

### Marilyn Coppernoll Memorial Scholarship

Marilyn Coppernoll was a local writer who never gave up her dream of publishing, no matter how many rejection letters she received. All her life she dreamed of writing for magazines and newspapers and eventually short stories or a novel, and her husband, Bill Coppernoll, made it his job to get help her there.

Marilyn was born in Peru in October, 1956. She grew up in Peru and went to Peru High School where she met her future husband, Bill, when she was 14. Even at that young age, Marilyn knew that she wanted to be a writer and was already trying to contact publishers about writing short stories; however, her ultimate dream was to publish a fiction novel.

After graduating from high school, Marilyn attended IU Kokomo and received her BA in history. Having never had any formal training in writing, Marilyn was completely self-taught; however, she quickly learned how to tailor her writing for the market and how to write about what she knew.

In her 20's Marilyn began writing about agriculture, something that she had been raised around and had an extensive knowledge of, and she had her first article published in a magazine. After that first article, her passion seemed to be fueled even more, and she wrote more than ever. After several years, she was writing for three to four different publications a month and three or four others quarterly.

For a few years, Marilyn worked as a staff writer for the Peru Tribune, but she soon went back to writing freelance. With every article she approached, she went out of her way to do above and beyond what she needed; she would collect all the information she could and constantly try to rework or add more to stories to get them republished somewhere else.

In her later years she started a writer's support group with another writer in Kokomo. They collected approximately ten to twelve regular members and met for four years. She also wrote her first full-length, non-fiction novel for the Historical Society which recounted the history of Miami County in both pictures and words.

Unfortunately, Marilyn passed away in 1998 before she could accomplish her dream of publishing a novel. Not long after her death, however, Bill began receiving several letters from publishing companies asking to speak with her about potentially publishing a novel. She had been so close to achieving her dream.

Marilyn and Bill were married for 24 years and had two sons, Quentin and Brandon. After she passed, her sister suggested to Bill that they start a scholarship fund in her memory. Marilyn had been working on an article about the Foundation only months before her death, so Bill knew instantly where they should go to start the fund. Unable to afford the fund at the time, the family attempted several fundraisers, raising almost \$1,000. Just when they thought they would never make their goal, however, an anonymous donor stepped in to provide the rest of the money they needed.



Writing was always Marilyn's life, but she also enjoyed horses and horse racing, reading, and spending time with family. Bill still works in the IT industry, where he has been for the last 20 years and enjoys hunting, fishing, gardening, golf, baseball, and travelling.

Bill always thought that, had Marilyn had the formal training she needed, she would have reached her goal much faster. Through the Marilyn Coppernoll Memorial Scholarship, Bill and his family can provide other students interested in pursuing a career in writing with the necessary tools to achieve their goals.