

Congratulations, Mary Thomsen



From working with paper ledgers to using the most advanced technology, Mary Thomsen has seen it all in her career at Mount Vernon Bank & Trust Company.

She retires March 31 after 42 years of service to the bank.

CEO/President David Ryan commented on Mary's tenure: "On behalf of the board of directors and shareholders, I'd like to personally thank Mary for her commitment to the bank and the service she provided to our customers over the last four decades."

"Mary has certainly seen it all in community banking and we will miss the breadth and depth of her data processing and bookkeeping knowledge. I'd like to wish her a very happy retirement."

"I've absolutely loved it here," said Mary, a bank vice president who's managed the bookkeeping department for about 36 years. She laughs that her tenure almost never started.

A 1975 Mount Vernon High School graduate, Mary was working in Cedar Rapids as a secretary when she learned of an opportunity at the bank in 1979. She was having coffee at her sister's – an event also attended by Marcia Bair, the head teller at the time. Marcia asked Mary to come by the bank Friday night for a job interview. The bank hours were different then – it was open until 8 p.m., but the doors were locked for a two-hour supper break.

Mary arrived with the bank closed. "I didn't even knock – I just figured I didn't get the job." Marcia Bair called her the next morning, and Mary landed the position after that Saturday interview.

She's spent her entire career in bookkeeping. That began in "a little corner upstairs," before a bank building expansion. The work then also included serving drive-thru and walk-up customers.

The early years as a bookkeeper involved labor-intensive tasks. For example, items were processed here and sent by courier to a data processing center. And for many years every check a customer wrote came back to the bank, was filed in the customers special place in a filing cabinet, and packaged up with monthly statements.

The first computer was for the bookkeeping department – to process maintenance items such as address changes.

Mary joked that there weren't many "banker's hours" over the years. When most people received paper paychecks on Fridays, the bank was open late to serve customers. Many New Year's Eves were spent here until midnight to handle important year-end tasks.

But Mary said it was enjoyable. She enjoyed getting to know her coworkers (many of whom started in bookkeeping and transitioned to other departments). And she's enjoyed working with customers (many of whom still call her directly with questions).

One her most memorable experiences was Y2K, when there were concerns about the impact the year 2000 would have on computers. She and others worked hard to prepare – documenting many things on paper – and stayed at the bank past midnight. There were no impacts.

But it did lead to Mary heading the bank's Disaster Recovery Program. Mary's ability to handle banking in many ways – with or without computers – made her the perfect fit for the role. In her final year at the bank, that role was important – with the COVID-19 Pandemic and the summer Derecho that hit Eastern Iowa.

Mary laughed that she worked here 42 years because "I'm a creature of habit." But, in truth, she loved being able to "grow in the job" as technology and other advancements came to the banking industry. She added that her coworkers and customers made this a great place to work.

Mary said she looks forward to more time with family in retirement – including her two children, her step-daughter, her 14 grandchildren and her siblings.

Bank Events

**Community Shred Day, April
17th, 9:00 am to 11:00 am**

Community Shred Day

We are happy to announce that our Community Shred day will be held Saturday, April 17th, from 9 am to 11am.

There will be a few changes this year: we ask that you wear a mask, drive into the designated area, remain in your vehicle, and we will have one of our employees remove the items from your car. More information will be in April's newsletter.



Southeast Linn Community Center

The following article was written by Nicole McAlexander, Executive Director, Southeast Linn Community Center.

In 1986, the Southeast Linn Community Center Corporation was started by passionate community volunteers. The Board of Directors secured a federal grant to build a facility in Lisbon. They began fundraising, asking the community to provide \$66,000 in additional donations. According to Reverend Kalen Fristad, the first Board President, there was skepticism that so much could be raised. However, they were determined to build a center for “the Congregate Meals program, HACAP programs, the Lisbon Mount Vernon Food pantry, and WIC supplemental food programs. It will also have a community room where groups such as Boy Scouts, widow clubs and other local organizations can meet.” (Sun newspaper archives)



It will come as no surprise to local residents that the community did support this new organization. The funds were raised, the building was built, and services began. And over the last 35 years SELCC has continued to grow and thrive, thanks to that same community support.

Today SELCC is run by 1 full-time and 3 part-time staff members, an active Board of Directors, and an army of dedicated volunteers. Our mission is to serve children, seniors, and low-income individuals in Lisbon and Mount Vernon. Programs include a Food Pantry, Freestyle Clothing Closet, Home-Delivered & Congregate Senior Meals, Senior Transportation, After School Cafe, Activity Scholarships, Holiday Assistance, Community Garden, Crisis Assistance, Operation Backpack, School Supply Drive, and Social Activities.

While many programs are on hold or have been adapted due to the pandemic, our core programs have been essential for our neighbors during this challenging time. Over the last 18 months over 11% of the Lisbon Mount Vernon community has utilized our weekly food pantry. Last summer the community garden raised over 1,400 pounds of fresh vegetables. Over 300 holiday food boxes were distributed. And dozens of seniors are able to remain safely in their homes thanks to meal deliveries.

We are grateful to receive funding from the United Way, Linn County, the City of Lisbon, and the City of Mount Vernon. But our largest source of support is donations from individuals and local business sponsorships. Learn more about donating or volunteering at www.selinn.org or on Facebook or Twitter. We look forward to serving the community through whatever may come in the next 35 years!

Launching Soon



ENHANCED
BANKING
COMING IN MAY

Mount Vernon Bank & Trust Company, 206 First St SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314

895-8835 www.mountvernonbank.com Member FDIC