

Honoring a Life Well-Lived

Bonnie Marschall's parents, Eddie and Angie, are an example of the all-American hard-working Midwestern family. Raising five children in Edgar, they were dairy farmers by trade. Innovators in their field, the couple journeyed into Ginseng farming – a root crop grown in Marathon County. "My parents were pioneers in the ginseng industry" Bonnie shared. "It was very hard work, but they did it together for many years."

Recognizing the Signs

"In their late 70's, both of my parents' were impacted by dementia," Bonnie shared. "They had both been such hard-working individuals that it was hard to see some of the signs." Her mother got lost coming home from church, lost her desire to cook or clean, would wander out to the garden and fall and was losing track of time. Her father was impacted with dementia in a different way physically, mentally and emotionally. "I have found that everyone is impacted in so many different ways by Alzheimer's," Bonnie shared. "My siblings and I stayed with them as much as we could, but eventually we moved them into an assisted living facility to ensure they were safe." Bonnie's father lost his battle with dementia with his wife by his side and her mother is now living in a memory care facility.

Get Involved

"Through my parents' journey, I have gotten to know so many people who are facing this disease and I felt obligated to help in any way I can," Bonnie said. "I got involved in the Walk to End Alzheimer's in Wausau four years ago. Families face many challenges – caregiving services are hard to find and facilities are full – and we need to do whatever we can to raise awareness and funds to find a cure. I do this for myself, my siblings and their children. We have to start somewhere." The Walk to End Alzheimer's in Wausau takes place Sept. 24.

"I'm thankful my mom still recognizes all of her kids," Bonnie said. "She's funny and witty and everyone loves her so much, and I walk for her! For any family facing this journey, I would encourage them to reach out to the Alzheimer's Association. Through people I met during the Walk, I got so many of my questions and concerns answered."



Eddie and Angie - Ginseng farming



Bonnie Marschall, Wausau



Eddie and Angie



Angie and her 5 children