dog food. Through Jane’s stories, I have learned that she is an ambitious, determined, and humble individual with a huge heart and a passion for all that she does.

This semester, Jane has allowed me to accompany her on some of her adventures. Sometimes Jane picks me up in her red minivan and takes me out to lunch at restaurants I have yet to try in Cedar Falls. I love exploring the community with Jane as she drives along, pointing out significant places from her past and telling me incredible stories. Even if our adventure for the day is simply talking about how our weeks have gone, the news, or the future of our country, Jane brings an insightful, encouraging voice to the conversation.

After a visit with Jane, I can’t help but feel cheerful and driven; she has a way of inspiring me through her vivacity. Meeting with Jane has been a blessing this semester. She truly lives with a “glass half full” mentality, a quality I am now working to emulate in my own life.

*Jane Mertesdorf, Western Home Communities Senior  
Anna Kron, UNI Human Relations Senior 6C10*

### **The Beauty of a Conversation**

“What a small world!” I have grown up hearing this saying thrown back and forth between my parents at different gatherings, but I have never truly believed it or been in a situation where it seems true. Lorna is the one who made this famous saying finally seem true. What are the odds that I would be paired with someone who knew of the little speckle on the Iowa map that I call home?

When I mentioned I was from Red Oak, IA and that my mom worked at Farm Credit Services of America, she instantly made a connection about how my mom might know her friend that worked at Farm Credit in Red Oak a few years back. After finding this out I gave my mom a call and found out that Lorna's friend is the family we always sat behind at church. It really is a small, small world!

I would have never made this connection if it weren't for the beauty of conversations. Conversations allow us to make connections with people we have never met, learn a new way to look at something, or even discover something new. Conversations are something we often take for granted by only partially listening; listening in order to respond, or we opt out of having a conversation because we have something else to do.

Lorna made me realize the beauty of conversations all over again. The hour I spent with Lorna could turn my whole week around by a simple conversation. She would share her strength, and her advice that has stuck with me and will continue to be with me. Her wisdom and outlook on life reminded me how important it is to have deep conversations with those we meet because we never know what lesson they will teach us or what part of our story they will be.

Thank you Lorna for being a part of my story. I will cherish the lessons and advice you gave me always.

*Lorna Ericson, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Courtney Marsden, UNI Human Relations Senior 6C*

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### Who Would've Thought

What is it about Evelyn? Is it her warm heart, huge smile, or her bright soul? Maybe it is the fact that she reminds me so much of my grandma. When I first walked into Western Homes, I was nervous and had no idea what to expect; however, after meeting Evelyn I was no longer nervous and my mind was at ease. Every Saturday I would go visit with Evelyn. At first, I sat with my arms crossed and legs on the floor in her red recliner, but then Evelyn opened up and so did I. Now when I arrive, I am greeted at the door with an overwhelming sense of happiness. We sit down in those same red recliners, and of course the leg rest popped up!

As I got to know Evelyn, I noticed right away how special of a person she is. She puts the wants and needs of others before herself, which is something I do as well. No matter how big or small the need is, Evelyn will always be there.

Evelyn has a passion for kids. She used to run an in-home daycare. When she was pregnant, she only took a few days off of work before returning after giving birth. She knew those kids needed her, and she missed them dearly. Although Evelyn no longer runs a daycare, she is still in contact with some of her kids.

One thing Evelyn has done for me is to "get me a man" —her exact words. The week before Valentine's Day she asked me what I was doing and if I had a boyfriend. (Unfortunately, I am single and ended up working on Valentine's Day [yay?].) Evelyn said she was going to find me a guy. I said that was fine because how do you say no to that? I thought to myself, 'what are the actual chances she is going to find someone for me?' because others in my life aren't doing a great job at it. Well, the following week, she told me she found someone—what are the odds?! It is her sister's grandson and he lives in Kansas. So, next time he is in town all of us are going to meet up.

It has been a wonderful opportunity to go out into the community and get to know one of the most caring, honest, and compassionate people I have ever met. Although I was nervous at first, I have made a new friend and who knows, maybe a new boyfriend as well.

*Evelyn Herman, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Allison Miller, UNI Human Relations Senior 6C12*

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### All Differences Aside

When I got my placement with Beverly, I had no idea what to expect. During our first meeting, I learned a lot about her. Born in Coshocton, Ohio, she moved to Waterloo when she was three with her mother, father and siblings, one of which was her twin sister. She had a large family, has owned many different pets over the years, and liked English in school but hated math. I have a relatively small family, never had a pet other than a fish, didn't really like English and am studying to be a math teacher. I knew we would have some differences, but I struggled to find anything in common!

I kept searching, asking about everything I could think of. Eventually, I asked about sports. Finally! Something we had in common, she loves baseball. There was only one small (well actually large) problem, she's a Cubs fan and I love the Cardinals. It seemed like we couldn't be more different. I left the first visit, hopeful that the next visit we could find something in common.

During our second visit, we were supposed to talk about hardship. She told me about her life during the Great Depression, living in a tent near the Cattle Congress in Waterloo. How her father built a floor for them so they didn't have to sleep on the ground. How they hung a cradle from the top of the tent for her baby brother.

It was at this moment everything in our relationship changed. She told me, "Hardship makes you stronger. It forces you to do things you didn't think you could do."

I've faced tough times, just as everyone has. I've been told "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger", but never realized that hardship forces you to do things you might never have done. Looking back, this was true for me through each hardship I faced. I have had to push myself to do things I didn't think I could do, and even some things I didn't think were possible.

I knew from that time on, I wanted to live with an attitude like Beverly's. She always has a smile on her face, and never fails to put one on mine. She has continued to push through and become stronger through adversity. If Beverly and I weren't so different, I don't think we would have talked about so many things. I have learned a lot about her and myself, through these diverse conversations. All differences aside, our stories have connected us and I have learned more than I ever expected.

*Beverly Greenway, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Kayla Minkel, UNI Human Relations Senior 6C13*

### Words of Wisdom

The moment I met Willie was a day I can easily remember. I was very stressed out from school, but a few short minutes after talking to Willie my stress went away. Willie is one of the most genuine and easy going people I've ever met. I could ask him anything I wanted and he would answer.

We talked about our families, what school was like, our best friends growing up, and other parts of our lives. I loved hearing every single one of Willie's stories and imagining what it would be like to be in his shoes. Willie told me stories about his family, how he met his wife, and stories about him when he was in elementary school.

Willie dedicated his life to being a farmer. He worked hard to become the person he is today. I am proud to say I feel connected to Willie. My grandparents do not live in the state of Iowa so visiting Willie is like visiting a grandparent for me.

Every time I step into Willie's home, I feel like I am also at home. He has showed me pictures of him when he was in elementary school and we looked at his old high school yearbook. I can tell Willie cares about also getting to know me because he always asks me about me as well.

Having Willie as a friend has truly been a pleasant experience so far. It's crazy to think how I would have a strong connection with someone that I've only known for a short amount of time.

I hope everyone can find a friend who is like Willie. Find someone who immediately takes an interest you and who genuinely cares about you. Those are the type of friends that will benefit our lives for the better.

*Willie Irvine, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Katelyn Mishmash, UNI Human Relation Senior 6 C14*

### The Diary of a War Bride

"I believe that we each are placed on this world for a reason and that everything happens for a reason." Marian Christiansen has had some wonderful life experiences to support her belief including the love story of her and her husband, Milo.

When Marian graduated from Orange Township High School at age sixteen, she immediately got a job as the secretary of the school. A year later, she found herself searching and applying for jobs all around Waterloo with no luck of getting hired. Skimming the newspaper one day, there was an ad that caught her eye! The advertisement was for a sheet metal workers school in Wichita, Kansas that promised jobs after graduation from the program.

Marian boarded a bus and hurried down to Wichita to begin the training program for the one purpose of getting a job. Little did she know that this decision would lead her to meeting the love of her life, Milo. After a year of training, Marian graduated and immediately got hired by North American Aviation where she became the head of her department.

Milo, a young man working in the tool repair department, was informed by some friends that there was a young lady from Waterloo, IA working in department twenty-two. The young

man, also from Waterloo, knew immediately that he needed to go meet this woman his friends told him about.

After introducing himself, Milo took Marian on their first date. In early August, the couple spent their first date driving around Kansas City and ended up on the top of a hill that looked down on the entire railroad track system of the city.

Six short weeks after the couple's first date, on October 31<sup>st</sup>, they found themselves getting married on a Friday afternoon after work. Milo got drafted for the service soon after and was stationed in Portland, Oregon. Marian and their three-month-old, Michelle reunited with Milo in Oregon about a year later.

Eventually, Marian and Milo ended up back home in Waterloo, IA, where they raised their beautiful family. When Marian responded to the ad in the Waterloo newspaper about seventy years ago, she had no idea that she would be meeting her hometown husband in a city so far away. This is one of the many stories Marian has to support her statement, "I believe that we each are placed on this world for a reason and that everything happens for a reason."

*Marian Christiason, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Carissa Newman, UNI Human Relations Senior 6D*

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### **Life is a Blessing**

*"Blessed are they who see beautiful things in humble places  
Where other people see nothing . . ."*

The first time I met Betty Newport, she told me how blessed she was in her life. If I was to know anything about her, it was that she was thankful for every single bit of it.

Betty was lucky enough to not marry and love just one man, but two. She learned what love is from those two men and poured it out through her stories. Never have I met a woman who taught me how to love life even if it doesn't work out the way we expected it to.

She taught me to keep a smile on my face and the love in my heart for people. She continues to welcome life with open arms and does not let her age keep her from enjoying every single bit of it.

