



A Collection Of
**Senior Love
Stories**

by

Janis R. Ehlers & Kerry Green-Phillips

“The easiest part of marriage is falling in love and walking down the aisle. The most difficult part of marriage is 10 years later when the problems have ensued and issues have come about and you still find love. Marriage is not about the beginning; marriage is about the process and still being able to love through all things.” - Unknown

We are often inspired after meeting senior couples at our clients’ communities. They have such rich histories and fascinating stories.

From their first meeting and courtship to when they married and their early lives, these are wonderful heartfelt stories that need to be written down.

For some of the couples, it was love at first sight. For others, the love needed to blossom. Some found love a second time thanks to the help of family and friends. A few of the couples have even found their soul mates through online dating sites.

Regardless of how they met, the following profiles capture their unforgettable love stories...

True Love Found

Couple: John and Ginny



John's first wife, of 13 years, flew off with an airline pilot giving him custody of two wonderful sons.

Ginny's first husband, also of 13 years, left her with custody of three beautiful daughters.

John was struggling along with help from some very kind neighbors and, most importantly, a high school senior, who was an aspiring nurse. He continued to work at a major publishing company in New York City, while living in New Jersey and taking care of the boys on his own.

Then, providentially, a dear friend said, "John, you should go see Ginny!"

John knew who Ginny was since their families had attended the same church.

The friend said, "Her husband left her a year ago with custody of their three daughters and you two have a lot to talk about!"

WOW! Was he right! That was in the fall of 1972!

Ginny and John began to date and do things together with their five children.

It was truly wonderful! The children obviously enjoyed each other.

After almost a year of happily going together, in November of 1973, just a year from their first date, they were married and combined their families.

Their marriage was mentioned in an admiring New York Times article about second marriages. At the time of their wedding the children were 8, 9, 10, 12 and 14.

The wedding ceremony included the children exchanging vows to build a happy home together. Well, they did...and all lived happily ever after. They put all five children through college and today all are professionally successful. They remain a close family and are very proud to have nine beautiful grandchildren.

While bringing up their combined family, Ginny completed her college education, passed all four CPA exams at once, eventually becoming the first audit partner that Arthur Young appointed in Chicago. She retired as Executive Vice President of an auto-leasing firm in Saint Louis.

In the meantime, and because of Ginny's unstinting love and support, John had become President and CEO and eventually, Chairman and CEO of the largest medical publisher in The United States.

The words, "Love conquers all!" seem to come to mind, as they reflect upon their story.

John has written an entire book of poetry about Ginny and their love.



Hallmark Card Love Story

Couple: Jim and Winnie



In a small farm town in Ohio, Jim came into the Hallmark card store to buy a card for someone he was dating.

He turned to sales person and commented, "these are so expensive."

Little did he know he was complaining to the store owner.

Winnie quickly retorted, "Well, I have to eat too."

But at that moment, Winnie claims it was love at first sight.

In 18 years of widowhood no one had attracted her as her first encounter with the rugged farmer.

Loss was compounding to Jim.

A widower, his family's 127 year old historic farm house burnt down and he decided to quit farming after 42 years.

While he was dating someone and contemplating an engagement on New Year's Eve, something clicked and he knew that woman wasn't for him.

On New Year's Day, he walked back into Winnie's store and told her about the broken engagement.

The reserved Winnie surprised herself by asking Jim what he was going to do.

Without giving it much thought, he said, "I think I'll go Las Vegas".

She simply invited herself along.

What happens in Vegas must stay in Vegas...as the commercial says.

Since that fateful conversation, the couple has been together 24/7.

Their love story is truly a hallmark card story.



A Great Love Story For All Generations

Couple: Al and Nathalie

Submitted by: Paul

Once in a while we come across a couple whose love for each other is so special that we have to say, "Now this is truly the way a marriage should be".

Some people seem as if they were made for each other and you could not imagine the one without the other.

They are such a joy to be around and seem to lift the spirits of those around them. I'm sure that when Al and Nathalie married as a young couple they could not, in their wildest dreams, have thought they would still be here in the autumn of their years so very much in love.

Long after the burning passion of youth subsides and the children have left the nest to start their own lives, now we find out if this marriage lives up to the words we spoke, "in sickness and in health".

A few months back when Nathalie was ill and I hadn't seen her for a while, I mentioned it to Al and he said she wasn't feeling good.

When making rounds of the hallways later, and as I passed their apartment, I could hear them laughing and talking inside, their trays outside the door. Al had both dinners delivered so his beloved Nathalie would not have to eat alone. "That's Amoré".

At the last anniversary dinner, I mentioned to Nathalie how beautiful she looked and she said, "Paul, I haven't bought anything new in over 20 years". Her makeup was flawless and hair so beautifully coiffed.

