

2012 Spirit of Philanthropy Awards

The Spirit of Philanthropy Banquet, which took place at Dining Services on Thursday, Sept. 27, 2012, is the kickoff event for Alumni Homecoming Weekend. Three Spirit of Philanthropy Awards were presented and 201 new members were inducted into the Golden Hearts Club.

Max (BA '50) and **Linda Taylor** were recognized for their gift-in-kind donation of two airplanes, **Douglas Benson** (BA '54) was honored for his foresight in establishing an estate plan, and **David** (BS '73) and **Helen** (BS '72) **Susens**, current Andrews staff, were acknowledged for their consistent annual giving for the past three decades. Following are excerpts of the individual presentations to the award recipients.

Max and Linda Taylor

*Presented by T. Ryan Keough,
senior development officer*

You have already heard some about Max tonight as an honored alumnus, his wife Linda, Denise (daughter) & Doug (son-in-law) McDowell, Larissa (daughter) & Catherine (granddaughter) Quijano are here with him this evening. Their other two sons, Max and Todd, were unable to attend.

Max and Linda have been strong supporters of the University and currently sit on the President's Council. This group meets twice a year to talk with and advise President Andreasen. The Taylors have not missed a meeting since joining in 2010.

Something you haven't heard about are Max's other two children. The two that didn't make any family lists or get presents at birthdays or Christmas. He never actually let them in the house or even on the property. He had a special room just for them. He called them N210WT and N704WF and their room was a hanger over at PHX (Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport). Max loved these planes and flew them himself all over the county.

When it came time to try and find a new home for his beloved planes he thought of Andrews University. Both are currently comfortably housed over at the Andrews Airpark and have been serving as training aids for the students.

N210WT, a turbocharged Cessna 210, has been completely gone through by the students and staff and is currently ready to fly again. The Department of Aviation would love to take you up in her this weekend if you like, Dr. Taylor. N704WF, a Cessna 150 Trainer with a picture of Tweety Bird on her tail, is currently serving in the student lab and along with other duties is helping test the students' ability to diagnose engine problems.

The gift of the two planes was a "gift-in-kind" and is just one of the many ways that



L-R: President Andreasen, Max Taylor, Linda Taylor

Andrews receives support from alumni and other friends.

I am proud to call Max and Linda Taylor my friends and privileged to be able to present them with the Spirit of Philanthropy award tonight.

Douglas Benson

*Presented by David Faehner,
vice president for University Advancement*

When I came to Andrews University 28 years ago, one of my first responsibilities was to visit special friends of the University. One of those friends was Doug Benson, an AU alum and physician in Glendale, Calif. I visited him at his home, a beautiful Spanish hacienda full of antique artifacts and furniture. He used this home to entertain a large number of Christian youth for Friday night programs.

The home had a door and a bell, but no doorbell. The bell was a large Spanish one

that you rang with a big rope. I announced my arrival with a big bong.

That night, Doug shared his philosophy of philanthropy that has never changed: "Everything I own will be given to the Lord's work. Scholarships have been and will continue to be provided for students to help them get a Christian education."

Doug grew up in Wisconsin during the Great Depression. His family lived in different small towns where his mother was a teacher and his father a tradesman. He learned three things during his growing up years: the value of a Christian education, to read a lot, and a love of nature.

After graduating from Bethel Academy, he arrived at EMC in 1950 with \$20 in his pocket and no thought of a major. The business manager at the time was Wilson Trickett. He asked Doug if he had any money besides the \$20 in his pocket for school and Doug said no. Wilson took a chance with Doug and admitted him anyway. Doug took on



Far left: Douglas Benson & President Andreasen



Left: David and Helen Susens

three jobs—custodial, lab assistant and night monitor—working a total of 35 hours a week.

In his freshman year at EMC, Doug took a science class and did very well. In fact, he beat out the premed students and Professor Harry Wang suggested that he study medicine. He took the challenge and that decision shaped the rest of his life.

In 1957, Doug married the love of his life, Lynn Nell Floyd, a nursing student at Loma Linda University. After three bouts of rheumatic fever, Doug finished medical school at LLU in 1959. He and Lynn set up a practice in Glendale and for 30 years she was his nurse.

They followed the Golden Rule by never turning away patients who couldn't pay and always praying with them, if granted permission. He says 85 percent liked it and 15 percent he's not so sure about. Together, they brought 92 patients into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

H.M.S. Richards Sr., the renowned Adventist evangelist, was his favorite patient. Doug deeply admired Richards for his ability to read through the Bible a few times a year in spite of the fact he had poor vision. Richards inspired Doug to be a faithful reader of his Bible every morning for one hour.

After his wife died and in later years Doug decided to return to his roots in the Midwest. Today he lives in a modest house on Lake Chapin Road, overlooking the St. Joseph River. The home sits in the middle of 1,200 acres of beautiful woods. Many call it the most beautiful piece of property in Berrien County.

Doug is a businessman who carefully plans

ahead. Thirty years ago he started planting 500 acres of hardwood trees on this property. The sale of those trees will raise funds for Andrews University in perpetuity.

During the past 28 years I have visited Doug more than 200 times and he has never changed his intent to support Andrews University.

David and Helen Susens

*Presented by Jacqueline Spencer,
annual giving coordinator*

When we think of philanthropy, we often think of it in terms of the larger gifts that impact an organization almost instantly. While the amount is certainly encouraging, the gifts that I find most inspiring are not the multimillion dollar gifts that come our way every so often, but rather the gifts that in their own way make a tremendous impact over time.

Enter our recipients for this year's award. Both are Michiganders—one was born in Hillsdale, Mich., and the other in Battle Creek, Mich. They met at Andrews University and after juggling their relationship amidst their assignments and work, in 1972 they tied the knot right here on campus in the Lamson Hall Chapel. Mind you, this was just two weeks after the bride had graduated with a Bachelor of Science in medical secretarial studies. She was a student worker in the records office, so it was only a natural fit for her to work there on a full-time basis after graduating. She stayed for a year and when her new husband graduated in 1973

with a Bachelor of Science in business administration, they both left Andrews to pursue a career opportunity that had come up for him.

However, 18 years and three children later, the couple made their way back to Berrien Springs. Their daughter had decided to attend Andrews and they wanted to support her. With her daughter now on campus, "Mom" went back to the records office and applied... and had an interview right in her old office! She remembers saying, "Wait, wasn't there a wall over there...?" Her interviewer confirmed that was the case. Over time, their daughter graduated with a degree in English and one of their sons also attended and graduated with a degree in aviation. He now works as a commercial pilot.

As they worked at Andrews they both gave back, generously supporting various projects on campus, including the Fund for Andrews, Buller Hall and endowments. Together they have given over 166 gifts to the University.

It is not merely the generosity of their gifts, but their faithful and consistent support over the course of 31-plus years that make them great examples of the Spirit of Philanthropy among the faculty and staff of Andrews University. And for these reasons, we present the Spirit of Philanthropy award to them.

Unfortunately, they were unable to attend tonight, but if you would like to congratulate them, you can find them on campus: David Susens is the manager of the ITS Computer Store and Helen Susens is the assistant registrar for Undergraduate Affiliation Programs.