She told me that her life provided her with "extra years" that give her the chance to change lives. She decided long ago to not live in pity, but to live in joy. She could sit in her room and dwell of the lives that have left her, or she can look forward to the future and the lives that she can change.

When I look at Betty, I look at a positive spirit. One that will forever be known as a woman who never let anything hold her down.

*Betty Newport, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Kylie Nielsen, UNI Human Relations Senior 6D17*

### **Lifelong Teacher**

Down to earth, hardworking, and teacher are three words that describe Margarie Goodman. When I met Margarie or Marg as many friends and family know her as, I knew the kind of person she was when I asked if I should take my shoes off and she replied quickly, “Oh heavens, no!” not caring if I dirtied the carpet or not. In the times that I have visited Marg, that never seemed long enough, I have heard countless stories that could entrance anyone.

From a young child, she was grateful for the things she had, coming from a family with nine brothers and sisters and being the oldest she was always working hard on the farm where she grew up. Taking on extra chores that didn’t get finished by younger siblings without a complaint was normal. She did it because she was grateful to have what she did and now does. She knew what had to be done and did it.

Marg’s hardworking attitude continued as a successful schoolhouse teacher. She knew from the time she was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade that she wanted to teach. She loved what she did and even today continues to teach to others, including myself. She made differences in so many lives throughout the years and it has been shown to her when she has spoken with past students and they told her how lucky they were to have had her as teacher. It is easy to see the love Marg had and still has for helping others, such as her students succeed in life.

Marg always kept a journal while teaching. Every day she would write one good thing and one bad thing that happened. Afterwards, she could look back on it remember the good in every day. It is obvious keeping a journal made an impact on her life as a teacher because she did not always focus on the bad, but mostly the good.

Today, she continues to look at the positive side of life just by walking down the hallways where she lives and saying hello to other residents. She knows that one little hello could change someone’s whole day and maybe life around.

*Margarie Goodman, Western Homes Communities Senior  
Beth Overturf, UNI Human Relations Senior 6D18*

### **A Country Life Love Story**

Esther was a lucky young lady who grew up on a farm; she had one sister. Her family’s farm was out in the country not too far from a small town called Oran, Iowa. The tallest building was the silo that stretched high above the whole farm. The buildings were all white, as well as the nice little house in the corner with tall trees and some baby pines. The view in all directions for miles and miles, was corn, beans and other crops. Yes, Esther received many blessings from living on the farm, but that did not mean life was easy for her. She worked long hard days from sun up to sun down.

During the summers, Esther would work for other families for about a week at a time. She would take care of household duties; these duties entailed cleaning and other small tasks around the farm. Esther made about five dollars a week when she worked for the other families.

Unfortunately Esther's school life and ability to be educated was short lived. She attended the ninth grade with her sister, but was told that she needed to quit school to help on the farm. Her father owned the farm, but he only had one leg from an incident that occurred when he was herding the cows home with his brother one day. This meant he needed all the help he could get on the farm. Therefore, Esther did not get much of an education and had to stay home to work.

When Esther was about 15, her father hired a man by the name of Edwin to help out around the farm. Edwin came from a family of seven children. He was about 16 at the time. Edwin worked for Esther's father for three years.

It did not take long for an interest to spark between Esther and Edwin; they began dating about a year after Edwin started at the farm, and within a few months they were engaged.

Together the two decided to get married in January. However, December 31<sup>st</sup> changed their plan; the United States was in the middle of World War II and Edwin got drafted in the military. Needless to say, the wedding was postponed. While Edwin was off protecting their country, the two wrote letters back and forth to keep in touch and to grow their love for one another. After three years of being gone, Edwin was given twenty days to go home before heading to Arkansas.

Edwin and Esther spent all of their time together. Three years was too long for this young couple to be apart. However, the twenty days ended too soon and Edwin had to leave for Arkansas to train some troops. The training lasted for six months; then on July 13<sup>th</sup>, his birthday, Edwin got to go home again. What a wonderful birthday present he received to go home and see his love. At last, the two were married less than two months later on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1945.

I love this story so much and want to have Esther's story as my own.

*Esther Westendorf, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Bethany Phillips, UNI Human Relations Senior 6D19*

### **Remember Love**

From the moment I met Wanda I knew she was special. We instantly made a connection and were able to talk for hours. Wanda loves to talk so it made it really easy to listen to her stories.

She often talks about her travels with Russ and how much she enjoyed that time. Wanda talks about how lucky she was to find a man who loves to travel just as much as she did. A love for traveling was something we both shared. We exchanged many stories of our adventures, which led to some pretty great laughs.

One of the biggest pieces of advice that Wanda gave me was, "Find the man that makes you feel whole and hold him tight". Wanda talked to me a lot about how she never realized how important of decision it is when you pick the man you're going to spend forever with.

Wanda told me many times how lucky she is to have found a partner and friend like Russ. They rely on each other to fill in each other's missing pieces. I hope to one day be lucky enough to find a love like Wanda and Russ.

*Wanda Nielsen, Western Home Communities Senior  
McKenna Reicks, UNI Human Relations Senior 6E20*

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### **Ethel Ann's Story**

As I have continued to get to know Ethel Ann during our many visits, I have learned so much about her. Ethel Ann tells me many stories from throughout her life, but when I asked her about what she wanted to write a story about, Ethel Ann was hesitant and wasn't sure. We were both stumped for a while, but then she told me about Mary and I knew it would make a great story.

Ethel Ann was born in Ackley, Iowa she was raised on a farm where she milked cows and did other farm chores. Ethel Ann attended a country school that was two miles from her home. As a young adult, Ethel Ann went to nursing school in Des Moines. After her schooling, she and some friends from nursing school moved to Denver Colorado. There, she worked as a Graduate nurse at Colorado University. After passing her boards, she moved back to the Cedar Falls area where she worked at Sartori hospital.

Ethel Ann met her husband Karl when he had his appendix out at the hospital. Over the course of the few days he recovered in the hospital, they shared conversation. It wasn't until after Karl was discharged that he realized he wanted to take Ethel Ann out on a date. Although he had fallen for her, he couldn't quite remember her name. Eventually, after going through his sister in law to locate her name, he took Ethel Ann out to a movie. A year later in September, they were married.

In December of 1955, Ethel Ann and Karl welcomed a young girl named Mary into their home over the holidays. Mary was from the Lutheran Children's Home, and didn't have a family to call her own. As a baby, she had experienced high fevers, which affected parts of her cognitive development. Although some people had judged Mary as she grew up, Ethel Ann and Karl were different. As soon as they met Mary, the couple knew she was someone special. After that first visit, Ethel Ann and Karl decided they wanted to continue to welcome Mary into their home for weekends and other holidays. Eventually, Mary simply became to be part of their family. Ethel Ann and Karl's three sons considered Mary as just another one of their siblings.

As she grew up, Mary transitioned between a few jobs, but couldn't find the right fit. Finally, Ethel Ann found a job for Mary at Sartori Hospital, where Ethel Ann worked. At first, Mary was nervous and didn't want to move to live on her own; but after talking with the minister and getting a tour of the Hospital she decided it would be a good fit. Mary worked at the Hospital in the laundry room. In all of her 45 years of working there, Mary was never once late, and only had a few sick days.

Mary was well known in the community, whether it was people she worked with at the hospital, or people seeing her as she rode by on her moped - everyone knew Mary. Mary was very outgoing, and was always looking for someone new to meet. Mary always looked on the bright side of things, and served as a source of encouragement for many people. Mary was a hard worker, but in her free time she had, Mary enjoyed traveling. She traveled to places including Alaska, California, Tennessee, Israel, Switzerland, Holland, and Norway.

I think we could all learn something from Mary, whether it be to be introducing yourself to a stranger, making a point to travel the world, or simply choosing to look on the bright side of things; she lived life to the fullest. Although Mary is no longer with us, she will be well remembered by all who met her. There is even a fountain at Sartori hospital that is dedicated to Mary. As Ethel Ann said, "she never knew a stranger," Along with all of her friends and acquaintances, Mary is remembered by Ethel Ann and Karl, as well as two of her younger brothers.

I am thankful for the opportunity to meet and get to know Ethel Ann, and to learn from her. She has experienced so many interesting things, and along the way met many interesting people, including Mary. I look forward to more visits, and hearing more stories.

*Ethel Ann Koch, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Claire Rowden, UNI Human Relations Senior 6E21*

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### **It Is What It Is**

After just the first meeting with Cy, I knew that she was not just an ordinary lady. Cy went into detail about her family and what her idea of living a simple life was; the only thing was that that simple life turned into something extraordinary.

Cy and her husband have seven wonderful children who care deeply for her. They even make a point of getting together every year during the summer time to keep the family spirit alive. Cy jokes about how her children care so much for her that she has to remind them that she doesn't need a babysitter. Her husband John passed away this December. You can tell by the way she speaks of him how much love they shared. She has decided not to dwell on the past and what has happened in her life, but to live each day to the fullest. There are many people who could learn a thing or two from this woman.

Cy grew up on a farm in northeast Iowa. She was the youngest of thirteen children, and her parents adopted two of her nieces who were a few years younger than her as well. The sibling she often spoke of was her sister, Harriet, who was witty and able to bring out the best in her. Her husband also grew up on a farm, and shortly after they were married they moved to Waterloo, Iowa where they began their life together.

One story that Cy told that really stood out to me was when she was talking about her friend Marilyn. Her and Marilyn were friends for over forty years and it was a true genuine friendship that was based on trust and love. She told the story about how her friend was selfless and gave more of herself and asked nothing in return. One birthday in particular, Marilyn asked Cy what she wanted for her birthday. The only thing that Cy could think of that she wanted was

for her friend to get rid of these god awful red baggy sweat pants. Like promised, her friend gave the sweat pants to Cy. Still to this day Cy still has those red baggy sweat pants. I aspire to have a friendship like theirs one day. Marilyn passed away around ten years ago, however, their friendship and love for one another will still live on.

