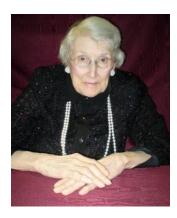


McDowell leaves \$1 million to Benton Scholarship Foundation

The Benton Scholarship Foundation (BSF) has received a gift of \$1 million from the Marjorie (Marge) McDowell estate.

This is the foundation's largest bequest and continues the legacy of Mrs. McDowell's (1930-2013) commitment to helping Benton Community seniors pursue a higher education. With a generous gift in 2004, Mrs. McDowell established H.O. and Ruth Schloeman Memorial Scholarships in the name of her parents. In 2006, she established the Linne Schloeman / Young Corn Memorial Scholarship.



Marge graduated from Norway High School and Iowa State Teachers College. During her teaching career she taught general science and biology in the Detroit suburb of Madison Heights, Mich., Norway Junior High School and Washington High School, Vinton.

"Marge was an only child who grew up on a farm near Norway. She was a teacher and very proud of her Benton County roots," said Linda Druschel, McDowell's executor. "Marge was a real historian – she had a passion for Benton County history, Norway baseball and was proud of her 'South Sloper' ties."

The Schloemans were long-time residents of Norway and dedicated servants to Benton County. Henry Schloeman (1892-1983) and Ruth Jones Schloeman (1891-1987) were active in the Norway community and Benton County for more than 60 years. Henry was a director of Benton County Savings Bank for over 50 years. He also served on the board of Lenox Mutual Insurance Company and was president of South Slope Telephone Company when it went into service in 1958. Ruth came to Norway as a high school teacher after attending the University of Iowa. She was very artistic and was also very active in the community. Their motto was, "Service is the rent we pay for the space we occupy."

Linnie E. Schloeman, McDowell's aunt, was the first woman superintendent of schools in Benton County. Grant Wood's famous "Young Corn" painting was painted as a memorial to Linnie. She was a junior high math teacher at Wilson Junior High in Cedar Rapids. Her students and a few teachers collected around \$200 and asked Grant Wood to paint a tribute "Young Corn" at the time of her death in 1930. The sight of the painting is in Iowa County north of High Amana across from the Lenex Cemetery where she is buried.

Kelsey Ritscher, BSF vice president, Keystone, worked closely with Mrs. McDowell to help ensure these scholarships were awarded in accordance to her wishes. "It was a pleasure to work with someone as passionate about education and as generous as Marjorie was over the past several years."

Benton Community seniors can apply for these and the other 60-plus BSF scholarships after the first of the year. The Benton Community High School guidance office will send an announcement to students and parents with application details.

"Mrs. McDowell's legacy and her love for our community will live on with this gift," said Debie Towe, BSF secretary and Norway board member. "The entire board is honored to help ensure her generosity and commitment to education continues for generations."