

Planned Giving Quarterly

Donor Spotlight

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“You could say that our favorite thing about Marshall is that we found each other and have been married for 62 years,” says Sue Crum, a Marshall alumna, Class of 1959.



Meeting in an education class, both Sue and Gene Crum have always had a passion for learning. Gene, a graduate of Ripley High School, studied science and social studies, as they were areas he always enjoyed. He chose to attend Marshall because his sister worked as a nurse at the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital in Huntington. By attending Marshall, he had a place to stay. Sue grew up in Mount Nebo and graduated from Summersville High School. She chose to study home economics, as she was a member of 4-H, the oldest of four children and “always had much responsibility,” and the program was well known for its excellence.

Both Gene and Sue were active on campus. Gene was a member of the men’s concert choir and Cavalier, a small, independent, laid-back, non-Greek fraternity. Sue was in the Home Economics Club; Sigma Sigma Sigma, a sorority; Kappa Omicron Phi, an honor society for students in human sciences; and Alpha Lambda Delta, a national honor society for successful first-year students.

The couple describes Marshall’s campus then as “small, with enrollment at about 3,400 students,” and remembers the students and faculty were friendly. The Student Union was Gene’s favorite place and Sue most enjoyed the Lab School Area where she was given the opportunity to work with small children (ages 2-4), setting up and cleaning up before and after their arrival under the direction of Dr. Adella Strouss.

“Marshall gave me an excellent background in history, which I thoroughly enjoy, even today,” said Gene.

After Gene graduated in 1958, and Sue the following year, they spent one year gaining professional experience before both joining the faculty at McKinley Junior High School in Portsmouth, Ohio, which is no longer in existence. The couple spent seven years there before going to Portsmouth West High School where they taught for 23 and 24 years, respectively. Upon retirement, they went into business owning apartments and Portsmouth Monument Company. The Crums chose to remember Marshall in their estate plans because they wanted to give back.

“Marshall gave us a foundation for a better life. Gene was a first-generation college graduate. We believe giving back is important because monies well managed make it possible for students to go to school that otherwise would not be able to do so,” Sue said.

They advise today’s students to study hard, get involved and take educational risks like seeking out internships or taking a part-time job relevant to their studies. They hope that Marshall continues to “thrive and grow.”

“Higher education opens doors for self betterment and community betterment. We hope that the next generation is compassionate, industrious and generous,” said Gene.

These days, the Crums enjoy gardening and spending time outdoors. They help clean up downtown Portsmouth and attend Second Presbyterian Church of Portsmouth. They enjoy traveling to visit their children and grandchildren, and stay involved with Marshall University.