In the world today, where the divorce rate is over 50 percent, couples are not the only ones affected, it's also the children.

Anyone who has spent any time in the company of Al and Nathalie know that this union is special.

We at Buena Vida have been witness to one of the most enduring and remarkable love stories of this or any generation. No one can deny that. When we see one, you know that the other one is somewhere near.

When Nathalie gets up to go into the dining room, Al gets up and walks closely beside his beloved Nathalie. Talk about "Bogey and Bacall", "Liz and Richard". Are you kidding me?

Al and Nathalie's union is the real deal. This is truly one for the ages. What a joy it is to be in their midst and to see first hand this remarkable "Love Story".



Monogram The Towels

Couple: Bill and Jane

Submitted by: Sally (Daughter)



It was written in her 8th grade annual, for anyone to see, "I'm coming back to marry you."

He was a 17 year old farm boy who liked to skate with trouble; he was on his way to the Marines.

Her dad was the superintendent of schools, her mother a school teacher and they could see trouble coming.

In the 1950's the Portage roller skating rink was a party beacon for teenagers in a 50 mile radius. He skated tricky, wild and slow with all the girls, even her sister.

He wrote her while in basic, declaring his love and intent to make her his own. In the spring, three years later, he knocked at the Edgewater Street door. She pushed aside her steady and her parent's objections and married him in the fall. Aunt didn't waste time or money monogramming the towels; it wouldn't last.

High school dropouts they both returned to finish college; Bill going on to teach at a Junior College and Jane to become a Funeral Director. With the youngest child graduated, they sold their home and followed a dream to travel the highways and bi-ways of this great country. They spent 20 years living in the close quarters of a semi-truck as team drivers.

November, 2011 they celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary.

Jane and Bill raised four daughters and enjoy four son-in-laws and seven grandchildren. They established their retirement home on the land that Bill grew up on, outside the town where Jane lived. They are active in the VFW, Historical Society, Friends of the Library and the First Congregational Church.

Love found a way through trouble, objections, and the test of time. Aunt, you should have monogrammed the towels.



She Isn't Swedish, Is She?

Couple: Don and Joanne

DON: My relationship with Joanne literally was love at first sight. I saw her across the room at a meeting of Detroit area high school Bible club presidents, and that was it! I was at her club meeting the next day.

JOANNE: *I can't say my reaction was that dramatic, but there must have been something happening, because when I saw Don at our club meeting I recognized him immediately and sat next to him. He drove me home and we had our first date the next weekend.*

DON: I'm a Swede, and Joanne had dark hair, dark flashing eyes, a beautiful smile, and she was full of fire, everything a Swede knew almost nothing about and for which I had no defenses!

JOANNE: *Don was handsome, smart, and funny. I found myself liking him more and more with each date. He also was a gentleman. That was important to me.*

DON: We dated for about a half a year, and then we went away to different colleges. For 4 ½ years we did much of our romancing by letter or phone.

JOANNE: *We dated some other people, but our attention kept coming back to each other. After three years of dating, Don gave me a ring.*

DON: Our parents weren't pleased. They felt the differences in our backgrounds were too great. Joanne's dad told me that, but he added, "I know that's not going to stop Joanne, so go ahead and ask her."

JOANNE: *Don's parents had the same reaction. His Mom's first response was, "She isn't Swedish is she."*

DON: I wanted to say, "No, Mom, thank God she isn't." I loved the contrast in our personalities.

JOANNE: *We were married June 18, 1955, just a week after Don graduated college. The reception was in the lovely garden of an historic inn in suburban Detroit.*

DON: My career as a pastor took us to both coasts and through 20 years in the central plains.

JOANNE: The churches were small and the pay wasn't much, but with God's help we managed. We had two children who made our lives so much richer.

DON: We've had our share of struggle and fights, but they were worth it.

JOANNE: Divorce was never an option, so we worked our way through the difficulties. We may be more in love with each other now than we ever were.

DON: I know I am!



Double The Love

Couple: Larry and Lorraine

Submitted by: Melanie



One Sunday in 1947, Larry was visiting church with a friend of his who was home from the service. He was a member of a different church, but that particular Sunday he felt the need to “see some new people,” particularly female people.

Seeing 17-year-old Lorraine enter the sanctuary that day with her twin sister, Laverne, was like an answer to prayer.

“She was so beautiful,” Larry said. “I knew right then that I wouldn’t want to date anyone else ever again.”

Larry and his friend had double-dated before, and they used to good-naturedly rib each other about who had the best-looking girl. “But when Lorraine and her sister walked in –” says Larry, “no arguing. They were identical!”