Cy's motto in life is, "It is what it is." Regardless of the situation that she is in, or what has been thrown her way, Cy keeps a positive disposition on life and chooses to live each day to the fullest. We were writing a poem one day and Cy wondered, now looking back on her life, if she has made a difference.

Thinking about this, there is one thing that I know for sure. Cy Haugen, has made a difference in me. If she can make a difference in me in just a few short weeks, I can only imagine the impact she had on others throughout her lifetime.

*Cy Haugen, Western Homes Communities Senior*  
*Jessica Sandy, UNI Human Relations Senior 6E11*

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### Wanderlust Through Time

When I walked into Mary's home the first day to meet her I was first greeted by her family in her living room. It was great to be able to see that her family was there for her and then I was able to later put a few names with faces. Mary loves her family and is very proud of all of them, that is apparent by how she talks about them. In her "I am" poem her hopes, dreams, and fears revolved around the well-being and success of her family. She imagined she was flying to see them, she could hear the sound of her grandchildren's voices. She lives for her family and I feel honored to be partnered with an amazing woman who makes me feel like I am a part of that family.

One of the first connections I made with Mary was about our travels around the world. The numbers of experiences that we share, although they happened decades apart, are astonishing. We talk about how Japan was so beautiful and the people there go out of their way to help you. The perspectives we each have about Morocco and the beauty of that area are so similar you would think we were there together. We talk about how the culture in Spain was so alive and unique and how we felt so enriched by seeing another part of the world that was proud of their culture. Her stories of how her and her husband and family saw Gibraltar thirty years before I did, but we both felt so small amongst the vast world we were looking out at is a precious connection you can only have by experiencing it for yourself.

Mary and I connect by talking about our interest in seeing the world. I will be going to Brazil in the fall and I cannot wait to talk to her all about it. She shares my wanderlust in a way that few people in my life do. The pride I feel from her about my exploration of the world and the opportunities I have taken in my education match the feeling of talking to my Grandma who is more excited for me than I am for myself.

The stories that we have shared prove not only what a small world it is, but also how stories can make connection between people's experiences from decades apart.

*Mary Davis, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Jody Schares, UNI Human Relations Senior 6E23*

### **Oh, the places you have been!**

A very common goal in people's lives is to travel the world. Most of the time it is to see a popular tourist attraction, take some pictures to prove that they were there, and to buy some souvenirs. For Marty her travel experiences meant a lot more to her than anything she could ever buy or capture in a picture.

The first trip she ever traveled overseas was with her whole family to Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji. They saved money for four years to have this once in a lifetime opportunity. This trip was one of the few that Marty and Dale took just for fun.

As many know, Marty is a woman of strong faith and has spent months abroad on mission trips during her lifetime. She went to Japan for two months and spent five months in the United Arab Emirates. Most would say these trips really impacted those that got to meet Marty and her husband Dale, and I am sure that is true.

I have seen during the past few weeks how these trips have actually made a great impact on her. Marty has such an amazing spirit and character. She is very open minded and optimistic no matter what is going on in her life currently or has affected her over her lifetime.

I think that when you live on the other side of the world for a while, and see how different life can and could be, you think about everything a little bit differently. She has such a different view of life now and is so open minded to other people's ideas, practices, and beliefs, even though she still has her own. Her charisma and persona are so admirable.

Every day I visit her I get to reflect on my own life. I am impacted and influenced by her directly. I am very happy to say that I was one of the lucky people in this world whose heart was touched by Marty herself. If only we had a lot more Marty's in this world!

*Marty Halupnick, Western Home Communities Senior  
Nicole Self, Human Relations Senior 6E24*

### **The Things We Learn Along the Way**

Upon meeting Margaret for the first time, I knew she had many stories to share. Some of those stories were about the many jobs she has had from being a young girl to her hobbies she works on now. All these jobs have influenced her in different ways through their experiences.

Margaret's first job came to her at a young age and consisted of her riding in the back of a hay wagon "thrashing" hay for fun. Each time she came over, the local farmer paid her 50¢. For her next job, she worked as a runner for the town telephone operator. When someone was trying to get ahold of someone who didn't have a phone, the operator would call Margaret's house and have her run the message to the intended receiver for them to then find a phone and call back. Each time she was dispatched, she received 25¢. She was really making big money!

During her junior and senior high school years, Margaret worked at the candy counter at the market measuring and bagging candy and at the bowling alley scooping ice cream and setting pins. She continued to take odd jobs to avoid babysitting, something she most definitely did not like doing.

While in college she worked as a coat checker, a waitress, and a telephone operator. She often handled heavy Army coats from visiting soldiers and officers. The restaurant she worked at was especially crowded during hunting and fishing season as they came in for lunch midday or dinner after a long day of being in the rough. She spent her summers at home working as a telephone operator with a manual board that had many plugs. One thing she remembers distinctly is giving farmers a 6 AM ring; some happy to hear her voice, some not so happy at that hour of the day.

All of these job experiences added up to her career as a teacher. “That was always the end goal,” Margaret shared while recounting these experiences, “everything I had done led to that moment – my own classroom.” All these jobs taught Margaret a different lesson and supplied her with valuable life experiences she will never forget.

*Margaret Willoughby, Western Home Communities Senior  
Kelsey Steger, UNI Human Relations Senior 6F25*

## 83

### **Mortality Realized**

It was a day like any other on the naval ship. The sun was shining on the backs of all the young and immortal Navy men. These young men did not understand the danger they faced, nor did they fear it. When they were asked to do a job, a job is what they did. They did so without questions or self-reward.

The sun began to fade, and storms took over as the day progressed. Joe was set to copilot on this stormy night with a fellow pilot to take flight and look for submarines near Japan. Joe’s friend Jim Showalter asked if he could take his place on the flight because he needed the pay to help his family. This was a mission like he had done many times before. When his best friend Jim asked if they could switch shifts so that he would be able to receive his pay for the month, Joe did not think twice. He knew how important the money was to Jim and for his family back home.

Joe received news later that day that the plane did not return to the ship. Twenty-year old Joe had just learned his best friend didn’t make it back to the naval ship. The reality that he would never see his friend Jim again began to sink in. It was on that day that Joe understood he was as mortal as the next man; it just wasn’t his time to punch the ticket.

He had many more days to live and many more lives to protect. Life is not always easy, nor fair, however it is a gift. It is a gift to be cherished and valued. Joe continued to serve his country without questions or self-reward. Joe’s life in the service took him too many locations, and his life afterward did much of the same.

He traveled across our nation, seeing peaks and valleys, oceans and farmland, sunrises and sunsets. He experienced triumphs and disappointments along the way. He continues to cherish the gift of life to this day. His body may not be as strong as that twenty-year old on the Navy ship, but his soul is as strong as ever. His faith is as strong as ever. He is a veteran, he is a Christian, and he is a fighter. He is Joe Nelson.

*Joe Nelson, Western Home Communities Senior  
Brady Stramer, UNI Human Relations Senior 6F26*

## 84

### 103 Years of Wisdom

It is interesting how pictures can tell someone's life story. On Martha Nation's wall, there is an electronic display of constantly changing photos ranging from her as a child all the way to her one-hundredth-birthday party. Obviously, she has documented many memories and experiences in her 103 years of living.

From teaching to traveling, Martha has lived and seen just about everything this world has to offer. Because her father was on the school board, her family always had other teachers at their house in Hudson, Iowa.

Martha decided to attend the Iowa State Teachers College to become a teacher herself. According to Martha, "Whatever I tried to do, I did the best I could, with the backing of my parents." She recalls riding her pony over to her grandparent's house, where she would study birds with her grandmother and record new birds inside of a book. Growing up in a family of six children and eventually having children of her own, Martha has experienced both the ups and downs of life. "You find that if something is really hard in life, it makes you think more about others and makes you a better person," Martha said. "No matter what it is, you find out that you can go through it."

Martha has also had the opportunity to travel around the world. When she went to Ireland, she found her relatives by simply looking up her last name in a phone book. According to Martha, "We are more like our ancestors than we are different. You learn they think the same as you do and like the same things as you, such as reading, art, and travel." Martha's family has quite an extensive history, and she keeps a book full of stories, pictures, and lines of ancestry because she believes it is important for everyone to know where they came from.

When Martha and I first met, she said, "I bet you didn't think you'd be partnered with someone who is 103-years-old." She was right. I also never expected Martha to become my friend and role model. I will forever cherish the wisdom she has provided through this experience.

*Martha Nation, Western Home Communities Senior  
Katie Upah, UNI Human Relations Senior 6F27*

### From Tragedy to Blessing

The day I met Allene I knew that I had met a strong woman with many stories to tell. I had many stories to choose from when beginning to write this, however, the story that I found to be most inspiring was this one. A story about how a tragic event in Allene's life turned to be a blessing.

Although Allene told me that she did not have many hardships throughout her life, she did tell me about the hardest event she's ever had to go through; losing her son. Allene told me that due to heart complications, her son was just twenty years old when he passed away. After his passing, Allene had a hard time talking about the event. She sought counseling, which she says helped immensely, and is something that she wishes she would have suggested to others in her family during this time. She also said that during the healing, her neighbor at the time gave her assistance that she was grateful for.

After some healing time, Allene decided that it was time to get involved in her church. She started out by giving her life to Jesus. Being a new believer, Allene wanted everyone to be saved, and told everyone about her newfound love for God and the church. She showed this so much that a close friend of hers even said, "I want what Allene has." This woman was later saved because of Allene's faith.

