

DONOR STORIES

ELIZABETH NAEBERS

“Elizabeth Naebers Scholarship Fund”

Margaret Elizabeth Naebers, or Liz, as friends knew her, loved to talk. It was this voice that would help many people during her 70 years.

Elizabeth was born on May 14, 1931 in Waterloo, Iowa to parents Christen Henrich (Henry) and Mary Naebers. Her father was born in Germany and moved to Iowa to live near his brother. Henry sang in the church choir and met Mary soon after he moved to Waterloo. The couple married on July 12, 1929.



ELIZABETH NAEBERS

Elizabeth and her family lived on a farm for most of their lives. Her classmates remember her as a smart student who wrote perfectly and was most comfortable in overalls. After graduating from Dunkerton High School, Liz began nursing courses at St. Francis hospital. After trying out the program, Liz decided she would prefer to work on the family farm instead.

Elizabeth shared strong bonds with her community and decided to establish a scholarship

Elizabeth’s father passed away when she was twenty years old and although her mother remarried, the family farm needed hard workers. Elizabeth knew how to work hard. She planted corn and hauled fertilizer bags in the heat of the day. She also loved all of the farm’s animals and would often take breaks to pet the cows.

As Elizabeth’s mother grew older, she moved into a nursing home. Though it was difficult for Liz to see her mother in failing health, Liz visited her regularly, continuing her commitment to her family. After her mother passed away, Liz rented out the farm and began to try new business avenues.

Liz thrived on the relationships she built while selling products for Watkins and Fuller Brush Company. Elizabeth enjoyed talking to friends and neighbors while she sold the products and would often stay for hours to talk through a client’s personal problems. She was always diligent in expressing her concern when she heard that someone was sick or in need of help.

Although Elizabeth pursued new business ventures, the family farm was always very important to her. To lessen her back pain, she would stand on washing machine tubs to hoe her garden and tend to her strawberry plants. Elizabeth was organized as well, and even kept a detailed diary recording the number of strawberries she canned in a day and other daily happenings. She loved to garden, and when she passed away in 2001 from health complications, her refrigerator was filled with canned vegetables

Friends Albert and Edmund Schmitt remember that Liz was a strong, independent woman who had a bit of a temper but a good heart. She shared strong bonds with her community and decided to establish a scholarship

fund after a friend mentioned the option to her. Through her fund with the Community Foundation of Waterloo/Cedar Falls and Northeast Iowa, the Elizabeth Naebers Scholarship Fund is helping students from Dunkerton and Don Bosco high schools continue their education. Elizabeth was an eager student with a passion for people, and her generosity will continue to support the community in which she lived now and in perpetuity.

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