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"IT'S ABOUT THE PEOPLE"

Togetherhness | Helpfulness | Friendliness

*We Remember
We Celebrate
We Believe*

Helen Patenaude *Farm to Real Estate*

Helen Patenaude

Born in Chicago

Farmed in Lena

Successful real estate
broker

Raised 4 children

Moved to
Couillardville in 2005

Lives on
Site of George and
Agnes Flynn Farm
&
Site of the first
Couillardville settlers
Jacob and Susan
Couillard.

Loves her Couillardville
Neighbors



I'm Helen Patenaude, and I was born in Chicago, Illinois, at St. Mary of Nazareth's Hospital. At that time my parents were living in Evanston, Illinois.

So, when I was born my mother went into Chicago and I was born in the windy City of Chicago.

My parents had nine children: my mother had two sets of twins, unfortunately, there was one twin brother that died of a respiratory

problem, so my mother and father raised 8 children. I was the 7th one born in my family. We were a very close-knit family.

I came from a very strict Catholic family. Weekends were spent going to Grandma and Grandpa's home in Evanston or in Wadsworth, Ill for dinner and visiting with my uncles and aunts. Uncles were big into baseball, so we were taken to Wrigley field in Chicago or to Riverview amusement park.

We all attended Catholic grade school and later I attended Holy Child High School in Waukegan Illinois. I believe I had a good education, and I appreciate all that my parents did for me.

I had many influences and some from very good teachers. There was one nun that had taught me, "that you can do anything that you want if you want to do it bad enough." I still believe this today!

I was a waitress in my cousin's restaurant, "Chuck Wagon", for about one year, then later I was employed at National Office Supply Company, which was a printing company. My job was to carry printed medical labels to Abbott Laboratory, in North Chicago. The labels were then proofread, and then I took them back to the printing shop to be printed.

At the young age of 18 years old I married my husband whose parents lived next door to my parents. We started our family and I had three children.

Move to Wisconsin

My husband was a bricklayer who liked to hunt and fish. One of our friends was from Lena, Wisconsin, so we moved there to work and to be close to them and their families. At that time my daughter was only 3 months old. Lena was not a very big community as its population was about 500 people at the time. Their doctor had an office in his home in Lena, but that was over 60 years ago.

While in Lena, I was employed at Coleman Products, which is where they made wire harnesses for the American Motors cars. There were over 400 women that worked there.

I was employed as an inspector for over four years.

Becoming a Farmer

As time went by, I married my second husband, Don Patenaude, and had one more child.

Don was a "born and raised" dairy farmer in Lena. He had about 50 head of milking cattle and had over 200 acres of land that he cultivated to feed his livestock. When I lived on the farm I helped with milking cows and feeding calves and baling hay.

Living on a farm there was always a lot of hard work. I think my children recall it was very hard work, especially

getting up at 3:00 a.m. in the morning before school.

They did enjoy the animals and my daughter loved horses; she could ride like an Indian bareback. This was what she loved best.

I remember baling hay was quite hard. The farmers today don't have to do that. They have got a lot of nicer modern equipment where they bale it in big bales now with plastic, so it's a lot easier because of modern technology.

The best of times were just being with the family and having meals together on Sunday. We all went to church every Sunday. I enjoyed just being with my children.



Over the years Helen owned 13 horses

After a while, milk prices dropped and we sold the farm on a land contract, and then we moved to Oconto. I was employed at Elliott Grove for about two years in Oconto. Don then sold feed for cows and horses.

A New Career

Don died at the young age of 52 years and I found myself all alone to raise four children. So, I decided to go back to school. I attended NWTC in Green Bay and became a licensed real estate agent. I worked at Century 21 for one year, then went back to school and got my Broker's License. In time I became a Broker/Owner. I also attained my Appraiser's license and did rental management.

I came from a very poor family, and I wanted my children to have a better life than I had had. I wanted to give my family a good home life. I bought a house right on the inside of Oconto and that is where they grew up. I became active in my community and church and was co-chair for the St. Joseph's church one year.

I was very determined to accomplish and do better. My day started at 6:00 a.m. and

ended at 12:00 a.m. I believe that you should do as much as you can each day. I did this for 20 years.

To be successful you have to like people, and that's a big part of selling real estate. I enjoy helping people and helping them find the home that they want to live in. It's one thing to sell somebody something but sometimes people don't know where to get financing. So that's a big part of the job.

After I did retire in 2005, for the next 10 years I did loan signings for banks and title companies for 10 years. So I did a lot of traveling, and on the last 2 cars, I put on around 300,000 miles and never was in any accidents.

American Legion Auxiliary



Helen was the American Legion Auxiliary President for Oconto County for 2 years and now is President for the American Legion Auxiliary of Oconto Unit # 74. Both of her husbands and her boys are veterans.



Helen's children; Dwayne , Shane & Debra Haines and Aric Jon Patenaude

During that time, I was in my early 40's, my children were interested in Karate and Tae-kwon-do. I went with them and decided to join. The four of us became Black Belts during a 10-year period. I believe I bonded with my children, and this was one of my greatest accomplishments.

I wanted my children to grow up to be good Christian people. My oldest son, Dwayne, was a Marine Veteran of twenty-eight years, now retired. My daughter, Debra, is an RN and works for an insurance company. My second son, Shane, served in the Marine K-9 Division for eight years, then became a police officer. My youngest son, Aric, owns Granite Stone Works in De Pere, WI. All of them have done well and I am very proud of them.

My greatest joy was watching my children grow while attending all their sporting events, like football, baseball and basketball games.



Became a Black Belt with three of my four children

Couillardville Years

I retired in about 2005 and moved to Couillardville. I had purchased a farmhouse with 40 acres of land, and we stripped that farmhouse down to the 2x4's and reconstructed it with all new wiring, plumbing and drywall. So, it's like a newer home built on an older foundation.

I guess I wanted something different than the city life. There's not a lot of privacy when you live in the city; in the country is more private.

For 20 years I lived in Oconto and now I've been in Couillardville around 21 years now.

Couillardville is a very nice community. There is a lot of nice friendly neighbors and they're very helpful. Anytime that I need some help the neighbors are right there to help. It's a very nice community. I was invited to the gatherings of the Families of Couillardville and have enjoyed meeting many new neighbors. Over the years it is sad that some of the neighbors have passed away or some moved away to be with their families. I hope the Couillardville families stay together as it has been a very warm close knit group of people.



Helen's River Realty Business