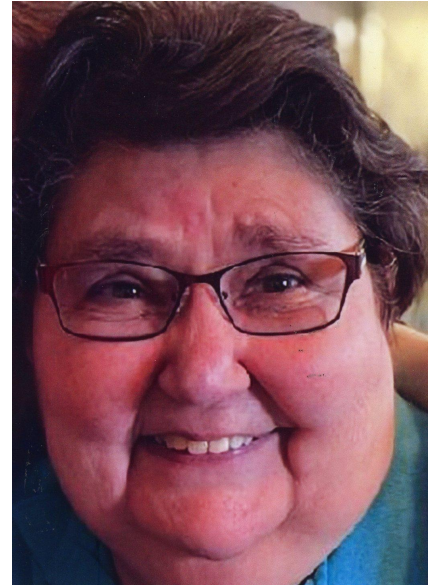


Mary Wilson

Nominated by Marcy Schneider

It all started with a Kodak camera, progressing to an instant Polaroid of her father's, then a Kodak EK6. Mary and her dad took photos of Melvin Grimm's milk truck when it broke through the Yellow River Bridge on Lincoln Avenue, many years ago. When he looked at the pictures she took, he told her that she took better pictures than he did. This is where her story takes on a life of its own.

Mary realized her true potential when she picked up that camera. Mary pursued a vocation as a wedding and special events photographer. She created a business, "I Can't Believe It's Me" Photography, which she owned and operated for 10 years. For Mary, it wasn't about financial gain or having her name in lights. She was a 'behind the scenes' gal with a camera, and one of Marshfield's greatest hidden gems.



In 2011, Mary lost her best friend and fellow artist/photographer. It was then that she had an epiphany. She knew that her friend would expect her to "carry on." She took twice as many pictures to express her increased kindness and gratitude. She doubled her volunteer hours. Her health issues limited her ability to put in long hours; however, she took photos for the Marshfield Fair, Fall Fest, fundraisers, ribbon cuttings and leadership projects. (She was at the MMS Literacy Garden so much that the crew thought she was the boss).

Mary has been a member of the Zoological Society since 2013, serving as President since 2018. She spends many hours at the park/zoo taking photos of the wildlife. She created postcards, greeting cards, and Christmas cards with photos of zoo animals and the displays of Rotary Winter Wonderland. Her photos are truly a work of art. She also created a book of zoo exhibits with photos and captions. Her books could be purchased at the Marshfield Zoo Store. She donated a copy of her book to the Marshfield Public Library. Mary trail blazed a path to help people of all ages connect with the Wildlife Park & Zoo.

There are multiple ways to look at the same thing. When Mary looks through the camera lens, she sees something that most of us never notice. People either have that gift or they don't. Mary definitely has IT. She spends much of her time taking wildlife photos in nature, as well. She enjoys it immensely. Her favorite photos are those of eagles, as they have special meaning to her.

Mary believes that acts of kindness can make a huge difference in the lives of others, so she takes photos of historic homes, churches, businesses, and events. Her photographs have allowed people who are not able to travel to participate in events like Fairs, Parades, and more from the comfort of their homes. Future generations of people will view her photos and they will experience years of Marshfield's history.

She has had her photographs shared in the News Herald, Hub City Times, and Visitors Guide, along with a multitude of wedding albums. Mary also shares some of her photos on Facebook, bringing smiles and joy to many people. She has many followers but she will probably never know all the lives she has touched with her photos.

There is no slowing down for Mary, as photography is her passion in life. She recently took photographs at the ribbon cutting for the Veteran's Wall of Honor and they are some of her best.

Mary is a very integral part of this community and very deserving of this nomination. She pours her soul into her photos and her relationships. In the years that I have known her, I have met hundreds of people who know her as one of the friendliest people they've met. She is humble and kind, just the type of person that would be honored to have one of her photographs appreciated by the masses and not just taken for granted.