Suzy Shierholz was a dedicated community volunteer in Ames when she discovered significant money available from Iowa’s casinos and racetracks could not be dispersed to local nonprofits because there was not a community foundation in Story County.

Suzy likes a challenge, and she led the charge to get Story County Community Foundation off the ground in 2005. As founding advisory board president and volunteer executive director, she built community support from existing nonprofits and surrounding towns. She and the board members built on each accomplishment “energized to try new things,” Suzy said. “It was one crazy experiment after another!”

Heartwarming stories of the impact of giving in Story County motivated Suzy as she moved from an active executive to volunteer for the foundation in 2012. She continues to assist with the foundation’s social media and the review of grant applications each year. She and her husband John are generous donors and volunteers in the Story County community.

“There are many Story County agencies doing good things for so many. We want to support those agencies we feel good about — especially with operational donations. As some of these agencies opened endowment funds with the foundation we also tried to support their sustainability in this way,” Suzy said. “We have always had a strong commitment to children, family health, and education. To be able to support agencies dealing with these issues has been something we both feel really good about doing.”

Suzy and John enjoy sharing the decision-making process with their children and grandchildren when they choose recipients of their donor advised fund, the Shierholz Family Fund. Her knowledge of local needs combines with their desire to extend their personal philanthropic reach. Together they guide another generation’s generosity to their communities.