Upon meeting Keith Wanner a few things are immediately obvious. First and foremost, he’s a Buckeye and proud of it. He graduated from Ohio State in 1979 with his degree in welding engineering. Second, as an array of computer monitors on his desk testifies, he’s not afraid of technology. A third thing to know about the founder and owner of RobotWorx in Marion is that he’s committed to giving back to the university. Wanner and his wife Joan became the most recent donors toward a new science building at Ohio State Marion with their $50,000 pledge.

Although his degree was in welding engineering, Wanner realized the future was in robotic welding. When he was at OSU, industrial robotics was just taking off. Robots could do the dirty, dangerous, and repetitive chores, like welding quicker and cheaper than humans. That was where he thought he’d specialize.

As robots became more universal, Wanner stayed ahead of the curve. He realized robots were becoming more commodities than one-of-a-kind installations. At the same time, the Internet was the new wave in selling. He decided the way to sell robotics was not through traditional channels. Instead, he bought hundreds of web names, so when someone searched for robots, or industrial robots, or welding robots—they landed on the RobotWorx page. He invests as heavily in internet technology as he does in robots and capital equipment.

Wanner believes enough in the value of his college experience that he’s put three of his four children through Ohio State. The fourth is flying F-15s for the Air Force. Three of his top employees at RobotWorx are Ohio State engineering graduates. “Ohio State was definitely the catalyst that made everything happen,” he noted with obvious pride.

Woody Hayes was the engineer of football magic in the Horseshoe when Wanner was in college—and there’s little doubt that the coach’s ethic rubbed off. Woody admonished his troops to “pay it forward.” Keith Wanner is doing that today with his commitment toward a new science building on the Marion Campus. “ Marion’s got a lot of potential,” said this multi-faceted Buckeye. “We’d like to do what we can to help promote the technical part of it, to help get this building built.” Utilizing the entrepreneurial spirit he developed at Ohio State, Wanner is paving the way for new Buckeyes to build their own bright futures.
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From the Dean and Director

On December 3, 2010, Ohio State Marion held its annual Donor-Scholarship Recipient Luncheon in the Guthery Community Room. While it was a cold day outside, the atmosphere in the room was warm and welcoming. The event featured philanthropy in action—students who received scholarships for the 2010-2011 academic year seated at the same table eating lunch with donors, donors’ family members, or donors’ representatives. Our donors always tell us that this is a heartwarming and reaffirming experience. They enjoy connecting directly and in person with the students for whom their or their family’s generosity helped make possible dreams of higher education at Ohio State Marion. But perhaps more significant is what our students experience. They discover that the name on their scholarship is not just a bunch of letters, not just something virtual or conceptual. Rather, the names represent real people right next to them at the table—real people who gave real money to create those scholarships. It brings the concept of philanthropy home to them, reminding them of the investment in past, present, and future students made possible by the scholarship donors. Having seen the model of philanthropy, the students should think about giving back, when they are able, by establishing scholarships or providing other support so future Ohio State Marion students can benefit from the same spirit of philanthropy that assisted them. That was the charge given to them by donor Jerry Davis at the luncheon. By reinforcing the spirit of giving, the event was a fitting start to the holiday season.

In July, 1970, Ohio State Marion’s campus was only two years old and there wasn’t much else along two-lane SR 95. Forty years later, the campus is surrounded by commercial and residential development. How the campus ties to the growing University District was the topic of the first of what is expected to be a series of ongoing regional growth meetings organized by Ohio State Marion. “As our campus and our neighborhood grow, it is important that we’re in sync and grow together in ways that benefit our students, staff, faculty, and the community,” said Dean and Director Greg Rose, as he welcomed approximately 25 community representatives to the Guthery Community Room.

Pictured above left to right, are Marion Township Trustee Dick Rasmussen, Marion County Commissioner-elect Ken Stiverson, Township Trustee Karen McCleary, and Marion County Regional Planning Director Ken Lengieza at the first University District planning meeting held December 22 at Ohio State Marion.

GoBuck$ Rally

Pictured first row from left: Jada Adams, Asher Jones, Ayris Rich, and Jesse Bell; second row: Isaac Hodges, Chloe Alley, Raiden Sipes, Landon Heard, and Nick Hecker. These kindergarten students are shown with their GoBuck$ Ohio State Marion tuition vouchers earned by meeting attendance and achievement criteria. The program is made possible through the philanthropy of George Alber.

Campus Hosts University District Growth Forum

Benjamin Harrison Elementary School
Marion, Ohio
Celebrating the Spirit of Philanthropy

C. Gary Iams
Coordinator of Development and Community Relations, The Ohio State University at Marion

Lee Iacocca was born the son of Italian immigrants. Rising from his humble beginnings in Pennsylvania’s steelmaking belt, he became one of the most successful of all American businessmen, best known for his revival of the Chrysler Corporation in the volatile 1980s and for his wide-ranging philanthropic endeavors. In a speech given at his alma mater, he said, “I was fortunate to get a scholarship when I went to Lehigh University. It was because somebody was kind enough to spend their money to educate people that they would never get to know. That’s what I think philanthropy is about.”

This edition of Traditions features yet another story about the philanthropy of our friends and donors. Like Lee Iacocca, they understand that gifts for scholarships, new buildings, and emerging campus priorities are vital to the success of The Ohio State University at Marion. Because of their generosity, life-changing experiences in the pursuit of a college education will continue to be a reality for our students. Join us in celebrating the philanthropic spirit of Lee Iacocca being demonstrated each day by our own neighbors.

Donor Scholar Luncheon - December 3, 2010

Pictured above from left: Ann Lowe, Bradley Weaver, and Arthur Lowe. Bradley, a senior from Sycamore, Ohio, is the first recipient of the Lowe Family Scholarship, given annually to students at The Ohio State University at Marion majoring in business or the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) disciplines. It is one of Ohio State Marion’s first portable scholarships, which may follow recipients to any other Ohio State campus or program.
Traditions
Dr. Gregory S. Rose, Dean and Director
Dave Claborn, Director of Development
C. Gary Iams, Traditions Editor

presented:
The Music of Florence Harding

Florence Harding was an accomplished pianist and music teacher prior to her service as our nation’s First Lady. Join local musicians Merrill Cooper Bender, Carol Becker, C. Gary Iams, and Louise Vance as they join forces with author and re-enactor Katherine Sibley and re-enactor Tina Salamone for a delightful snapshot of history featuring the music played and enjoyed by Florence Harding.

Thursday, January 20, 2011, 7:30 p.m.
in Morrill Hall Auditorium

Tickets are $10 adult, $9 seniors, $8 campus employees, and $4 students
For more information, please call the Office of Community Relations at 740-725-6340

Mark your calendar for July 22-23, 2011, as the Warren G. Harding Symposium at Ohio State Marion presents: The Western Trip - Discovery, Understanding, and the Death of a President. Call 740-725-6253 or visit: www.osumarion.osu.edu/harding for details.