Allene began regularly attending church and looked up to her pastor. One day, her pastor asked Allene if she would like to lead a Bible study group. Allene was nervous, but accepted the challenge. Allene's Bible study group would later become the largest group, with thirty attendees.

To this day, Allene's faith still grows. I see Allene's love for God every time I visit her apartment on Wednesday afternoons. Allene inspires me to be a better person and to have a faith as strong as she does.

*Allene Chambers, Western Home Communities Senior  
Kandice VanDyk, UNI Human Relations Senior 6F28*

### Living in History

As a history education major, I study, read and write about things that have some grave importance in history itself, however I won't ever be able to live in the past, and understand what it's like to live in that period of time. That's where meeting Mary has given me an insight on it. Not necessarily "living" in the past, but experiencing it.

Mary has lived an interesting life, thanks in part, to a trip in Sturgis Falls in the late 1980's. She and her husband, along with her three sons were visiting the area. Jeff, her teenage son, was invited to participate in a Civil War re-enactment as a flag bearer. Soon after that, he became hooked, and Mary, wary of her son going to re-enactments by himself, had her husband go along with him. Eventually the whole family joined and it became a tradition for over 20 years.

Mary's experience was more from the sidelines, since women weren't necessarily able to go onto the field unless she was a nurse. But she, along with her other boys helped to make the

costumes, cook small meals, and make quilts for the soldiers. Mary, along with her sons and husband did “teach” elementary students about the burdens and hardships from the Civil War.

Once Jeff and her other sons had left, the re-enactments became less and less common, but for Mary, the memories live on. I’m honored to have had the time to talk to Mary about her adventures to the re-enactments, and hope that I can experience history in my own way as well.

*Mary Jane Boorum, Western Home Community Senior*  
*Wyatt Beltz, UNI Human Relations Student 9A1*

## 87

### **The Progression of Time**

Time is what separates then from now. With every year it becomes a little more valuable, and perhaps scarce. While growing up on her family's farm, JoAnn Kramer grew to appreciate the hard work farm chores had to offer. In that time, competitive school sports were only available for boys, not girls.

As the years progressed, JoAnn went on to study at the University of Iowa to become a physical education teacher. After the passage of Title 9, she became the girls’ volleyball coach, though she no prior experience with competitive sports. Through these experiences she was able form an appreciation for the sport along with learning together with her team what it took to achieve success. She was able to witness a transformation and evolution of sports within the school setting, right before her eyes. Today, at 76 years old, JoAnn still enjoys the game of many sports. She enjoys biking, walking, playing tennis, as well as attending numerous Iowa Basketball games with her husband, Jerry, supporting her alma mater.

When writing JoAnn's "I Am" poem she noted "I am older and wiser . . . I feel time has gone too fast . . . " Each day is comprised of 24 hours, just 1,440 minutes of living that seems to pass by in the flash of a second. JoAnn Kramer continues to make the most of her time, dedicating her life to her husband, children, volunteering, and making the most of every day.

It is people like JoAnn that remind us all not to take a day for granted, to live life to the fullest and to be the best we can be. She is a living example that hard work and dedication pays off, as she continues to inspire people (especially teachers in the making) through her lifetime of memories, experiences, advice, and outlook on the meaning of life.

*JoAnn Kramer, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Mackenzie Crist, UNI Human Relations Senior 9A2*

### **Excitement at the VandeKieft Household**

My weeks began on a Monday just as everyone else's but my mentality was never prepared for what the week was about to bring. So as the weeks continued to pass, I continued to follow my exact routine of school, work, and homework. The week that my attitude, schedule, and mentality changed was the week that I met Dick and Judy VandeKieft at their house for our first visit.

After I talked to them for an hour, I realized that I could not wait until next Wednesday at 11:00 a.m. My mindset shifted from wanting Friday to come around to Wednesday just so I could go see Dick and Judy's cheerful faces and listen to their fascinating stories.

Their stories definitely added excitement but the best part was seeing Dick wave his hands hello and welcome me into their home every time I came to visit. Who would have thought that ringing a doorbell would have given me so much excitement? I know a weeks ago, I would have said that the thought of that was silly and ridiculous but now my mindset has completely changed.

Besides the doorbell, Dick was always good at keeping me entertained by showing me different artifacts from his childhood such as the hand-carved house number, pictures of his family when they were little, and business cards. Each artifact that Dick showed me brought him so much excitement, which made my experience even more enjoyable. The one artifact that stuck out in my mind was the outline of Dick's childhood house that he had hand drawn so he could show me what it looked like. On this piece of paper, he had drawn every little detail to where his dad's radio sat, to where his siblings slept. He wanted to be so precise that he even called his older sister so she could help him map out the details.

Moments and stories like the ones I experienced were the reason why my Wednesdays had become my Fridays and all I can do is send out a huge thank you to Dick and Judy VandeKieft!

*Dick and Judy Vandekieft, Western Home Communities Seniors  
Mandy Demaray, UNI Human Relations Senior 9A3*

### **A Heart for Service**

The moment I met Barbara, I knew that I had the perfect match for me. Instantly we clicked and found many common interests! I walked into Windgrace the first day with some nerves but Barbara's kind words and fun stories made me feel at home. Now I feel as I am family each time I arrive. I'm greeted with juice and a warm hug.

Barbara has passion that you can visibly see when she talks about things she loves. She has lived a life filled with service work. Thirty-five years she volunteered at the Salvation Army for twenty five hours a week. She helped the people who needed it and that was the only

recognition she needed. Many memories were made within the time she volunteered there. Not only did it change her life, but she changed other people's lives.

The Alternative Crisis Center is a place that Barbara helped create. She helped organize free services to pregnant mothers and counseled those going through hard times. Barbara is very caring so I know she made these mothers feel at ease. My time with Barbara she has helped me with hard times and has a beautiful way with words.

Volunteering her time with Salvation Army and the Alternatives Crisis Center kept her busy but Barbara went above and beyond and did more. Her husband and she had a few local businesses. The first one was an antique shop that makes her smile every time she talks. The second business is a food table at the Cattle Congress. She has been a hard worker her whole life with working in real estate and at the newspaper. One piece of advice I received was “. . . if you can't afford it, don't buy it!”

Barbara has the biggest heart out of anybody I have known. It is because of people like her that our world is a better place. She left a huge mark and has changed so many lives. I know this because she has changed mine. Each day I strive to be more generous and self-less like Barbara.

*Barbara Spates, Western Home Communities Senior  
Alyssa Faylor, UNI Human Relations Senior 9A4*

## 90

### Communication: Then and Now

*Riiiiing, riiiiing, ring, ring, ring, ring.*

“Spooners, this is Mary.”

“Mom, this is Ralph. I'm in town; Storm Lake.”

“I thought you were in Fort Dodge?”

“I was, but the war is over.”

Party lines are a thing of the past and an early form of communicating with people at a distance. There were designated rings for each house-phone and many people had access to the same phone-line. These lines made it convenient for people to get ahold of family members living a few cities over and even more convenient for those interested in eavesdropping for entertainment.

Growing up, Steve McCrea became very familiar with the ringing and usage of a party-line. I, on the other hand, have no experience with them. My sources of communication do include a phone, but I have my own line, text messaging, e-mailing, and social media all on one device. This is something Steve and I found to be an interesting topic of conversation; communication then and now.

Steve calls people that he wants to talk to, such as his family and former students, and uses e-mail primarily for business. I also call people that I want to talk to, but have the luxury of texting or messaging people whom I do not want to have a long conversation with. My options for communicating are extensive, while his are limited, yet it seemed to be true that the conversations we have with people, no matter the form, are meaningful simply because we love people.

A specific detail that I enjoyed about our conversations pertaining to communication is that Steve and I have both spent over a year communicating with our significant others at a distance. While I lived in Cedar Falls, finishing my schooling, my fiancé lived and worked over an hour away. While Steve finished his schooling in Cedar Falls, his wife also lived and worked over an hour away. We could not always be near our better halves, but we would call them every night, because communicating with them was one of our top priorities.

Hearing this helped me see Steve's love for his wife, Kathy, even more than before. Although these instances were decades apart, this was very important to me, considering one of the first things I told Steve about myself was that the most important things in my life are my family, my future marriage, and my future career as an educator. He too found those things important and could not gain as much happiness from them as he has without the use of communication.

*Steve McCrea, Western Home Communities Senior  
Emmaly Fickel, UNI Human Relations Student 9A5*

## 91

### **Family is Forever**

“A smile makes sure that everything is okay.”

This simple, yet meaningful sentence spoken by Mary Jo will stick with me forever. The moment I met Mary Jo, I knew my life would be changed. She has a heart of gold and truly wants what is best for the world. While visiting with her, I learned more about how she developed a passion for helping others and where her motivation originated from.

Growing up, Mary Jo was an only child on a small farm in Iowa, which made it almost impossible to make friends. However, that did not stop her from having the best friendship and role model she could ask for. After hearing more about her mother, Francis, I could not have pictured a better friend for anyone to have. Francis was Mary Jo's number one fan. From supporting her desire to play basketball, to giving her advice, she was always there for her. Not only was her mother her best friend, but her daughter, Mary, is also her best friend now. Mary Jo has reminded me that you do not have to look too far to find your best friends; they are right next to you.

Meeting with a complete stranger can be slightly intimidating at first. Mary Jo and I knew nothing about each other prior to the experience and were placed together at random. However, I believe that Mary Jo and I were destined to cross paths. She has taught me how to be a better person, to smile more, and what the true meaning of friendship is. I am forever thankful to now have Mary Jo as one of my best friends.

