



The family of Ramona Rouse, longtime resident of Mercer County from 1973 to 1984 and from 2000 to 2017, honored her memory with a donation to the Caregiver Program of Northwest Missouri Area Agency on Aging. Ramona loved people and had a heart for all ages, especially for older adults.

One of the first things a person noticed about Ramona were her pretty blue-green eyes, as well as her quick smile. She was always particular about her appearance wherever she went. She was an avid reader, and she was active in her community and her church as long as her health allowed it. Her husband Tom became her faithful caregiver in 2012, and they eventually moved back to Iowa in 2017, where their family was able to step in to assist and support them.

During the course of her working career, Ramona worked closely with the public and loved the interaction with others. She began her career in 1962 as secretary to the director of the Data Processing Center at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Tom was a student at Iowa State, and Ramona balanced being a student wife and mother to 3 small children who were 3, 6 and 8 years old, all while working a fulltime job. She worked daily with department heads and staff at the University, where she became proficient in understanding the overall workings of the University.

In 1966 Ramona began working at the Colo Iowa Independent Telephone Company as the bookkeeper and Business Office manager. During her employment, the Telephone Company was upgraded from all above-ground telephone lines to a modern all-buried telephone system. When the manager of the Colo Telephone Company was the president of the Independent Telephone Association for four years, Ramona served as the secretary for the Association.

During mid-1970s to the early 1980s, Ramona worked in the RSVP program at the Princeton Senior Center for over 4 years; and she served as the Director of the Harrison County Senior Center in Bethany, working closely with Bina Davis and the NWMOAAA during her tenure there. She updated records for services the Center provided to members of the community; removing files of those who were deceased, and keeping meticulous records. Ramona began working at the Grand River Telephone Company for then-manager Bill Chastain, who was a highly-respected member of the Iowa Independent Telephone Association.

She worked at the front desk, and traveled to wherever she was needed in Trenton, Princeton, Bethany, Linneus and Ravenwood, Missouri, and Leon, Iowa.

In 1984 Tom and Ramona moved back to the Colo, Iowa, area; and Ramona returned to work at Iowa State University as an Information Specialist at the Convention/Event Center, taking pride in being able to handle any and all inquiries that came into her office. She took a proactive role in problem solving all questions and concerns, in a very efficient manner. After Ramona retired from ISU in 1999, she and Tom returned to farm life in Mercer County in 2000.

Throughout her busy life, even with full time employment outside the home, her favorite activity was always spending time with family and friends. She was very supportive of her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Ramona was a patient person and remained pleasant and positive, even when declining health took away her ability to participate in activities she always enjoyed.

Her family noted that they are pleased to be able to make a memorial contribution as a thank you for all the support the Area Agency provided--physically, socially and emotionally--over approximately 10 years. The Agency also supported Tom in his role as caregiver. They further stated that the support provided by NWMOAAA definitely allowed Ramona to be able to remain at home with her husband.

The staff of NWMOAAA is honored by this gift and is so appreciative of the love and thoughtfulness of Ramona's family in helping others who benefit from the Caregiver Program. She and Tom were great people to work with and a lasting example of serving others and working together as a family. Tom was an excellent member of the NWMOAAA Board of Directors and provided wisdom and insight into the needs of older adults during his tenure.