



Don and Lynn Chard devoted their lives to farming, their family and their community.

Born in 1926, Don spent almost his entire life within 15 miles of his boyhood home Rochester. Lynn was born in Springfield in 1934 and has similarly lived nearby ever since. They married in August 1952 and lived briefly near Rochester and Middletown before moving to Franklin in 1954.

They settled outside of Dawson in 1956 and leased a farm from Michael Scully. That became the long-time base of their farming operation, and it was there that they raised their sons Steve and Mike.

Eventually their operation encompassed almost 1,000 acres across several properties including Don's parents' farm in Rochester. The operation included both grain and livestock (cattle and feeder pigs).

After a long fulfilling career, Don and Lynn semi-retired in 1984 and moved to a house that they built on his parents' farm. They continued farming his

parents' property and Lynn's parents' former farm near Chatham, until their full retirement in 1999.

A talented baseball pitcher, Don once had the opportunity to try out for the St. Louis Cardinals farm system. He also was a "dowser," witching water wells for many area farmers, and was renowned for locating productive wells. He refused to take more than a token fee, seeing it as a call to public service. Don was also a member of the Mechanicsburg Township Board and Rochester Lions Club.

Lynn could outwork many men and was as comfortable on a tractor as she was in the home. She has been a member of the United Methodist Church both in Dawson, and in Rochester where she still sings in the choir. She has been active politically and most currently serves as Clerk of Rochester Township. She was an 2012 Illinoisan of the Day honoree at the State Fair and recently retired as Director of the Sangamon County Soil & Water District. She is also a member of the Sangamon County Home Extension.

Don and Lynn spent many years working with the Sangamon County Farm Bureau organization, and both served as Director for the maximum 9 years. Lynn was only the 2nd woman to be a Director. Both worked on several committees for the organization.

A simple recitation of facts and dates does not fully capture their commitment to their community and to agriculture. They took very seriously their role of being stewards of the land that they farmed. Perhaps more importantly, in addition to raising their sons, they also "raised" several high-school aged and older young men who worked for them as hired hands. Lynn's lunches became legendary among this group. Don and Lynn also routinely performed quiet acts of charity for people in need around them.

Now 88 years old, Lynn still lives on the family farm outside of Rochester and enjoys an active social life of someone 25 years younger. Beloved and missed by his family, Don was lost to an automobile accident in 2003.

**2022 Recipients
Don & Lynn Chard
Rochester, IL**