

*Darwin & Ruth
Kenner
Scholarship
Endowment*



Darwin and Ruth (Dokken) Kenner raised cattle, grain, six daughters, and three sons on a farm west of Devils Lake along Six Mile Bay. Both came from large, Norwegian families with deep roots in agriculture. Neither had much opportunity for formal education beyond high school but both were ardent supporters. Several of their children and grandchildren have attended LRSC, and their son, Corry, has been LRSC's vice president for Administrative Affairs since 1984.

Gilmar Darwin Kenner was born June 16, 1921, in Devils Lake, North Dakota, the ninth of the ten children born to George and Magda (Kulland) Kenner. After graduating from Devils Lake Central High School in 1939, he became a member of the Class of 1941, the inaugural class of our college (known as Devils Lake Junior College at that time). On October 3, 1942, he entered the United States Army and served his country during World War II as a sergeant with Company A 50th Engineers Division.

He engaged in the Aleutian Islands Campaign and the Marshall Islands Campaign and was awarded the Asiatic Pacific Theater Ribbon with two bronze stars. On November 25, 1944, Darwin received an honorable medical discharge.

Darwin married Ruth S. Dokken from Towner, North Dakota, on November 22, 1950, at Saint Olaf Lutheran Church in Devils Lake. They built their own home along Six Mile Bay of Devils Lake and farmed for many years. Darwin was also a pilot but had to discontinue that when he contracted polio in 1957. Music was an important part of Darwin's life and, besides singing with The Diplomats men's choir, he often sang for funerals and weddings. He had an uncanny ability to memorize song lyrics and poetry. The game show *Name That Tune*

was a favorite as he could usually name the tune immediately and then go on to sing several verses. In later years, Darwin worked in sales for KZZY Radio. He was a member of Saint Olaf Lutheran Church, the Devils Lake VFW, American Legion, and Odd Fellows. He died February 25, 2005.

Ruth Solveig Dokken Kenner was born April 5, 1928, at home on the Dokken Ranch along the edge of the Mouse River north of Towner. She was the middle of the seven children born to Syvert and Clara (Oium) Dokken. Ruth grew up helping her family on the ranch and attended school

with her siblings in a one-room schoolhouse not far from her home. After she finished high school, she worked at the local bank before love brought her to Devils Lake when she married Darwin. One of the many gifts God gave Ruth was an ability to be a caregiver. Besides raising nine children and helping on the family farm, she worked at the local crisis unit and for many years at the Good Samaritan Center. She demonstrated time and again the importance of doing anything and everything one can to help the ones you love, as she cared for their adult daughter (with developmental disabilities) and later her beloved husband

as he battled with his health. Ruth had a most beautiful soul, filled with compassion, love, kindness, and joy, and her love for her family was unconditional and immeasurable. Ruth played piano



by ear and enjoyed getting together with her siblings to play hymns, bluegrass and folk music. It was no wonder all of her children participated in band and choir. She enjoyed reading and working in her fabulous flower gardens. In her later years, she enjoyed crafts and baking. She died January 25, 2018, leaving twenty-six grandchildren and thirty-four great-grandchildren.

This endowment was established by Darwin and Ruth's family to provide an opportunity for students with desire and ability but without adequate financial means to pursue their education. ●