*Mary Jo Hunchis, Western Home Communities Senior  
Genna Flaherty, UNI Human Relations Senior 9B*

### The Hostess

Elaine Logue has lived her life in many locations. She grew up in Wyoming and spent many years in San Diego, California before she moved to Cedar Falls, Iowa. She fondly shares memories of her time in each place, telling me stories about the girlfriends she used to hang out with, the ladies she still meets up with, and all of the people she met along the way.

Elaine has an extreme fondness of the city of San Diego. She spent a few years there when she was around ten and recalled that she had a girlfriend who had horses. The two of them would go out and ride up and down the valley. She enjoyed spending this time outside and liked being on horseback. Many years later Elaine would live in a condo in this same valley.

One particularly great story Elaine shared was about a day when she was volunteering at Admiral Kidd's Officer Club down on the bay as a hostess. Many American servicemen both active and retired would come to the club. Since she was the hostess she would greet them and talked to them while showing them to their seat. Visiting servicemen from other countries would sometimes show up as well.

The day that sticks out in her mind is the day that Prince Andrew came to Admiral Kidd's Officer Club. Her friends decided to pull a joke on her since she did not know that Prince Andrew was already in the club. They led him around to the lobby where she was at the desk. She remembers being shocked to see royalty in person.

Elaine and I have bonded over talking about stories from her past and share a connection to the Air Force. Although Elaine volunteered and served many Navy men during her time in San Diego, her husband was a pilot in the Air Force. This is a strong connection for me as I have many relatives who served in the Air Force as well as other branches of the Armed Forces.

Human connections are so important. Elaine realizes this and I am so thankful to have the opportunity to get to know her and her story.

*Elaine Logue, Western Home Communities Senior  
Abigail Goedken, UNI Human Relations Senior 9B7*

### Reconstructing The Past

When most of us think of barns, if we think of them at all, we have a standard vision of what they look like. Tucked behind an aging farmhouse, we envision a large crumbling building that has been battered by the elements since the day it was built. It is usually red with occasional white trim and the paint is chipped, exposing the rotting boards underneath. Often, aromas hang in the air that suggest it was a place where domesticated animals once resided.

These structures are usually filled with darkness, except for what light permeates through the glass windows dispersed throughout. For most of us, the beauty of these buildings is only in the practical nature with which barns are used. But Bill Stone sees something else when he envisions an idea to construct one of his miniature models of barns. He sees an opportunity for these unique structures to return to their former glory.

These projects are often not planned. The idea to build a miniature barn can come from looking at a picture, from noticing materials on an everyday walk around the block, or from the depth of one's own imagination. From here, Bill's creative process takes over.

The process of building these barns is not for those that are impatient. They require long and tedious hours of constructing, gluing, fixing mistakes, and refining even the smallest of details. It may take days to complete a single inch of one of these structures. However, persistence to deal with the unforeseeable discouragements that may arise during the building process are worthwhile when the final product is complete.

Thirteen barns have been built by Bill throughout the years. Each has its own unique qualities about it and a heartwarming story that bring a smile to his face when he tells it. These barns will remain with Bill's family as each has been designated to one of his grandchildren for something they can look at to remember their grandfather.

Belonging to different generations, there are distinct differences between Bill Stone and me. However, our love and admiration for the beauty of the past is something that unites us. The most important lesson I learned from my time spent with Bill Stone is to always be ready to be inspired because inspiration can take place when we least expect it.

*Bill Stone, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Heath Hutcheson, UNI Human Relations Senior 9B8*

## 94

### **Milk and Coffee**

The door to the back deck was open, letting the cool breeze of morning waft into the Simpson's one bedroom apartment. A particular, toasty smell soon filled Marlys's nose. It was coffee. Instant coffee. Marlys's mother stirred the brown powder into the hot water, turning it blacker and blacker with every rotation of her spoon. Her mother's friend was already on the back deck with her own mug of the dark stuff.

Marlys and her younger siblings were playing in the back yard. She was five years old. Above them on the deck, like two watchmen, were her mother and their neighbor. Like every morning, they were sipping their coffee and chatting, while their eyes danced over Marlys and her siblings frolicking in the yard behind their apartment.

On some occasions, Marlys and her siblings would get their own mug of coffee. Their mother would heat the milk till it was warm and cozy, and then mix in just a hint of the brown powder. Marlys and her siblings would drink their milk and coffee just as the adults did, feeling as though they too were sipping on the bitter drink, growing wiser and wiser with each gulp.

Marlys Simpson and I seem to understand each other. Our weekly conversations take place on her two navy blue recliners directly across from each other. Her apartment is quiet with lots of natural light. A repetitive topic we always happen across is the idea of being happy with what we have, and not sweating the small things. She mentions that she tries not to get caught up in the negativity of others. I enjoy her insights, because I feel the same way in that I believe that things are not always black and white, amazing or terrible. Rather, many life experiences are rather grey. And that is quite all right.

When she told me about her story of how she drank coffee with her mother, I enjoyed the simple beauty of it. It was a snapshot of a pleasant part of her life. At a later date, we brought up how we like our coffee. As it turns out, we both enjoy it black with a splash of plain milk.

Our lives are neither black as coffee or pure white as milk. Our lives are a robust mix of both. Both milk and coffee.

*Marlys Simpson, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Jakob Jehn, UNI Human Relations Senior 9B9*

## 95

### A Child from World War II

Judy Finkelstein was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1932. Her elementary years marked the height of World War II. As a nine year old, only child growing up in Joliet, Illinois, she remembers most of her time in the classroom during those years surrounded by the spirit of the war in America. School children were proud contributors to the war effort and the troops. They did many things in their part to support the people serving the county.

A favorite Friday afternoon activity was to bring their wagons to school to canvass the neighborhood gathering left over fat from cooking and whatever scrap metal residents could find to donate to the war effort. Within the walls of the classroom, the pledge of allegiance was said faithfully every morning and the national anthem was sung. All the young girls learned to knit hats, scarves, mittens and afghans to be sent to the troops. Judy remembers being excited to knit in a beautiful blue color for the navy or a little less excitement for the olive drab color for the army.

On Fridays, the students, Judy included, would bring dimes to school to purchase a defense stamp. These were placed in a little book. When it was full it could be redeemed for a War Bond which in ten years could be cashed in for \$25! Rationing was also a big factor of life during WWII. Judy remembers, and was able to show me, her and her parents' ration books. These books served to limit precious food items such as sugar and meat. Gas was also rationed. All these things were needed for the war effort.

Victory gardens were planted to feed families so bigger cooperation farmers' crop could go to the troops. Everything about this time in Judy's life revolved around keeping a positive attitude and supporting the cause of defeating the enemies.

As Judy reflects on her childhood during WWII, she can't help but remember the spirit it brought to her community. Children were excited to hear about American victories and were so proud to have a family member serve in the war.

Now, as she ages—and has since converted to Judaism—she can't help but wonder about the children who lived through the war in a very different place such as a concentration camp or a European country that was under attack. Their memories must be of fear, anxiety, and pain.

Although some such as Anne Frank kept hope alive as told through her diary. Judy's stories have mesmerized me and encouraged me to reflect on my childhood and the gratitude I have for the security I felt throughout. Judy and I have been looking through books to teach us and help us develop empathy for those children who remember the war to be a scary, unsure time. We hope to share some of these resources with anyone interested.

*Judy Finkelstein, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Allyson Jungwirth, UNI Human Relations Senior 9C10*

## 96

### **Do Not Count Anyone Out**

A young man, Don Erusha, got out of the service in the 1950's and was awarded what is called a GI Bill. A GI Bill is a bill that government passed meaning after every day you were in the military you would get a days' worth of college paid for. He went to Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and got his bachelor's degree in Physical Education as well as in Social Studies.

Take a step back a few years to the reason why he went to Coe College. One of his friends, who was African American, that lived down the block told him told him, "You love the game of football and you have the GI Bill, why don't you go to Coe College. They have a football team that you can try out for." So Don took his friend's advice and went to Coe College and received his bachelor's degree.

After he received his degree, he tested the waters with coaching. After his first and only head coaching job for football, he decided to be done with coaching and go further his education. He knew he had more funds available through his GI Bill so he wanted to further his education.

Now when this man that thought he was done coaching for good because of a bad experience, went to the registrar's line at the University of Iowa to peruse his master's degree he had to get in a line with 7 people, of both men and women. He talked to a well-dressed man about getting his master's in Counseling.

This man in his suit and tie told Don, "Well son, your grades are not good enough to get into this program."

Don thought, "Wow, you can shove that where the sun don't shine and I will prove you wrong." Don did not let the first defeat take him running back home, so he went to the line to talk to the Physical Education department. At the head of the line was another some-what imitating, well-dressed man.

This man said, "Well . . . your grades are not the greatest, but for a man with a military background we will give you a chance." Don was ecstatic! He thought to himself that he will not let this well-dressed man in the Physical Education department down.

Don more than held his word he went on to become a Hall of Famer at University of Northern Iowa, Iowa High School Football Association, and Cedar Rapids Washington for coaching after his Hall of Fame performance at Coe College.

What he found out to be the most useful in his career was, even when you think you know it all listen to everyone's opinions their way of thinking may help you become a better coach.

I feel that Don and I can relate pretty well to one another. We both set out for a career based on our interest in coaching and discovered we could branch out from coaching, for him it was to get his master's in Physical Education and for me it is to get my bachelor's degree in Secondary Mathematics. I hope to be achieve honors like Don was able to, after all you can't count anyone out.

*Don Erusha, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Perry Kessel, UNI Human Relations Senior 9C11*

97

### **IN MEMORY...Jim Tice**

Jim was the perfect match for me. We connected right away through his great humor. I was able to learn much from Jim even though I only knew him for a short time. I learned that he grew up very close to where I grew up and we have been to the same venues as each other like the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, IA. I also learned the vast differences in schooling from when he was going through school and to when I went to school. We connected with each other through playing cribbage. It was a great thing that we had in common. I learned so much from Jim in such a small amount of time especially his strong faith in God.

