Ivan Ludington Jr. traces his roots back to Sand Beach (now Harbor Beach), Michigan, where his grandfather, Captain Lewis Ludington, a skipper on the Great Lakes, had settled to log the forests on the Michigan peninsula. On the heels of the great Chicago Fire of 1871, the forests were reduced to a tinderbox of stumps and rotted timber, forcing the family to relocate.

In Detroit in the early 1900s, Ivan’s father purchased a small magazine distribution agency and renamed it Ludington News Company. It grew from a small distributor of only seven magazines to a wholesaler that distributed more than 1.5 million periodicals a week. Ludington News was one of Michigan’s top 100 privately owned companies until it was sold in 1997. Ivan was chief executive officer.

His wife, Joann “Jodi” Fairchild-Ludington, who passed away in 2002, worked for New York Magazine, MS Magazine, and Viva Magazine in New York and was a disc-jockey, reporter, and radio talk show host in Ohio. Ivan and Jodi have one son, Michael Ludington Fairchild (’00, ’04 MBA). Michael currently works for Daimler Chrysler Services.

Targeted for holdings in the history and culture of the Midwest and Great Lakes region, the Ludington Endowment benefits students and researchers in history, government, art, literature, culture, environmental and ecological studies, law, civil rights, and many other areas. It has also supported the acquisition of microtext versions of regional newspapers, which have been heavily used for teaching and research at Notre Dame.