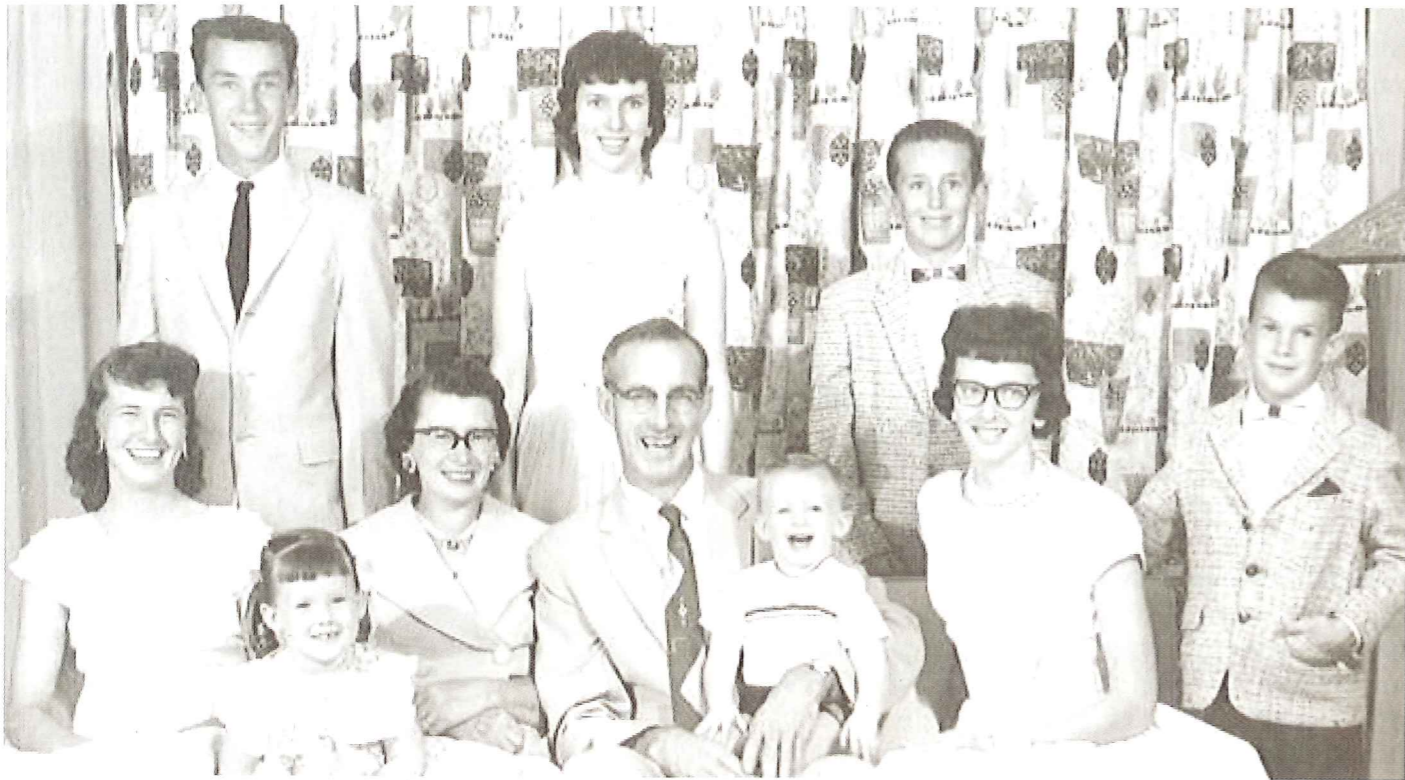


Innovation Award

The Fabian & Lorraine Sheehan Family



Sheehan Family 1960

The Fabian and Lorraine Sheehan Family of Bird Island has played a major role in keeping their community of just over 1,000 vibrant for many years through economic innovation and community commitment. Fabe and Lorraine, who were married in 1939, loved everything about Bird Island and found it to be a perfect place to raise their eight children. They valued education, faith, community, commitment, volunteering and entrepreneurship. They taught their children to treat people the way they'd want to be treated, never take anything for granted and to do the right thing, not the easiest.

These values come through in their family businesses, beginning with a small LP gas delivery business started in 1952. That business grew as did their family. To keep his children out of trouble and teach them about business, Fabe purchased the local drive-in where his children worked growing up. He was a true community promoter and responsible for Island Enterprises, an economic development corporation in the 1970s-1980s, which facilitated 16 business opportunities in the city financed by community members who pooled their funds to provide low-interest loans.

Several of the Sheehan children returned to Bird Island and continue to provide leadership at a local, state and even national level in their industries and through service organizations. Mike took over and expanded Sheehan LP Gas. Siblings Kevin, Brian and Susie own Rural Computer Consultants (RCC), an international business supporting the fuel distribution and insurance industries and employing 43 people, including many young professionals who live in Bird Island and surrounding communities. In 2006, RCC purchased the Bird Island Convent building for \$1 from the city, made more than \$400,000 in renovations to the building and donated \$20,000 to the Economic Development Authority to assist other small businesses.

Diverse career interests of other siblings also reflect their upbringing. Joanne is a registered nurse specializing in diabetes, Pat has an accounting background and is a restaurant owner, Sharon is a pharmacist and Joe is a mechanical engineer and independent consultant. Thirty grandchildren and thirty great-grand children complete this energetic group. With the next generation now becoming active in their businesses and communities, this family's innovation is sure to continue making an impact in the region and beyond for many years to come.



Sheehan Family 2007