

John Devine
Nominated by Bob Devine

I would like to nominate my amazing grandfather, John Devine, for the many positive impacts he had on the residents of Marshfield, which are still being enjoyed today.

John Devine, was born in 1886 in O'Neill City, Nebraska. As an adult, he journeyed to the Town of Mitchell, in Sheboygan County and established a farm. In 1912 in Black Creek, Outagamie County, John married Anna Fischer.



In 1915 John purchased 80 acres of property, located on what is now Catlin Ave, Clark County, just north of County Highway H, and NW of Chili. As was typical at the time, it was forested and had to be cleared before farming. John had a small house and barn built there.

In 1916, John and Anna, (with their 3 year old son George), loaded all their worldly possessions; their livestock and farm machinery, onto a train near Mitchell. 170 miles later, in unfamiliar territory, they unloaded the boxcar on a siding at the crossroads of Spokeville, in Clark County.

In 1917, John decided to again relocate his young family closer to "civilization", (Marshfield); and traded their Clark County farmstead for an 80 acre farm near Marshfield. The farm was located on what is now the SE corner of 14th st. and Lincoln Ave., the current site of the Christ Lutheran Church.

Farming was a hard go in those times, especially during the Great Depression. As happened to many, the farm was almost lost several times to the bank.

John was a prominent member of the Marshfield farming community; along with his neighbors of the time, the Weber's (now the milk store) and the Magedanz's (who had a barn white washing business). John would deliver milk by horse and wagon to the Borden Plant in Marshfield, and Anna would go along to sell eggs to the grocers in town. Then they would stop at Adler Bakery to buy sweets for a family treat. The bakery also would roast their turkeys for holiday dinners. During summer the family would spend Sundays at Wildwood Park, listening to music, eating picnic lunches, and visiting with friends and neighbors.

Although the Devine family had endured much adversity throughout the generations, John was an optimistic man. His favorite saying was, "Make the most of life, and waste no happy day. For time will never bring you back the moments passed away."

John died in 1954 , and Anna died in 1972, both in their adopted City of Marshfield.

Being a forward thinker, John's ultimate dream for the farm was for it to be developed into affordable neighborhood family houses. That was the direction he gave to his heirs.

After John Devine's death, the farm and land was rented out for a while. As economic conditions allowed over the years, John and Anna's sons, Clarence, George, and Ray, supported the Marshfield community through sales/transfers of land for new affordable houses, to the Christ Lutheran Church, the Marshfield Municipal Airport, what is now Marshfield Health Services, and

the Wildwood Municipal Park, all entities that still serve the Marshfield populace. In 1996 a plaque was placed west of the Wildwood Park upper pond, in memory of John and Anna.

The support of many past Mayors and Aldermen of the City, along with help of city staff, was key in the development of the Devine Subdivision. Over 80 affordable single family homes were built to comprise the Subdivision in close proximity to Wildwood Park Zoo, churches, schools, and the Airport, thus fulfilling the grand dream of John Devine.