Larry and his friend and the twin sisters went out on one date before the friend returned to the service. When Larry called Lorraine for a second date, she turned him down. “I won’t go without my sister,” she said.

“Hold on,” said Larry. “I have an idea.” He talked to his younger brother, Harold, who agreed to serve as Lorraine’s sister’s date.

The brothers and the twin sisters dated for a year and half.

“We always double-dated,” says Larry. “We had to. We only had one car!” Finally they set February 25, 1949, as the day they would be married in a dual wedding ceremony.

At the marriage license counter at city hall, Larry and Lorraine stepped up first. The clerk brusquely took their names, completed the forms, and brushed them aside.

Then Harold and Laverne stepped up to the counter and gave their names. The clerk did a double take. “I just did you!” he said to Laverne.

“No, you just did my twin sister,” Laverne explained.

“Wait a minute,” said the clerk, trying to sort it out. “You’re twin sisters? And, you’re marrying brothers?”

“That’s right,” the group replied.

The clerk set the “Closed” sign in front of his window, picked up his phone, and placed a call. “Chicago Tribune?” he said. “Have I got a story for you!”

As a result of the media exposure from the Tribune and others, on the day of the wedding the church was filled.

“It was wall-to-wall people – and we didn’t know most of them!” remembers Lorraine.

Ten years later they received a follow-up call from the Chicago Tribune. “They sent a reporter and a photographer out to the house and did a story on our 10th anniversary,” says Larry.

More than 60 years later, both couples are still married and still ardently in love.

“We can testify to wedded bliss for all these years,” Larry smiles at his bride. “We don’t know how long we’ll still be around,” says Larry. “We’re not as healthy as we used to be. But if we’re both around, I’m sure we’ll be together.”



Eternal Flame Of Teen Love Continues To Burn 63 Years Later

Couple: Roland and Eula



It quite fitting that Roland and Eula live in Virginia.

The commonwealth's famous tagline after all is "Virginia is for Lovers".

The couple has been married for 63 years!

Born and raised in Norfolk, they lived two blocks apart.

"It was love at first sight," said Roland, who was 15 years old when he first laid eyes on Eula. "I knew I wanted to spend my life with her."

After their first date at the neighborhood park on Easter Sunday, the two were inseparable.

"We got married when I was 17 and she was 16, after two years of dating," he said. "We had a very small ceremony. It was us, the priest and two other people."

The young couple has since built quite an impressive life together. She worked as a nurse in the hospital's nursery while he was employed by the government.

They currently live in Portsmouth and are the proud parents of six children and 13 grandchildren.

When asked what was so special about Eula, the love and passion shared for over six decades together was evident in his response.

"She's such a unique person. It's not easy to find someone like her," he explained. "Eula is easy going, forthcoming and never gets upset. She's the person responsible for our great life together."

Eula appreciated her husband's praises but was quick to point out his role in the success of their marriage.

"He's so loyal," she said. "His loyalty and loving ways have been the secret to our longevity."

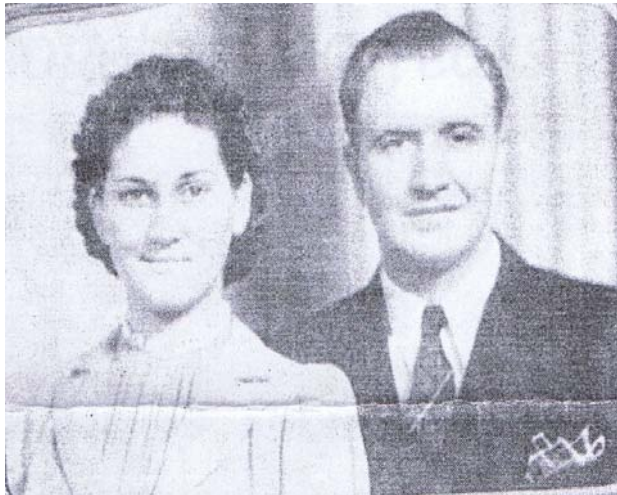
The couple advises newlyweds to work together as a team. They also said there can be no secrets or the marriage will not work.



70 Years & Counting

Couple: Floyd and Marvalene

Submitted by: Linda (via Westby Times Reporter Dorothy Jaspersen)



Floyd and Marvalene of Viroqua, WI have learned the secret to a successful marriage – 70 years in the making.

They said working together to raise a family and knowing that the good days will outweigh the bad if you communicate with each other are cornerstones to wedded bliss.

The pair were married June 1, 1940 at noon. They were both graduates of West Lima High School.

Born in 1914, Floyd graduated from high school in 1932. He continued his education at the Vernon County Normal School, earning a teaching degree, a feat accomplished by many in far less time than it takes in the 21st century to earn a bachelor's degree in education.

