

Melvin and Margaret Peterson Scholarship Endowment

With dreams about all the things they soon could buy, Darwin Peterson and his younger brother, Ron, didn't expect their newly acquired paper route to be an educational experience ... but their parents did. Margaret and Melvin Peterson were always on the lookout for "teachable" moments, and the paper route was an important part of their strategy. They used it to coach the boys on how to sell the paper. *"Don't just ask homeowners if they want to buy a paper ... tell them why they need a newspaper in their home."* They used the paper route to teach the boys about sticking with a task (even in a blizzard), maintaining positive relations with customers (They ate a lot of cookies.), and dealing with the responsibilities of collecting the weekly delivery fee (Some people never answered the door when it was time to pay.). *"We didn't realize it at the time, but we were learning skills we would use the rest of our lives,"* explained Darwin.

The Petersons did not depend solely on the paper route to teach life's lessons. Margaret and Melvin were both actively involved in many community youth organizations—Boy Scouts, 4-H, and Farmers Union Youth Group to name a few. Preparing their children for productive lives was a top priority. Getting a good education was also a top priority. Each of their four children—

Darwin, Ron, Keith, and Candace—attended Lake Region State College and continued their education at universities.

Margaret Field Peterson grew up in Turtle Lake, North Dakota, and attended Capitol Commercial College in

Bismarck. Melvin Peterson grew up in Golden Valley, North Dakota, and met Margaret when he, too, attended the Commercial College. They married in 1941, and Melvin began a lifelong career with Farmers Union Insurance of North Dakota. He eventually became district manager for an agency force that served the northeast quarter of the state. Always community-minded, Margaret and Melvin worked with a broad spectrum of groups to enrich the

community, from their church to Sons of Norway to the community gold club, the Elks club, the quilters guild, and many others. They lived their belief that each of us should find a way to leave the world a bit better off than we found it.

This lesson, like many others, was not lost on Margaret and Melvin's son, Darwin. To honor his parents' legacy and the important life lessons they taught, Darwin and his wife, Joyce, established the Melvin and Margaret Peterson Scholarship Endowment. First priority for awards is given to students who have worked in a nursing home or supportive living facility. ☺

