



# Clifford G. and Ann Marie Clemenson Memorial Scholarship

**C**lifford Clemenson was a man with many talents and a special interest in education and students. Throughout his lifetime, Cliff—as he was affectionately addressed by nearly all who knew him—put his talents to good use and championed the cause of education.

Cliff Clemenson was born September 3, 1915, in Park River, North Dakota, the eldest of three sons of Chris and Alma Clemenson. The Clemenson family moved to a farm near Lawton, North Dakota, when Cliff was a young child. Cliff's father was well known throughout the community as an accomplished carpenter. He supplemented the family's farming income with earnings from carpentry jobs, especially during the winter months. Being the oldest child, Cliff was involved in both of his father's trades—farming and carpentry—at an early age. After graduating from Lawton High School, Cliff continued to work with his father as he also pursued his interest in music. He formed the Cliff Clemenson Orchestra which was quickly in great demand

to play at weddings and parties throughout the region. Cliff kept a busy lifestyle, playing with the dance band at night and juggling farming and carpentry jobs during daytime hours.

In 1940, Cliff and his brother, Wilbur, set off to explore the world a bit working for the Safeway Stores chain along the California coast. All the while, Cliff stayed in touch with Ann Marie Bolstad, the “girl next door,” who was also sprouting her wings working in retail in Mayville, North Dakota.

World War II caused many young people to chart new courses. With war threatening, the brothers returned to North Dakota. Cliff and Ann were married on October 26, 1941, and established a home in Devils Lake where Cliff worked for Peavey Elevator and continued to play in bands. By July, 1942, Cliff was serving his country in the Army Air Corps of Engineers. The Air Corps made good use of Cliff's talent as a carpenter during a tour that lasted three and a half years and took

him to Hawaii and Korea.

In 1945, Cliff returned home to Devils Lake and to Ann who was involved in a busy retailing career which eventually included owning and managing Ann's Hat Department at Rands. Cliff established the Clemenson Construction Company which custom-built and re-modeled many fine homes in the Lake Region for twenty-seven years.

During this time, Cliff was always supportive of the local community college. His construction crews included several graduates of the Lake Region State College Carpentry program. For his summer staff, Cliff sought out young men eager to learn carpentry skills while earning their college tuition. These apprentice carpenters quickly recognized Cliff's commitment to quality and good workmanship, as he demanded they learn to *do the job right!* They also appreciated the personal interest he took in their educational goals.

Cliff's reputation as a skilled craftsman

and his personal commitment to educational opportunities for young people caught the eye of college administrators. In 1969, Cliff accepted a faculty position in the Lake Region State College Carpentry and Cabinet-Making program. This career switch offered Cliff the best of both worlds—as an instructor, he continued to work in his trade, and he was able to assist and guide young adults seeking careers in carpentry and cabinet-making. Cliff always found the special interaction between instructors and students to be very rewarding.

Heart surgery forced Cliff to retire in 1980, but he never lost sight of his goal to benefit students. Cliff decided that an endowed scholarship would be his way of extending in perpetuity his appreciation of the college and his commitment to future students. Upon his death, Cliff's wife, Ann, and his many friends and relatives carried out his wishes and created the Clifford G. Clemenson Memorial Scholarship endowment in his honor. •

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## A tribute to Anne Marie

**T***his endowment was established by Anne Marie Clemenson in loving memory of her husband Clifford. Ann was born in November of 1912 in Stoughton, Wisconsin, to Hans and Ragnhild (Skaar) Bolstad. The family moved to Lawton, North Dakota, in 1919, and Ann graduated from high school in 1931. She then began working in Mayville, North Dakota. Ann and Cliff were married on October 26, 1941, and established their home in Devils Lake before Cliff went off to serve in World War II. Ann remained in Devils Lake working at a local dime store and at Bloughs. She owned and operated the hat department in Rand's for several years before closing her working career at Bell Drug. Ann died May 28, 2010. •*