Floyd loved teaching. He spent two years as the sole educator of the one-room Weber School and three years at the Retreat School. He earned \$60 a month for his service and learned the importance of saving for a rainy day, or his wedding day.

Floyd fell in love with Marvalene when she was just a teenager. A friend of his younger sister, Floyd knew she was the one from the moment he met her. The feeling was mutual for Marvalene. Still in high school though, the couple dated for two years until she graduated and was old enough to become his better half, a title she's proud to still hold at the age of 88.

While they were dating the pair would drive to Hillsboro and spend 25 cents a piece to get into a movie and maybe a nickel on popcorn if they were hungry. After the movie they headed down the road with friends to Union Center, where they took turns playing nickel tunes on the juke-box as they danced the night away.

"We never went out to eat like couples do today, but we sure loved dancing," Marvalene said. "It was cheap entertainment and so much fun."

"It was the heart of the Great Depression and money was hard to come by," Floyd said. "It helped that the dollar had value in those days, too," Floyd said.

Only days after Marvalene's graduation they pulled out their dress clothes, drove to Waukon, Iowa, visited the county courthouse, bought a marriage license, made an appointment with a preacher and were soon husband and wife. The newly married couple was honored with a small family dinner and an old-fashioned chivaree when they returned home the following day.

"I wore a light blue dress and he had a dark suit," Marvalene said. "We didn't buy any new clothes and we never even exchanged wedding rings."

Marvalene wasn't a mail order bride, but she did eventually get a mail order wedding ring after the couple returned home and Floyd gave her \$500 he had saved to purchase furniture. As a bonus for spending \$500 on furniture through the mail order catalog the buyer received a free wedding ring, a ring she wore for years and her daughter has today.

"It was thin and had the smallest diamond I'd ever seen," Marvalene said. "I wore it with pride until the gold got too thin and we replaced it."

For the next 47 years they worked side by side. Floyd left the teaching profession and went into business with his brother, who was in the process of constructing the Bud Cheese Factory, a building that is still standing.

A farm boy by nature, Floyd worked hard as a teenager during which time he learned how to be a cheese maker, a trade that would keep him and his new family in business from 1940-1986. Floyd remembers the cheese making competition was heavy in the early days when almost every small community had a cheese factory of their own. All year long Floyd kept busy making cheese and hauling milk, while Marvalene was chief bookkeeper for the business and bottle washer for the couple's two children, Terry and Sue.

"We did whatever we needed to make it all work," Marvalene said. "If someone didn't show up we found a way to get their work done too. It wasn't always easy, but it's all part of owning a business."

They sold the business in 1986 to spend more time with their family, which includes 10 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Today the couple enjoys reminiscing with friends and family and Marvalene is always prepared for company with some baked goods just waiting for the coffee to finish perking. She admits that wasn't always the case though when she first became a wife and had to learn the art of cooking through trial and error.

They don't know what the future holds, but they do know that time hasn't changed the love they have for each other and nothing can take away from the wonderful memories they've made together for the last 70 years.



The Bull Fighter & The Nun

Couple: Rudolf and Lilia

Submitted by: Darlene (Daughter)



My parents have a beautiful love story and marriage.

Many years ago a young bullfighter came to San Francisco to visit.

He and some friends decided to go to an afternoon dance with Latin Orchestras music and on the train ride over they met my mother and her friends.

He returned to Mexico to bullfight but would send my mother heartfelt poetry and letters.

My mother couldn't read a word of his Spanish so her mother would read all the letters to her.

They say that my mother and grandmother fell in love with my Dad at the same time.

He moved to the U.S. and my father rented a room from a little old lady who was the Zellerbach children's tutor.

My father who was the handsome "Ricardo Montalban" type was taken under the wings of this

lady and her friends who taught him etiquette and English.

My parents got engaged only to have my mother break off the engagement to become a nun!

My grandmother would not speak to mother she was so upset.

My father was packing his car to go back to Mexico when my mother called. The little old lady ran to get my Dad and tried to coax him to pick up the phone, but he refused saying, "There's nothing left to talk about, it's over".

She dragged him back into the house and he agreed to meet with my mom.

He now says, "All she had to do was look in my eyes and bat her lashes at me and it was all over".

55 years later with 5 children and 16 grandchildren they are still in love.



“Mail Order Bride From Arizona”

Couple: Gail and Ed

Submitted by: Becky

Gail, 61, and Ed, 73, started talking on SeniorPeopleMeet.com last October.

“I realized that this man is a gem,” she says. “He’s an honest, forthcoming type of person and didn’t hide anything.”

Gail had been out of a bad relationship for a couple of years, when someone at work mentioned a dating site. Gail was on SeniorPeopleMeet for only two weeks before she met Ed.

