

# DONOR STORIES

## WILLARD AND KAY JENKINS

### “Willard and Kay Jenkins Scholarship Fund”

Kay Jenkins was born on April 19, 1937 to Helen and Lester Fothergill. The Fothergill family farmed in Rosendale, Missouri. Kay grew up in this small community and started 1st grade at Rosendale Community School.



WILLARD AND KAY

Six miles east, Willard Jenkins was born on August 26, 1937. Willard was born to Ulva and Glenn Jenkins. Also a farm family, their son began his schooling in a one-room schoolhouse near Rosendale.

The two first met each other in second grade, but agree that their first date was to the 8th grade graduation. They dated all through high school and college, although they were separated by distance during some of those years. Kay attended Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri earning a BS in Education in 1959. Willard continued his education in St. Joseph, Missouri at a Junior College for one year before enrolling at the University of Missouri at Rolla where he earned his BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1959. Willard obtained his MBA in 1968 at The University of Iowa.

Willard Jenkins and Kay Fothergill married on June 14, 1959 in Rosendale, Missouri and started their married life in Moline, Illinois where Willard was employed with Deere & Company as an engineer. Kay settled into married life, and began a teaching career in Rock Island as a kindergarten teacher. Before long, the Jenkins started their family and Kay became a full time mom to four beautiful children. Mike (an engineer), Ross (information technology specialist), Julie (science teacher turned homemaker), and Dave (insurance agent) all grew up to settle in the Midwest and eventually gave the Jenkins 11 grandchildren.

In 1970, the family moved to Heidelberg, Germany where Willard continued working with John Deere. In 1973, they returned to the states and settled in the Quad Cities. In 1976, they made their final move to the Waterloo area with John Deere. Willard had a long and distinguished career with the company and retired from John Deere in 1993.

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After retirement, Willard began a second career as an elected official to the Iowa House of Representatives. Elected in 1996, 1998 and 2000 - he currently serves his constituents with Kay at his side as a staff member.

Willard and Kay believe in giving back to their community. Willard and Kay have been Elders and Deacons at the Cedar Heights Presbyterian Church and have served in many other positions including the position of financial chair and Sunday School teachers. Willard was also on the board for the Iowa Work Force Development Board for 2 years as well as being involved in the Cedar Falls Rotary Club. He has also helped with fundraising for the University of Northern Iowa and the Waterloo/Cedar Falls Symphony.

Kay has also been an avid volunteer in the Cedar Valley. Kay was a part of the Family and Children's Council for 15 years and was part of the Parent Connection Mentoring Program for at -risk mothers and children. Kay has served on the Foster Care Review Board, which is a group of trained citizens that reviews the foster care community along with an overview of each child. In 1992, Kay earned the Iowa Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedication to child abuse prevention. Kay has also served the community by doing a variety of other services -from pushing the hostess cart at the hospital to being a member of the Symphony Guild Board. She has been a volunteer in classrooms using her teaching skills helping with various tasks and listening to children read.

Willard and Kay have many hobbies and interests that keep them busy. Their favorite pastime and number one passion is spending time in the Rocky Mountains. They love to hike and ski and enjoy time at their home in the mountains. Willard enjoys woodworking and flying his airplane and hopes to learn fly-fishing in the future. Kay's enjoys reading, with history and biographies being some of her favorite reading material. They have enjoyed the task of building three of the homes that they have lived in, including their mountain summer home where they enjoy time with their family and friends.

Willard and Kay share a passion for education and have been fortunate enough to be able to put all of their own children through college. When they ran out of their own children to send to college, they began to help others in the community to achieve the same goal. Feeling that their parents had instilled a giving attitude toward their community - Willard and Kay have continued in that same endeavor.

The Willard & Kay Jenkins Scholarship Fund was established with the Community Foundation of Waterloo/ Cedar Falls and Northeast Iowa for students attending Expo School in Waterloo. The scholarship provides financial assistance and encouragement. It was Kay's early volunteer work with at risk families that brought this area into focus for the Jenkins and ultimately brought about the establishment of this scholarship. The Jenkins were also impressed with the Expo staff and how goals were set for helping the non-traditional students of the area.

Willard and Kay Jenkins have worked hard to make their community a better place to live and work. Their caring and generous contributions will continue to impact the lives of Cedar Valley families for years to come.

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