

Announcing the Nancy Seiberling Circle

JOHNSON COUNTY HERITAGE TRUST has ventured into new territory with the creation of the Nancy Seiberling Circle to honor one of our far-sighted and amazing founders. The Nancy Seiberling Circle is comprised of very dedicated individuals who have agreed to contribute \$1,000 per year or more to further our mission to preserve our natural heritage

Charter members of the Seiberling Circle are Kathie Belgum, Don Bolin and Liz Hall, Holly Carver and Lain Adkins, Laurie and Terry Dahms, David and Sally Dierks, James Fluck and Julie Scott, Tom and Becky Gelman, Jix and Jean Lloyd-Jones, Liz and Ryan Maas, Mark and Judy Madsen, Jane McCune, Connie and Bob Mutel, Judy and Bill Nauseef, Sharyn and John Reitz, Bob and Hutha Sayre, Dick Schwab and Katherine Burford, Mark and Mary Ellen Stinski, Kristin Summerwill, and Jean and John Van Rybroek.

If you are interested in joining this group of committed individuals, please contact Executive Director Tammy Richardson at 319/338-7030 or info@jcht.org.

Nancy Seiberling by Jean Lloyd-Jones

WHEN NANCY SEIBERLING and her husband, Frank, moved to Iowa City in 1959, they must have shuddered at the dowdy look of the town. Frank had just become chair of the University of Iowa's Art Department, and Nancy needed no invitation to start educating the citizens about the potential beauty all around us.

I first met her when she came to a United Nations Association meeting at my house. We were trying to figure out how to raise \$5,000 to help pay for a refugee house in Austria. Nancy proposed a tour of homes. The board members looked at one another in disbelief. Surely nobody would pay to tour homes in Iowa City. There were no architectural masterpieces here. But Nancy had already chosen the six homes, each representing a different decade in Iowa City history, and four months later the first annual tour of homes was a smashing success. She taught us to appreciate the gems in our midst.

Soon after that, she and Gretchen Harshbarger teamed up to start Project GREEN. Over the years, in partnership with the city of Iowa City and with the help of hundreds of volunteers, that organization has restored the Iowa Avenue medians, beautifully landscaped the entrances to Iowa City, helped with the design of the ped mall and countless other projects, and planted and catalogued thousands of trees. While accomplishing all this, Nancy hosted receptions and dinners, entertained dancers and writers, and advocated for world peace and urban renewal.

One day Nancy said to me, "We need a land preservation trust in Johnson County!" I must confess that my first impulse was similar to that of the UNA members: "We don't have any ecologically valuable land worth preserving. And where would we find the money to buy land and preserve it in perpetuity?" Nancy had answers for every question. She already had some choice land in mind, she had people in mind for the initial board, and in a short time the Johnson County Heritage Trust had become a reality.

Nancy's eye for beauty and her passion for preserving the environment have had an impact on our community far beyond the ability of any of us to measure. I am pleased to learn that the JCHT board has established a donor category in her name. Everyone who joins the Nancy Seiberling Circle will honor Nancy by helping future generations see the beauty of our Johnson County landscapes.



Nancy (left) with sisters Becca and DJ, ca. 1980. Photo by Frank Seiberling, Jr.