Gail says that Ed had all of the attributes that she had been looking for.

“He was older than me, an animal lover, handsome, a hard worker, independent and yet wanting to share his life.”

They would talk on the phone, sometimes for six hours a day, and a month into these phone conversations, Ed flew her out to Oklahoma City where she went to work with him every day.

“We started talking marriage the first week we met,” she says, sounding stunned herself. “It’s a whirlwind, and yet it’s not frivolous. We’re both very sure.”

For Christmas, Ed bought her a full-size horse to keep on his ranch, and she’s got first dibs on some new minis due this spring.

Gail is currently planning to leave her beloved Arizona to move in with Ed. Of course, she’s bringing her four dogs with her, and Ed has built her a 360-foot fence around his house to make sure they don’t run out to the road.

As it turns out, all of Ed’s horses can just about walk between the legs of Gail’s Great Danes.

The couple is talking about a September wedding, and Ed jokingly tells his friends about his “mail order bride from Arizona.”

Gail makes her fast-paced romance sound straightforward if not downright practical when she says: “I knew what I was looking for, I knew what I was tired of, and I knew what I wanted out of the autumn of my life.”



Heaven Sent

Couple: John and Juliette

Submitted by: Stephanie



John is a widow and a perfectly lovely man with many gifts and talents.

One day John pours out his heart to me. He says that he would really like a companion, someone to share his life with.

Then he sits back and says, "I don't know why I am telling you this, I've never told anyone this."

Suddenly like a bolt of lightning, Juliette's face pops into my head and will not leave, no matter how much I try to shake it out.

"Why her?", I wonder. She was not even looking for a partner. Still the feeling is so strong, I tell John about it. He is willing to go for a lunch date, if she is.

Oh, Oh. That means I have to call her!

"You'd better sit down," I begin. "What would you think of going on a blind date?"

"Never!", she replies without hesitation.

I tell her about John and she says, "Oh, my God. I have just been praying to the Lord to send me a relationship. If I pray for a relationship and He sends me one, and I say 'no' He's going to say – 'what the heck?'"

She is babbling on the phone to me, but really talking to herself, I think.

She is petrified, but agrees to the lunch if I will go. Fine, we all go.

One year later, I am giving a speech about their 'Love Story' at their wedding. Did I mention they were both in their late 70s? And, Juliette was my grade one teacher!



Fireworks

Couple: Gene and Bella

Gene and I met at my “best beau’s” cocktail party on Memorial Day 1950.

I still don’t know why, but Gene and I clicked upon meeting and chatted throughout the party. He was just ending his second year at American University.

The very next day he came to see me on the farm in Potomac where mother and I lived. We spent every day thereafter doing farm jobs and riding horse back together. I couldn’t believe how quickly he learned and he seemed to love it. We were inseparable.

We talked by the hour and seemed to agree on all the important things that mattered, children, a simple life, and mainly being together.

On the 4th of July, as we were watching fireworks near the Mall in Washington, we decided to get married. The next morning we called my mother in her Washington apartment and told her we wanted to get married. She nearly fainted, and said “Bella, I don’t even know his last name!” Although we wanted to get married Saturday, we agreed to wait until July 20th for our wedding.

After a wonderful ceremony at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Washington, we had a reception at the farm. After it was over, we went to New Hampshire to see Gene’s family, then on to Canada camping. Gene’s father came along!

When we returned to Maryland we had a big farm sale. We wanted to be independent and do it “our way.” We planned to go to Tucson when Gene got accepted at the University.

Off we went with two horses in the trailer and nothing much but camping gear. We went a little more than three thousand miles for eighty-two dollars including gas and food! Each day we found a likely looking farm and talked our way in to camp for the night. Everyone was quite taken back at our journey and was most hospitable.

When we arrived in Tucson, Gene was able to sign up for the classes he wanted on the last day of admission. By 5 o’clock we had found a house with a barn! We stayed there happily for two years until Gene was recalled to the Navy.

After the Navy, we went east and visited with my mother. Soon, we moved to New Hampshire. Three wonderful children, and many horses later, we are still in New Hampshire and as happy as ever!



A Late & Improbable Romance

Couple: Ned and Ava



We could not have more mismatched – a female, devout Episcopalian and long-time Republican who was born and raised in Iowa and a male non-believing Jew and active Democrat who was born and raised in San Francisco.

She had been married and divorced twice, had one child and had no significant love affairs. He had been married three times, had three children and had many love affairs.

She was intelligent and fond of abstraction in music and art. He was highly educated, intellectual, successful in business and preferred classical music and impressionist art.

He was 71 years old and had recently experienced bad health. She was 61 years old and healthy.

