

Social history and “Resident Stories” book from Tiffany Pettit with Orchard Ridge



Orchard Ridge has put into practice the process of gathering social history information about our resident's. We have found it to be very helpful in getting to know the person who has come to live in our community. The better we know the individual the better we can do our job by providing individualized care to meet that person's spiritual, physical, emotional and personality needs. Our staff makes a stronger connection to the resident when they know their story. It creates friendships and respect when we know how the person grew up, what they did for work and what their family life was like. Something as simple as visiting the same place on vacation or discovering they have a mutual friend brings our staff closer to the person and creates trust and a bond. Upon admission, the resident and family fill out a questionnaire and our activity staff write up a bio based on the information provided. We then take those bios and compile them in a binder that is made available to staff, so they can read each resident's story to make a connection with that resident.

Tiffany Pettit

John Johnson

John Johnson was born on the cold, wintery day of January 29, 1916 in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho. He grew up in Coeur d' Alene and Rose Lake, Idaho. His father, Earl M. Johnson, was a farmer. His mother, Clara Johnson, was a housewife. His parents were actually married on the property of Coeur d' Alene Homes in 1915! John has four brothers and one sister.

John's grandparents immigrated from Sweden around the turn of the century and lived on a homestead farm near Coeur d' Alene. He spent many happy days with them while on school vacation. John has early memories of riding the horse and buggy with his grandmother while delivering milk. He also recalls the Native American Indians from Worley camping at Cougar Bay and bartering with his

grandpa for oat hay for the horses and cream for themselves in exchange for huckleberries.

John finished school through the 8th grade in Rose Lake. He attended Coeur d' Alene High School while living in Cougar Bay, so he walked 2 and a half miles to school every day. The first job John had after high school was for a miner on Cedar Mountain, near Silverwood. It took him 5 hours by horse and wagon to travel the 20 miles to the camp.

John attended NIC and then graduated from the University of Idaho. He served in the Air Force from 1941-1945, being stationed with the Alaska Siberian Air Route for 2 and a half years. This was not considered hazardous warfare, but was an active base with planes being sent to the Russian front. He also worked for the Department of Health and Welfare from 1940-1976, in Sandpoint, Grangeville, Boise, and Coeur d' Alene.

John married Sally L. Smith on July 8, 1951. John was married to his wife for 48 years. Though they knew each other since they were students, they didn't marry until they were in their early 30s as John wanted to make sure that he could support a family properly. The day he asked her to marry him was one of the best days of his life, "I expressed my love for her and said that we needed each other." If asked for marriage advice, he says "be more considerate of each other's views. Try to recognize that you can do more as a couple than alone and attempt to work together rather than going your own way." John and Sally enjoyed traveling together and even visited Norway and Sweden, where they had relatives. Sally passed away in 1998.

John has one child, Bill Johnson, who was born in 1952. Bill lives in Medford, Oregon. He also has three grandchildren who live in Washington and Oregon. He greatly enjoys when he is able to spend some time with them.

John enjoyed gardening (especially growing strawberries, raspberries, and apples), fishing, reading, and huckleberry picking. He has traveled to Hawaii, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and most of the western and Midwest states. For exercise he enjoyed hiking, skating, and swimming. He was interested in politics

and was President of the Chapter of the National Council of Senior Citizens. He volunteered for the Kootenai Environmental Alliance and the National Wildlife Federation, which works to protect the habitat. He is a long-time member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Coeur d' Alene.

John attributes his longevity to good genes, good medical care, and simple living.

We are so happy to have John here at Coeur d' Alene Homes!

John's Favorite Things

Season: Spring, the awakening after winter

Hymn: Children of the Heavenly Father (Swedish hymn)

Color: Blue

Past Gift: A knitted sweater from Grandma made out of wool

Gift he would love to give to his grandchildren: Property to be close to the soil and nature

Historical Figure: Abraham Lincoln, courage in the face of obstacles

Favorite thing about his wife: That she was so thoughtful of others and made beautiful handcrafts.

Advice: Enjoy the simple things of life!