GEORGETTE FRAZER, BS, MS, CPA, PFS, CFP
by Jane Kennedy

Marshfield became Georgette Frazer's hometown in 1975, and since then she says she's "settled in quite well!" Georgette moved to Marshfield after growing up in a Chicago suburb and going east for college. Right away, she knew she'd landed in the right place, a "lifetime home."

"Suburbs are good places to grow up in but they're strange," Georgette said. "Families who live there spend most of their time apart. Marshfield was the first real town I'd ever experienced, where a family could live, work, and study without being under the shadow of a bigger city. Marshfield is its own place."

While out east Georgette studied botany, ecology, and rural economics, obtaining the first of two master's degrees. Exploring and learning about Marshfield and its connections to the farmlands and wild places nearby has been an ongoing passion for her. Inspired by what she's learned about her new home, she's looked for the best ways to make her own contributions to local life.

Her first job was as an instructor at the UW-Marshfield/Wood County campus (now UW-Stevens Point at Marshfield) in the Business and Economics Department. Over the years she found ways to connect her students to business and community life, to show them the relevance of what they were learning and to expose them to occupational opportunities. With enterprising student Matt Berrier, she began a business club on campus that brought in local businesspeople to talk with students. Club members took field trips and helped local businesses with their marketing plans.

At the campus Georgette also revived the Continuing Education-Extension program and served on the Foundation's Investment Committee, working with Dr. Nelson Moffat to make sure endowment funds were invested properly. She also advised local businesses through the federal Small Business Development Program and gave entrepreneurship classes at Marshfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MACCI).

After 17 years at the campus, Georgette decided to put her teaching to work by opening her own practice as a CPA and Certified Financial Planner. She specialized in Sustainable, Responsible and Impact (SRI) investing and served clients from Marshfield and throughout the U.S. Many of her clients wanted to focus their investment decisions on long-term, broader social goals as well as personal goals. She was honored nationally by her colleagues with a lifetime "Candle in the Mountain" award and was selected by her national professional group, US SIF, to design the first course on SRI for financial professionals.



Georgette Frazer

Back home, Georgette's working days were filled by what satisfied her most: supporting her clients through financial decision-making and through difficult market fluctuations. She brought her problem-solving and financial skills to a number of organizations, becoming Marshfield Rotary Club's first woman president, and later presiding over the Main Street and MACCI boards; as well as serving as a director of the boards of Marshfield Clinic Research Foundation and St. Joseph's Hospital. She was the first woman member to receive the Service Above Self Award in Rotary Club's 80-plus year history. For her civic service MACCI awarded her Small Businessperson of the Year in 1995.

Her love for the natural world and her civic involvement came together when Georgette initiated the city's Flower Power Project. Expanding on work that the Marshfield Garden Club had begun, the Flower Power Project brought large flowerpots along Central Avenue, and built gardens in many of the city's downtown parking lots. Many local volunteer gardeners supported the project, as did Brian Panzer and the Street Department staff. The project was launched with funds from the city's Community Development Authority.

As the oldest girl of six in her family, an interest in women's issues came naturally to Georgette. She helped to establish the Wisconsin Women's Credit Union and became its president, combined with teaching Credit Union Management courses at MSTC. Along with Prof. Richard Rowley at the UW she developed a new course in Business Communications for Women to support area women in their business careers. She helped to start the local National Organization for Women chapter and contributed as an active member in the early days of several other local women's organizations like

League of Women Voters, Business and Professional Women's Club and Altrusa. These efforts were meant to give back by opening opportunities for talented women in our community.

Georgette and her husband, Don, also a teacher, enjoy exploring the wider world and have shared that enthusiasm with others. They taught in Malaysia for a year and came home to help start our Sister City program with our partner city in Jauregui/ Lujan, Argentina. They were in the "advance team" along with teacher Cathy Lau that visited Argentina to make the match. Georgette also supported Don in initiating the city's annual Cultural Fair, which is still a very popular event.

A commitment to preserving and protecting what's good in our rural and small-city life, a drive to add to the opportunities that are offered here, and gratitude for all that her neighbors, friends and family here have given her have inspired Georgette Frazer to share her time and talents through community service.

Georgette is an outstanding member of our community and an outstanding example to all of us through her leadership and through the many ways in which she has directly helped others. We no doubt have all benefitted from her many good works and her kindness to all living things. She has encouraged and nurtured countless community members, to our lasting benefit. The picture I chose shows Georgette at her finest, snowshoeing on one of our local trails, embracing life to the fullest.