He had been successful in business, academia, and writing books. She had attended a State college and nursing school and struggled to support herself as a nurse and manager of a wealthy woman's social life.

She lived in a small, one-bedroom condo in a working class suburb. He lived in a large, elegant, country house on seven acres.

These apparently ill-suited people were introduced at the home of mutual friends.

She found him interesting and called to invite him to a charity dinner. The tickets were a gift from her boss. He declined because he was nearing the end of an affair with another woman and had never "cheated". Pleased by this trait, she called him again to ask if he was now "free", and if so, to invite him to share tickets to a ballet performance. He accepted and offered to take her to dinner at a restaurant near the theater.

They enjoyed the ballet and shared information about each other. Then he told her that despite his failed marriages and love affairs he still wanted to find the woman who was right for him and if such a relationship was of interest to her, she should visit him at his home for a day, during which he would cook lunch and dinner and ascertain if they were compatible.

Six months later they were married in front of 40 friends and family. When someone asks him what qualities she has that other woman did not have, he always replies, "Only she has a generous heart."



Second Time Around

Couple: Gene and Bonnie

Submitted by: Becky

"It was overwhelming at first, the number of gals that were getting in touch with me," says Gene, 75, of his first foray into online dating.

To narrow down the list, he had come up with two clear requirements for a partner: she had to play golf, and she couldn't have animals.

When he e-mailed Bonnie, 74, she promptly e-mailed him back and let him know that she didn't play golf, and she had a dog. Bonnie did, however, live in Bradenton, not more than five miles from where he lived. "I said okay," says Gene happily.

After briefly exchanging e-mails, Bonnie and Gene first met for breakfast at a local restaurant, and things progressed from there.

"We both lost our spouses to cancer," he explains, "and we both had been married for over 50 years. There were so many things we had in common, probably because of the era we lived in."

They were also both retired bakers, and had several children each, he has four, she has three.

"We've talked freely back and forth about our marriages," he says candidly.

After their breakfast date, Gene called Bonnie and asked if she were available for dinner.

"Every time I called her," he says, "she would say "yes" right away. There was no hesitation, and we just kept getting busier and busier together."

Right now, Gene and Bonnie live separately but that might change over the next few months. She has her house up for sale, and they might eventually move in together.

For now, they're enjoying playing cards, going out to dinner, and seeing concerts at the local college.

"We still party at 75," Gene chuckles contentedly.



Love Rekindled

Couple: Henry and Christine

Submitted by: Melanie



They met at the age of 14. They were sweethearts during their teenage years. And, like many young sweethearts, they later married – 60 years later, that is.

Henry and Christine's love story is one of friendship, faithfulness, and coming full circle.

They grew up in Iowa and dated somewhat seriously, but life took them on separate paths. Christine enrolled in nursing school, after which she joined the army and served

in Europe during World War II. Henry had to work instead of going to high school, but he did enroll in flight school, where he earned a license to teach aviation. He spent much of the war at the Naval Air Station in Ottumwa, Iowa, training our servicemen to fly.

After the war, Christine was discharged from the Army and relocated to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she joined the Arabian Mission of the Reformed Church in America. She spent much of her second career traveling to Iraq, Jordan, and other mission fields to spread the Gospel and bring healing. Along the way she earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Michigan and a master's degree at Columbia University. Christine never married.

Henry left aviation – and Iowa – after the war and became a press operator in Colorado, though he still did some flying occasionally. He spent nearly 40 years in Colorado with his wife, son, and daughter.

Henry's wife died in 1987. In August of 1991, he traveled to Grand Rapids to visit family. While he was there he looked up his old sweetheart Christine.

They reunited and caught up on old times, and after Henry returned to Iowa, they continued to correspond. On December 15 that same year, at the age of 78, they were married.

Today Henry and Christine are now 97 years old, enjoying their golden years together at Emerald Meadows, an assisted living community in Grand Rapids. They care for each other just as tenderly now as they did six decades ago.



A Love That Has Spanned The Globe

Couple: Howard and Rita

Submitted by: Mike

Howard and Rita's lives have not been made into a movie, which is not to say it could not be.

The couple, who moved to Park Springs, a continuing care retirement community in August 2004, has always lived life to the fullest. It is a life which has taken them all over the world.

A soldier in the U.S. Army during WWII, Howard was stationed in the Philippines and Japan for more than four years where he served in a classified position as a radar officer with the Electronic Training Group, a new and secret unit in the U.S. Army.

Shortly after the war ended, Dean returned to Manila where he was once again stationed. While working as part of an operation to help remove troops and equipment, he met his wife Rita, a 17 year old who had just spent the past four years under brutal Japanese occupation for women and children during the War. Rita was assisting the military in a clerical position.