### **I AM . . . Jim Tice** **Western Home Communities**

I am hardworking and respectful

I wonder about the universe

I hear wood working tools in my shop

I see people laughing at my humor

I want to believe I made an impact

I am hardworking and respectful

I pretend I am still in my school marching band

I feel loved from my family

I touch the hearts of people

I worry that I didn't make a difference

I cry when I see people struggling

I am hardworking and respectful

I understand I am not perfect

I say that I made a difference

I dream being close to people

I try my best

I hope for the best

I am hardworking and respectful

*Kellen Kessler, UNI Senior*

## 98

### **Her Kind Heart**

The day I met Arlene, I was greeted with a kind, warm smile. As we began to talk and learn about each other, she immediately made me feel calm and comfortable as I am sure she does with most people she encounters. She has a way of taking my stress-filled week and putting me at ease. Arlene has a gentle, caring heart and I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to spend time with her.

Arlene is a very passionate, selfless, and faithful woman. She has always enjoyed music and playing the organ at the United Methodist Church. Arlene was playing the organ at church as she did every Sunday when she ran into the handsome David Waterman.

David swept Arlene off her feet and they married a year later. Her late husband, David, was a pastor at the United Methodist Church. The two devoted their lives to each other, God, the church, and their daughters, Marty and Ellen. Arlene has a warm heart and I love to listen to her talk about her husband and children. She has always wanted the best for her family and her church. Her selflessness is inspiring to everyone around her.

Arlene gives others an endless amount of love and sees the good in everyone. She puts others before herself without a second thought. Arlene touches those around her without even realizing it and radiates the compassionate love our world needs more of.

*Arlene Waterman, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Chelsi Lanus, UNI Human Relations Senior 9C13*

## **Finding God**

On the first day when meeting with Lorna, I was pretty nervous as I had no idea what to expect. However, those nerves quickly faded. Lorna welcomed me into her home and has been very welcoming and talkative since. After just one hour with Lorna, I knew that I would be looking forward to my time spent with her each week.

Lorna has a very strong faith and she lives her life by this faith in God. As we were talking about different stories, there was one story in particular that I could really see the passion in her eyes as she told me. This is something that has happened more recent. She was able to witness a change in one of her grandsons who had found God and was baptized. As her grandson had kind of lost his way in the past this was a huge deal for her. She said that this faith in God has really changed him and for the better. You can see how proud she is of him just by the way she tells the story.

From the many stories that Lorna has told me so far, I can tell that she is very passionate about things that have happened in her past. I admire her for this. To be able to portray her memories in a way that really make me feel some of the emotions she felt is pretty amazing. I have learned so much from my time spent with Lorna and hope to continue learning from her and her faith.

*Lorna Blohn, Western Home Communities Senior  
Jennifer Lewis, UNI Human Relations Student 9D14*

## **100**

### **Living and Learning**

Donna came from a humble home filled with family and love. From basement home living to summer time gardening and green beans for supper, Donna grew up appreciating the little things in life and wanting to further her education. Although Donna didn't come from a wealthy family, she never felt deprived, instead she decided she would make the most of what she had. She lived in a one-room basement house with her two sisters and parents with no bathroom. They had their own garden, clothesline for the laundry, and an outhouse outside, but that was enough for Donna and her family to live happily.

Something that Donna is proud of is her many years of education and dedicated work as a dental assistant. Donna became a certified dental assistant and went on for more education and eventually received her bachelor's degree in dental hygiene. After that she started teaching at Marquette then eventually taught at MATC, while taking credits to get her master's degree. At one point there was low enrollment in the classes at the college she was teaching at and Donna faced hardship when she lost a job, but she didn't let that impact her life negatively.

Not only was Donna a talented dental assistant and teacher, but she also makes beautiful cakes and meals. When Donna was younger she got a Betty Crocker book that taught her how to decorate cakes until she eventually became a talented cake decorator. She can also whip up gorgeous doilies and blankets for her friends and family.

It is someone like Donna that teaches us to stay humble and remember that it is the little things in life that mean the most later on. She doesn't let a little hardship take over her life but instead learns from it and makes the most of what she does have.

*Donna Pohl, Western Home Communities Senior  
Shelby Mahr, UNI Human Relations Senior 9D15*

## 101

### Roses

Jerry Junge is the definition of a hard worker. He worked hard all day, every day throughout his life. He now resides at The Western Home Community with his dog, Tuffy. I was taken back by the love for his family and especially his story of the roses.

Jerry married his wife, Henrietta (Shortie), at the age of thirty-two. Later when they were living in Sanborn, IA with their two sons, Casey and Kelly, Shortie had shrubs she wanted to plant. They weren't doing much. Jerry decided to pull them out and redo the soil and plant something new. His wife, Shortie, went and got some roses from Bomgaars for \$2.00, because they are her favorite flower. They planted seven rose plants on one side of the house in place of the shrubs. The following year they planted seven more on the other side.

From there, Jerry dug up another spot and planted fourteen more rose plants. He continued to plant them and had another spot on the east side of the house with fourteen more roses. The roses surrounded their home, but that still wasn't enough! Jerry planted six more along Shortie's shed and the rest by the ally way.

They had all sorts of colors . . . orange, white, blue, yellow, some were double color, and others were triple colors! But most of the roses were red, because that was Shortie's favorite color.

Jerry continued with his hard work ethic and spent his weekends taking care of the roses from June to October. He sprayed them about once a week and fertilized them three times a year. Then at the end of the rose season, he would put leaves over them to help the soil. Jerry said, "They're just like a woman. If you don't treat them right, they'll get ya. You have to be careful of those thorns!"

Jerry continued this for ten years. He lost most of the roses due to a dry spell. The only time of year he buys flowers is for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. He only buys three roses. One for Shortie, one for Casey, and one for Kelly. He says, "Any more than three is a waste." I have learned so much from Jerry, especially the will to be as hard of a worker as he was and to also have a great bond with my family.

*Jerry Junge, Western Home Community Senior  
Aubrie Meyers, UNI Human Relations Senior 9D16*

### Unbreakable

Indomitable or impossible to subdue or defeat. This word can be used to define Dixie Duffy. Meet Dixie, the 97-year old woman with the heart and spirit of a lion. In the near century of life she has experienced a superfluity of emotions. Starting with a humble beginning in Brisow, Iowa. Raised in a farming community, she continued the tradition upon marriage to Clyde Trent. Their marriage was a short but happy marriage. Days were spent tending the corn, feeding the chickens, and raising their 4 children.

She would've been happy to continue down that path until she fell into God's warm embrace but one day he decided he needed Clyde in his flock. At the age of 43, he was killed in a car accident. Dixie was only 37 years old and widowed. Most people would crumble under the pressure, but Dixie took this tragedy as a challenge. She raised her children and took care of the farm alone. One can only imagine the difficulty she encountered handling the 80 acre farm and raising her children in 1957.

Dixie is a fighter who believes there is no time to focus on imagination, rather than dream what could've been she has always set her sights to the future. Dixie has devoted her life to the service of others, accumulating over 8,000 hours of community service at Covenant. She also volunteered at the University of Northern Iowa and the Western Home. When tragedy struck Haiti, Dixie volunteered to make diapers for their infants. Working with her friend Marj Beaton, they made over 13,000 t-shirt diapers.

Now you would think that would close the chapter on this lovely Iowan but there is more to her. She has been a wife, widow, farmer, volunteer, and an artisan. She doesn't use brushes and canvas, rather, she uses her hands to create fantastic crafts ranging from candy john deer tractors, to doll covered tissue boxes, hardanger pieces, and lately walker accessory bags.

This is a woman who can take an idea; a few pieces of cloth, and some string and transforms them into a work of handy works of art. She is a gifted artist too humble to realize the value of who she is. She isn't just a resident of the Western Home; she is one of their rare Iowan gems.

*Dixie Duffy, Western Home Communities Senior  
Mars Ostrowski, UNI Human Relations Senior 9D1*

### A Paralyzed Parent

Joan Baumgartner and her husband Gary found out they were pregnant in 1974. Nine months later they had a baby girl named Melanie Baumgartner on June 22, 1975. Although all throughout her pregnancy Joan had felt some congestion issues. When Melanie was just three months old Joan decided, she was tired of always feeling that she had a constant allergy and was thinking it might have been something more at that point, so she headed to the doctor. She actually went to see a doctor that was in the same building as where she worked as a dental assistant. Things were different back then, people rarely asked the doctors questions or thought

about a second opinion. That is why when he recommended surgery for a deviated septum, Joan scheduled it.

In this time when someone had a surgery they were required to stay the night before, so she slept in the hospital bed awaiting her surgery that was supposed to be a fairly simple fix the next day. She entered surgery with her husband waiting for her to come out. Gary waited, and he waited, and he waited some more. He knew something was wrong and was determined to get some answers. He continually asked what was going on and what was taking so long with minimal response from hospital personnel. After an agonizing wait the doctor came out to Gary and told him there was a little bleeding during the surgery and they packed her nose and everything was okay.

Gary continued to wait some more for his wife Joan, and then finally after eight hours the doctor told Gary that Joan was not responding. She had a stroke during surgery for a reason the doctor said was unknown. The doctor told Gary that possibly the carotid artery had a spasm during the surgery. Although the neurosurgeon that later examined Joan had another opinion. He did some tests and believed that the doctor operating on Joan had made a mistake during the surgery because there was a light tear in the brain envelope. It had appeared the doctor had slipped when chiseling.

