

# Leaving a Legacy

By Michelle Toale-Burke

Dorotha Sundquist, of Independence, sat down with me to discuss her lifelong philanthropy. Dorotha and her late husband Grant (along with Harold E. & Marlin Smith) purchased Bloom Manufacturing in 1963. With Grant's engineering mind and Dorotha's progressive thinking and interest in the needs of others, Bloom Inc. was born and grew to employ many people. Grant and Dorotha sold the company in 2000.

Grab a book from the Independence Public Library shelves and you may see "Donated by Dorotha Sundquist" displayed inside the front cover. Many times people tell her they see her name in library books. Dorotha makes it clear to me that it's not important to her that they see HER name, only that they know someone is contributing to such an important cause. When asked why she has felt it important to contribute to the library, Dorotha said she didn't have access to a library when she was growing up and how important books are to her.

There is a common thread in Dorotha's life of seeing a need, taking the time to investigate the issue, and then getting to work on how to best solve the problem.

*"Too many people stop thinking. The more you keep thinking, the more you can do."  
-Dorotha Sundquist*

Dorotha has traveled over the years to Alaska, where she immersed herself in the culture and assisted with projects to help the locals. South America is another place she frequented to assist with developing waterways. She stressed the importance of realizing "you're not the only person in the world - if not me, then who?"

Dorotha was the first woman Rotary Club member and past President of the club in Independence. When asked how she came to join Rotary, Dorotha replied "I was interested in what they were doing so I went to find out." Simple as that. Her advice for being part of a group like this is "be an active part of it or just stay home." In other words, there is no point in joining if you aren't going to participate.

Grant and Dorotha were a great team. They made and continue to make such a difference in the lives of so many people...from their past Bloom employees, to the people of Alaska and South America, and most importantly, to the people of Independence who have the opportunity to read great books because of her. We are so grateful for her generous and giving

nature. Dorotha ended our conversation with “Grant and I were extremely hopeful that what we have done will keep going.” I think it’s safe to say it will.

Please join us in showing your gratitude by sending Dorotha a thank you card addressed to Attn: Dorotha Sundquist, Independence Public Library, 805 1st Street East, Independence, IA 50644. The thank yous will be delivered the week of Christmas, so please get them to the library by Friday, Dec. 20.

Also, if you feel called to contribute to the Independence Public Library Foundation, checks should be made out to the Independence Public Library Foundation or IPL Foundation. They can be mailed to the Independence Public Library Foundation, Independence Public Library, 805 1st Street East, Independence, IA 50644. Find out more at <http://www.independenceia.org/443/IPL-Foundation>, by emailing [indylib@indytel.com](mailto:indylib@indytel.com), or stop in and we can show you around our wonderful facility and tell you a bit about our current needs.

Thank you, Dorotha, and thank you to all those who contribute in so many different ways to our library!