

LEADERS ADAPT, ENGAGE, COMMUNICATE

LEGACY LEADERS | BY KEVIN SPAFFORD

AS A DIRECT descendent of T.W. Brazeau, patriarch of what was the Central Cranberry Co., Mary Brazeau Brown has some big shoes to fill.

Today, as the owner and president of Glacial Lake Cranberries Inc., she shoulders the bulk of the responsibilities for producing nearly 11 million pounds of cranberries, marketing branded products and hosting guests at the farm. As an advocate in the industry, Mary is recognized as a leader among the growers in central Wisconsin. She's promoted cranberry production, encouraged initiatives related to the fruit and advocated for fair marketing practices.

As a mark of sustainability, in 2016 Glacial Lake Cranberries will celebrate 143 years of commercial cranberry production. The land was originally acquired in 1873 by a lumberman. To manage the land and access the forests, the owner built dikes and ditches around the native cranberry vines and developed the growing beds. Beyond crop production, the 6,000 acres of reservoirs and forested uplands of the farm are home to ducks, geese, cranes, deer, fox, river otter and many other wild animals.

As one who is fascinat-



ed by multigenerational success and ever curious about the traits of a leader, I recognize the distinct qualities Mary employs to succeed in farming today. As a leader, she's adapting to changing market conditions, engaging in the cranberry industry and communicating with interested consumers. Mary's determination

is almost infectious as she talks about her new enterprise, Honestly Cranberry, and what she's doing to grow the venture.

From an observer's perspective, some of the characteristics Mary may use to succeed include:

1. Responsible and accountable. Mary works hard and shoulders the responsibility for results. She holds herself accountable and readily adapts to accomplish the tasks necessary to generate the desired results. Mary knows that stable markets and sure production methods are a myth,

and she must remain vigilant to changing conditions.

2. Respectful and appreciative. Mary's efforts demonstrate the respect she feels for those who've come before. She acknowledges that without the vision of her grandfather and the dedication of her mother and father, the family might not have a business opportunity today. Mary understands stewardship and promotes practices that promote sustainability.

3. Productive. In a world that often confuses "busy" with



Family comes first at Glacial Lake Cranberries Inc. With Mary Brazeau Brown (second from left) are son Stephen, husband Philip and daughter Allison.