Joan was paralyzed on her left side, with a three-month-old baby girl waiting at home. The physical therapy began nearly instantaneously. She would remain in the hospital for the next 31 days. The physical therapy was very intense at first, working hard each and every day. After the 31 days, she was able to return home and her physical therapy minimized as she got better each and every day though. She did have to complete physical therapy for nine full months and she remembers when she was first able to button her own shirt and what an accomplishment that was. It took her three weeks of physical therapy just to be able to accomplish that small task.

Throughout this tragic event the newborn Melanie had been taken care of by Gary's sister. Melanie only was able to visit her parents about once a month. Therefore, from ages 3-6 months Gary and Joan were rarely able to see their daughter. Melanie was living in Cedar Falls, Iowa and Joan and Gary resided in Chicago, Illinois. Joan even said that the first-time Melanie came to visit her in the hospital it had been about three weeks since she had seen her last. Joan recalled telling others in the room that it was not her daughter. She honestly could not even recognize Melanie because she had lost most of her hair as babies naturally do and she had grown so much. She had been apart from her child so long that she was nearly unrecognizable.

This is obviously an experience that no one would wish upon anyone else. Although Joan has a very positive outlook on life and she found a way to find the good in this horrific experience. The first thing she noted that was a benefit from her stroke was the fact that she quit smoking. Joan said at this time people were actually allowed to smoke in hospital rooms! Although with her left side paralysis she could not use that hand to smoke because she could not hold the cigarette, and that was her smoking hand. At that point, Gary told her he was not going to let her smoke anymore and she honestly never really had the desire again. This whole experience made it very easy for her to quit smoking which was a positive outcome. Obviously, a major downfall to this experience was the loss of initial bonding with her daughter even up to a year after her stroke as she was completing physical therapy, often tired, and adjusting to this new life. Although this may have been a downfall for Joan she saw the relationship Melanie had with her father develop into something extraordinary because of the strong bond they were able to have. Melanie also was very close to her aunt and developed a great bond with her as well which was fantastic to see too.

All in all, this was a life altering experience that was a very difficult part of Joan's life. Joan has learned so much from all of this and truly does have such a positive outlook on life, as she is willing to find the good in such a difficult situation. Joan says that you will always find a way. After hearing her story, I know that this must be true. No matter what life throws at you, there is a way. Also, as Melanie says, it is what it is. Once something happens all you can do is continue to live your life and deal with it. You can't change the past but you can alter the future.

*Joan Baumgartner, Cedar Valley Senior*

*Jenna Peters, UNI Human Relations Senior 9E18*

## 104

### **Diapers, Doggies, & Domino Effect**

The year was 1968. Donnabelle was a wife, a mother of two, and a new mother to her third child, Amy. Both Donnabelle and her husband, Lee, were so grateful for their new baby girl. She was practically perfect in every way, but God felt that their family could use a little adversity in their lives.

Amy was born with a wide, bi-lateral cleft palate. This created some challenges for Donnabelle and her family. Her daughter was not able to nurse or drink from a bottle like the average baby.

For many weeks, Donnabelle had to feed Amy using a syringe with formula, dropping small amounts on her daughters tongue. After weeks of using this method, Donnabelle received valuable advice from a mother who told her how to feed her child by rhythmically squeezing a plastic bottle. Donnabelle picked up this method quickly, but was only able to do it using her right hand. Because of the difficult feeding process, Donnabelle was the only one who was successful at feeding Amy. Her mother eventually learned how, but this happened months later.

Donnabelle and her family developed a routine and rhythm to their new normal. Doctor's appointments and arrangements were made to pave the way to Iowa City, where Amy would eventually receive surgery to repair her cleft palate. The first stop on that journey took them to Mason City (my home town), where the nearest Well Baby Clinic was located. From there, they would be referred and sent to Iowa City. In preparation for their absence, Donnabelle's cousin would watch over the older two kids, and their two Boston Terriers. All was well, except for the fact that her cousin seemed to miss the memo about one of the dogs being in heat, allowing for the two dogs to mingle. One thing led to another, and now, their family had two kids in elementary school, one who needed to be fed every two hours using a special method, and a pregnant dog.

A few months went by and the day of their first appointment in Iowa City arrived. In the morning while they were getting ready to leave, the mother dog went into labor. Lee quickly called and rushed the dog to the veterinarian, and they left for their appointment. Later in the day, he called the vet to check on the new puppies. The mother dog was well and the puppies were all doing well, except for one.

Crazy enough, the third puppy in the litter was born with a cleft palate.

The vet asked if they would be willing to care for the puppy until Iowa City was able to take the puppy in for research. Empathetic and eager to help, Donnabelle and Lee were happy to agree.

Now, Donnabelle had a baby with a cleft palate, and a newborn puppy with a cleft palate to care for, both of which needed to be fed regularly with formula. Although her daughter could be fed using an easier method, the puppy was not so lucky. Just like when her daughter was first born, Donnabelle had to use a syringe to feed the puppy, but also had to feed a tube down to the puppy's stomach.

Amongst all this chaos, Donnabelle's aunt passed away, and the mother dog developed mastitis and needed to be milked like a cow on a regular basis. So, to update the tally, Donnabelle had an infant with a cleft palate, a newborn puppy with a cleft palate, a dog that needed to be milked, a loss in the family, and had to continue being the mother, wife, and daughter to the rest of her family.

Long story short, Donnabelle and her family made it through, despite the many (and steep) bumps along the way. The puppy was picked up by the hospital, the mother dog overcame the mastitis, both dogs were fixed, and her daughter's cleft palate was on its way to being mended. Life kept on going, even though Donnabelle hoped it would slow down a bit.

This story, just like many others shared with me, brought a smile to my face and showed me just how strong, driven, and compassionate Donnabelle is, and has been, all her life. She told this story with a smile on her face and laughter with each new added piece. There could not have been a better time for me to gain such a strong and kind person in my life.

Although Donnabelle and I are only starting to get to know each other, I know God put her in my life for a reason. I have already learned and gained so much from Donnabelle and our short time together, and I cannot wait to see what the rest of the semester holds. She is the kind of person I aspire to be, and I am grateful for her welcoming me into her home, sharing her wisdom, her thoughts, and her stories with me.

*Donnabelle Miller, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Melanie Reichter, UNI Human Relations Senior 9E22*

## 105 Lifelong Learning

*"Education is the kindling of a flame, not the filling of a vessel."*  
- Socrates

The day that I met Jerry Kramer, I learned several very notable things about him. First, he had been an educator at Waterloo West High when I was a student there. What an incredible coincidence! While I did not have him as a teacher, we reminisced about those good old days.

On one of our visits, I brought two of my yearbooks with me so that we could look through them together. We had a wonderful time looking at old photographs, wondering "Whatever happened to....?"

Second, he and his wife, JoAnn (also an educator), had lived on a farm north of Waterloo and raised sheep. I was so affected by the fact that he had committed to teaching and looking after animals, and could make room for both of those consuming endeavors as well as their

commitment to raising their family. Finally, Jerry and I share a love of reading. A passion, really, for learning about new things. Jerry continues to be an avid student of topics that interest him.

Traditional school education is finite. It has an ending. However, that does not need to be where the learning ends. Jerry's interests have taken him from the battlefields of the Civil War to World War II, visiting Presidential libraries and museums, and learning about Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt. His pursuits are wide and diverse.

When something catches his interest, he wholeheartedly immerses himself in learning all he can. Jerry often seeks ways in which to connect with people in the community, and takes advantage of the courses, speakers and events at UNI to learn more about topics that pique his interest. He is always seeking opportunities to grow. He feels that there is no wrong age to begin something new. Maybe we won't become professional athletes, but we are never too old to learn and improve our shots!

Jerry's attitude about learning is contagious, and I sense his enthusiasm in the things that we talk about. I get the feeling, no I know, that Jerry will never stop wanting to learn more. With Jerry, I can see firsthand how lifelong learning makes the world a better place and helps us find meaning in our lives. I feel very privileged to know him.

*Jerry Kramer, Western Home Communities Senior  
Regina River, UNI Human Relations Senior 9E19*

## 106

### God Made a Match

Iva Meany had no idea that her life was about to change forever when she attended a dance at the Oelwein Coliseum Ballroom. Iva and her friends caught the bus from Fayette, the college they all were attending, on Saturday night. This was one of many nights of attending the ball, but her future was about to change for the better after just one dance.

Roger, who had just recently come home from the service and started working at John Deere, came to the dance with his brother. Roger asked Iva to dance and it was love at first sight. Iva new instantly she was comfortable in the arms of this man. At the intermission they went out to eat and at the end of the night Roger took her home.

Three weeks past and Iva had not seen Roger at the dances. She was giving up hope until finally, he showed up again and asked her to dance. In the weeks that followed this reunion, Roger and Iva talked on the phone and wrote letters to one another until they were able to see each other again. A year later, they were married and eventually had four children together.

God works in mysterious ways. Iva never thought she would meet a man that she shared so many qualities with. Roger and Iva both were raised on the farm, both grew up with 3 other siblings, and both of their mothers were teachers. Clearly God knew what he was doing when he matched Roger and Iva together because they were happily married for 64 years.

Roger and Iva's heartwarming and long-lasting love is much similar to that of my grandparents. To hear both of these inspiring stories, gives me hope that someday I too, will find someone that I can spend the rest of my life with. I can only dream of a marriage that is full of love and admiration as these two couples.

*Iva Meany, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Kaitlyn Schmitt, UNI Human Relations Senior 9E20*

107

### **A Life in Many Places**

Meeting Jo Santos means that you will be greeted with a kind smile, a wave and an open door. I realized quickly she had a lot of things to say that would be new to me with the variety places she has lived and the experiences she has had in her full life. I have enjoyed my visits with her as we connect with each other about our love for dogs and our families.