"I was immediately attracted to her," said Howard. "I thought she was a tough, intelligent young gal."

"We worked together," recalls Rita. "I thought he was a nice, handsome guy."

After a short courtship, the couple married, however three months following their wedding, Howard was forced to return to the states because of an illness.

"I had a horrible illness, and they told me if I did not return back to the states, I would die," said Howard.

The two corresponded during this time by writing letters back and forth. It wasn't until three months later, that Rita made the journey from the Philippines to Atlanta.

"I was on a ship for 21 days," recalls Rita. "I then had to take a train from Oakland to Atlanta which took six days. When I arrived in Atlanta, I was scared to meet his family. I was only 18 years old."

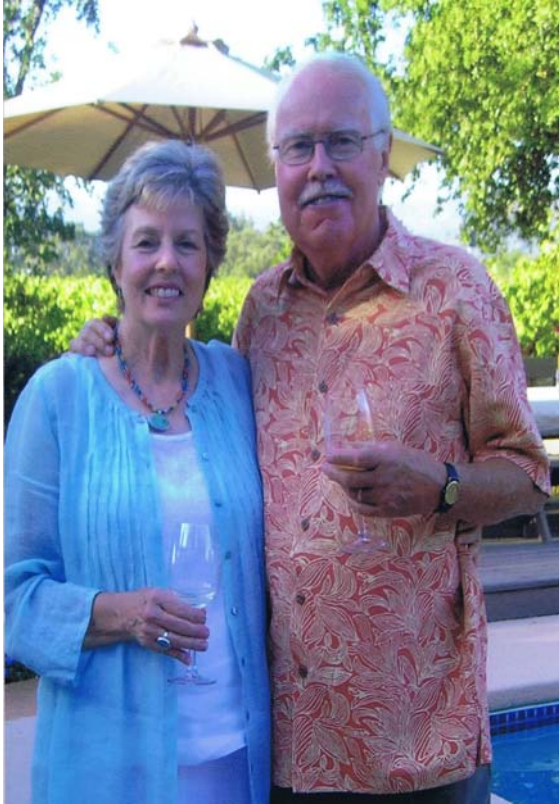
Over the next couple of decades, Howard settled in as a professional, a career that saw him spend a majority of his time working at Scientific Atlanta and at the Research Institute at Georgia Tech.

"We have been really fortunate," said Howard. "We have had a great life and have great kids and grandkids."



Summer Romance Blossoms

Couple: Bill and Sue



Once upon a time a boy named Bill and girl named Sue met at a 1950's hamburger drive-in near Los Altos, CA. They were introduced by Bill's fraternity brother, whose girlfriend just happened to be Sue's best friend. The boy and girl liked each other very much and dated all summer long.

Then in the fall, the girl started college at Cal, and the boy went back home to Salt Lake City where he was enrolled at the University of Utah. But Bill just couldn't be that far away from Sue, so he dropped out of school and returned to California. He got a job at Lockheed in Sunnyvale and bought a Triumph TR-3 to impress his girlfriend and to commute to Berkeley on the weekends to see her.

The boy and girl fell madly in love, and on a magical September day in 1959 were married in Los Altos. They honeymooned at Lake Tahoe, and then moved to Salt Lake City to finish college together.

Bill received his PhD in 1965 and was awarded a one-year NATO Postdoctoral Fellowship to Oxford. So off they went to jolly old England with two little boys (Scott and Robert), ages 2 and 3, in tow.

The next year Bill started his career at Bell Labs in New Jersey doing laser research, and that is where the happy couple raised their family, adding a baby girl (Stacey) in 1970. While Bill invented lasers at Bell Labs, Sue was far from idle. In addition to raising their three children, she had her own music studio, typically teaching from 25 to 30 students.

But Bill had always wanted to teach at the university level, and in 1990 he became a professor at the University of Central Florida in Orlando.

By that time the children were off on their own, and Bill and Sue enjoyed 10 full-time years in Florida and 5 more part-time.

In 1996 they decided they would eventually retire in St. Helena where Sue's parents, Howard and Mildred, had retired in 1971. The boy and girl fell in love with the Napa Valley, their friends, and their new Presbyterian church. On September 19, 2009 they celebrated 50 years of living happily ever after.



“It’s Our Wedding, Not The Kids or Grandkids”

Couple: Joan and Richard

Submitted by: Becky

Widowed after 43 years of marriage and armed with a healthy outlook on life, Joan (67) decided that it was time to try again, and joined a dating site. She was looking for a companion who treated her with respect and didn’t take life too seriously.

A retired naval captain, Richard (75) was widowed as well. He liked the way Joan presented herself on the website, with current pictures and “no sunglasses.”

