



## **The Robert and Eleanor Peterson Technical and Educational Fund**

This fund is established in memory of my parents, Robert and Eleanor Peterson, who lived and worked all their lives in Cloquet. This fund will help Cloquet High School continue to provide the latest technology and hands-on experiences for their technical and vocational students to compete successfully in their future careers.

My mother Eleanor graduated from CHS in 1937 and Duluth Teaching College in 1939. Her first teaching assignment was in a one-room school in East Lake, followed by teaching stints in Braham, Moose Lake and at Leach School in Cloquet. Her sisters—Lyla Kalli, Aili Juola, and Ruth Johnson—all had long careers in public education.

My father Robert owned and operated Peterson Plumbing and Heating in Cloquet until his retirement in 1982. Dad's formal education only went through tenth grade, when he began working with his father's plumbing business in 1935. Dad continued to develop his skills over the years, earning his master plumbing license and several boiler licenses. He was well-known in the community for the quality of his work in homes and public buildings, always insisting the job be done right the first time.

Dad served in World War II in the US Navy. He was in the Second Construction Battalion (Seabees), which built airbases and ports supporting the Allied war effort. Dad was stationed in the South Pacific on the islands of Samoa and Funafuti Atoll (now Tuvalu). His construction skills were key to his war service. According to US Naval history, the Seabees' mission and the speed with which they accomplished it was "unparalleled in the history of wartime construction."

I graduated from CHS in 1969 and earned my Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Minnesota in 1976. My sister Lenore (Penny) graduated from CHS in 1971 and the University of Wisconsin-Stout in 1975. She taught in the Long Prairie school system for several years.

I often credit Mr. Philip Larson, my industrial arts teacher, for helping me get into dental school. The skills I developed in his class—including manual dexterity, mechanical/architectural drafting, reading blueprints—seem unrelated to dentistry, but for me they were crucial to both the study and practice of dentistry.

My parents would be impressed, as I am, with the remarkable progress CHS has made in technical education. I hope that this fund will encourage Cloquet high school students to think about their future possibilities in a wide variety of technical fields, vocations and professions. The world is waiting for their contribution.

-Robert Peterson, Cloquet High School Class of 1969