She has made connections with a lot of the staff in her building and you can tell how much each of them love walking by her room as I visit. Her listening ear is a welcoming addition to my sometimes crazy days, and we reflect on our days with each other.

It is very clear, after only a short time with Jo, that her life revolves around family. This is what is most important to her in life. In her I AM poem she said, "I want health for my children and myself. I feel love for my family." They are the focus and purpose of her life.

She is originally from California, and this is where most of her family still lives. She attended college in Oregon after high school and then came back to California and had a family. She has lived in a variety of settings including on a farm with her parents when she was younger and had her own horse. She has also lived right on the beach for a good period of time, which she says she misses the ocean very much.

She moved to Iowa about 10 years ago to be with her daughter, who works at UNI, who she says is her best friend. She looks forward to visits to her family in California about once a year and weekly visits and activities with her daughter.

I have enjoyed my time with Jo as I learned about a world far different from mine that I have known my whole life. It is wonderful to hear about these new to me places and a life that has been so full. I strive to have a live with as many experiences, adventures and family to share as Jo.

*Jo Santos, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Kandy Schwan, UNI Human Relations Senior 9E21*

108

### **Picking Apples**

Virginia describes herself as being friendly and lighthearted. This couldn't be truer. Our visits consist of cheerful conversation and usually laughter at some point. She always has something to say or a story to tell. This is one of the first stories she told me. Virginia recalls a tale from her childhood. She describes it as a memory that, at the time, made her upset, but now she finds quite humorous.

"We were living in the country in Martel, Iowa. My dad, Maynard, was working as a handyman on a nearby farm. Not far from home was an unkempt overgrown apple orchard. My mother, Rose, told me and my sister she wanted to make an apple pie for dessert. She asked us to go fetch some apples from the orchard.

So, we began our quest into the orchard to gather some fresh apples. Viola, being my older sister, decided it was my job to climb up the trees and gather the apples. Her job was to

hold the pan of apples. I climbed up and grabbed some nice fresh apples and handed them to her. Once our pan was full, we began the trek back to the house.

The path to the orchard was overgrown. It was framed by grass and weeds that were taller than both of us. Suddenly, out of the overgrowth slid a large bull snake. Viola screamed and shoved the pan of apples straight into my gut knocking the wind out of me. Viola took off toward the house leaving me.

Our mother then came down to see what all the screaming was about. She met Viola on the way and asked where I was at. Viola answered, "I don't know" and stormed into the house. Back down the path, I was left with the pan of apples. Thankfully, the snake was just as scared of Viola and had slithered off.

When our mother found me, I was moping along and trying to get my breath back. She took the pan of apples and went back to the house to scold my sister. Later after dinner, we all got to eat a delicious apple pie!"

This is just one of the many mishaps she and her sister got into in her youth. If you want to hear another, just ask her to tell you about her Halloween adventures. It is sure to entertain.

I think this story stuck with me, as I often ventured into the woods at my grandmother's house with my sisters. It's in these woods, where I recall many, many happy childhood moments. Virginia and I seem to share a love for the outdoors and adventure. She speaks fondly of seeing the beauty in nature, mirroring my thoughts exactly.

*Virginia Emmert, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Rebecca Shere, UNI Human Relations Senior 9F22*

## 109

### **A Lifetime of Love**

Pam Hileman's adventure with her husband, Richard, began when she was just fifteen years old. He was seventeen at the time. Finally he found the courage to sit next to her one day on the school bus in high school. After that, they began dating and were inseparable until he joined the United States Air Force upon graduating high school in 1959. Richard could only visit Pam once a year in Iowa due to his part in a Fighter/Bomber Squadron during the Cold War. After their wedding in 1962, the couple moved to Clovis, New Mexico where Richard was stationed.

Richard was gone periodically throughout their first thirteen months of marriage. The newlyweds stayed in contact through several letters and phone calls. In Clovis, Pam lived in rental houses and got a job at a hospital after graduating as a Radiological Technologist from Allen Hospital in 1962. In 1963, Richard was discharged from the Air Force. Pam and Richard then moved back to Iowa and started their new jobs in Waterloo. They both retired in 1999, Pam being a Ultrasonographer at Allen Hospital and Richard being a Transmission Designer at John Deere.

From there, they discovered their mutual love for traveling. They snorkeled in Hawaii in 1984 and fell in love with the sea and all that lives in it. Pam explains, "The sea and the creatures that live in it open up a whole new world having grown up in landlocked Iowa." Hawaii, the Bahamas, Australia, and Fiji are just a few places that they have traveled to.

Throughout their lifetime, they raised two children, and now have four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. It is remarkable to look back on Pam and Richard's life and to see everything that they have accomplished together. Pam is kind, intelligent, funny, and loving. It has been a privilege meeting her and her husband because they truly reflect what it means to be married and devoted to each other. When I asked Pam about their marriage and its strength over the years, she replied by saying, "We'll be married 55 years in June of 2017 because of tolerance and love."

*Pam Hileman, Western Home Communities Senior  
Haley Snyder, UNI Human Relations Senior 9F23*

**110**

### **Hearts and Crafts**

A few weeks ago I met Judy Dengenstein at our meet and greet. Within that first hour of meeting her I knew we were going to have plenty to talk about! Judy is a caring and loving individual who says exactly what's on her mind. She says her mouth can sometimes get her into trouble. Over these past few weeks I have gotten to know Judy and always look forward to our Friday afternoon talks.

One of the many things that Judy is passionate about is card making. She spends hours in her room crafting, cutting, gluing, and writing hundreds of cards. Now you may be thinking, "That's a lot of cards, who all does she make them for?" Well let me tell you, it's literally everyone. Judy explained how it all started in her church. She would send cards to church members for birthdays, holidays, and just because. Her mission was to make sure even those that couldn't attend church still felt like they were a part of the community. Her church awarded her "Woman of the Year" for all the hard work, love, and dedication she put into each and every card.

Judy to this day is still making cards and continuing to touch the lives of many, even those she hasn't formally met. When I asked Judy why she made cards for people she doesn't even know, she reminded me that even a simple card from a stranger can make someone's day a little bit better. This melted my heart and changed the way I think about the world. By doing something simple, like sending cards to strangers, you can begin to make a difference in the lives of those around you.

*Judy Degenstein, Western Home Communities Senior  
Joey Stabenow, UNI Human Relations Senior 9F24*

**111**

### **I am Always With You**

It was a Friday morning in the month of April in the state of Illinois. Jean had just gotten back from the grocery store and she was unloading her groceries. The phone rang so Jean answered it. It was her neighbor, Eddie, from across the street. At the time, Eddie was at the age of thirteen years old.

On the phone, Eddie told Jean that he was really sick. Eddie was home alone because his mom was at work and his two younger brothers were at school. Jean called Eddie's mom at work but couldn't get ahold of her. Jean of course walked over to his place right away because she was

worried about Eddie. When she got into his house she went upstairs to where he was at and he had a 22-rifle gun in his hands. With this gun, he pointed it right at her throat.

In this moment, one of the things that Jean thought was that maybe there could be a way out of this. As this happened, Jean told Eddie that he doesn't want to do this because he doesn't want to be sorry for something that he will regret for the rest of his life. Eddie turned around and threw the gun up on top of the bed in the room that they were in. Jean told Eddie to calm down and she was afraid to leave him because she didn't want him to commit suicide. Jean knew Eddie was in a very bad place during this time. She called his mom from the phone at Eddie's house but she didn't get an answer again.

Jean eventually made it back to her own house and called the pastor and briefly told him about Eddie. The pastor told Jean that he didn't want anything to do with this and so the pastor called the police. The police arrived at Eddie's house and then the mom eventually arrived back home after that.

During this time, Jean never felt alone. She always knew that God was with her. Because of this, she knew that she could handle this situation when she arrived at Eddie's house. Knowing that she wasn't alone and that God was with her, it gave her strength. She knew that God would never give her something that she couldn't handle. When Jean told her husband what had happened, he told her that he was glad it was her that this happened to because he knew she could handle it.

This is one of the many things that I admire about Jean. Her faith gives me faith and her outlook on life is inspiring. From her, I realize that I will never be alone. Since I have gotten to know Jean, she has never judged me and I feel like I can trust her. This story is one of the many things that Jean and I have talked about when we get together and she has really made a positive impact on my life.

*Jean Hansmeier, Western Home Communities Senior*  
*Shawntel Young, UNI Human Relations Senior 9F25*

**I AM . . . Len Froyen**  
*UNI Emeritus Faculty*  
*Author of GRATITUDE*  
*From the Students' Perspective*

I am grateful and inspirational  
I wonder whose lives I am changing

I hear stories

I see potential in everybody  
I want everyone to feel grateful  
I am grateful and inspirational

I pretend I am retired  
I feel grateful for my students  
I touch people's hearts  
I worry I won't have enough time  
I cry because I want more chances

I am grateful and inspirational  
I understand what it is to give your life away  
I say "Be Grateful"  
I dream for a bright future for my students  
I try to encourage people  
I hope that I have made an impact  
I am grateful and inspirational

**I AM . . . Kathy Oakland**  
*UNI Instructor of Human Relations*  
*From Len Froyen's Perspective*

I am creative and courageous  
I wonder about better ways to inspire participation in this class  
I hear affirming things about my students  
I see a bright future for my students  
I want students to be proud UNI graduates  
I am creative and courageous

I pretend to care less about my students  
I feel responsible for the partnership  
I touch the heartfelt aspirations of students  
I worry about the indebtedness of students  
I cry for students who don't believe  
I am creative and courageous

I understand there are risks in teaching  
I say what matters about life  
I dream students are grateful for this class  
I try to secure the best presenters  
I hope students will honor and apply what they have learned in this class  
I am creative and courageous