After some successful phone calls, the couple met up in San Diego when Joan visited for a business convention. Ultimately, it was Joan’s daughter who encouraged her mother to meet Richard in person by simply saying, “What have you got to lose?”

Their first date included a lunch and more than one comment from strangers about what a nice married couple they looked like.

One day after meeting, Joan turned to him and took a risk: “Is this what they mean by love at first sight?” to which Richard responded, “Yes, I think it is.”

They spent the rest of her trip together, and maintained a long-distance relationship from October 2008 onward.

In January of 2009, he asked her to marry him, and in December of the same year, she made the big move from Sacramento to Coronado.

Joan is currently busy planning their wedding and laughs that they have to be clear with people that this is their wedding “not their kids, not their grandkids” and definitely nothing like Joan’s first wedding.

She proudly adds, “He’s wearing his navy uniform for the wedding, and he looks fabulous in it.”



A Love Story That Almost Didn't Happen

Couple: John and Blanche

Submitted by: Michael (Son)



John (90) and Blanche (86) of Toledo, Ohio and their beautiful family almost never were.

John met Blanche at a dance but she was already engaged to another fella.

But at last, true love was found deep in their hearts.

John was in the service during WWII and Blanche was a raging beauty looking for Mr. Right.

John and Blanche were married and hosted a reception at her father's home with beer, ground bologna sandwiches and Oreo's for dessert which John still enjoys to this day.

Through their "very" humble beginnings, John and Blanche have persevered and become the envy of all that have known

them through the years for their steadfast love and complete devotion to each other.

After 65 years of marriage, health issues, financial ups and downs, putting four kids through college and instilling in all their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren the values of a laughing and loving home, they are now the proud recipients of the sun-filled view of a life well lived.

Never once did either person fail to recognize the other for the successes and duration of their life together. If ever there was a pairing of man and woman that were meant to be partners in life, it was John and Blanche.



Love Overcomes All

Couple: Mick and Deone

Submitted by: Gloria

“I’m dying! Don’t you understand?”

“No, you’re not!”

“I’ve been in the hospital for four months, now I’ve been released to Hospice Care and I’m dying!”

“No, you’re not!”

“I’m a 5ft. 6in., 65 year old female who is down to 100 pounds. I’m so weak I can’t stand up for more than one or two minutes at a time! The doctors have given up on me, I’m dying!”

“No, you’re not!”

And so the conversation went.

“No you’re not!” was spoken by a man I had met about three years earlier. Mick was then 69 years of age, handsome and very active, and divorced. He loved the outdoors. Fishing is his main hobby. He lived in my home town, which I had just returned to after losing my husband. I had moved in with my mother to care for her, as she had just been diagnosed with cancer. The road for me had been long. I also had just lost my special needs son, and I had just been given a clean bill of health after having chemotherapy and radiation treatments for breast cancer.

Mick and I were both careful about a serious relationship, but our friendship was genuine as we worked, walked, fished, etc. together.

A year had passed and I had to have back surgery. The years of lifting my son and his wheelchair had taken its toll. Surgery was done, but complications arose, thus the four months in the hospital. Upon finally being released, I went to my brother’s home, which was nearby, and was in the care of Hospice nurses to die.

Mick was never far away, and he never gave up on me. “No you’re not” soon turned into “Yes, you can, and I’m going to marry you and take you to my home and make you well!”

“Was he crazy? Was I, to let him talk me into this”?

But with his deep conviction and love for me, we were married with a small group of family and friends in attendance.

I, along with Hospice care, moved into his home and “Yes, you can”, turned into two years of “Yes, I can”.

Bidding farewell to the Hospice nurses, I regained my health, all because this wonderful man believed in me and taught me to know that “Yes, I could”, if I had a reason to live. He truly is the love of my life!



Timing Is Everything

Couple: Larry and Marge



I was a senior in high school and an acquaintance invited me to go to the city to see a movie. After the movie while waiting for the train, two guys started talking to us. I was totally intrigued with Larry. He told me he and his cousin were from Ohio.

We were so engrossed in conversation that Larry didn't realize the train was suddenly coming to a halt. The train had reached their destination so Larry ran to exit. I stood up and glared at him through the window. Our eyes were transfixed on one another as he pointed his hand in the direction the train was going. I waved and felt perplexed. He seemed to be the man of my dreams and I might never see him again.

Two stops later my friend and I got off the train and just a few minutes later, they appeared. They had apparently gotten back on the train and came to our stop. At that point, the conductor was announcing that it was the last bus of the evening. I quickly gave Larry my class picture with my phone number on the back. Timing is everything. Little did I know this night would change my life forever.

I was totally ecstatic when he called me the next morning to meet him in the city again. He was in the military and was stationed at a hospital where I went to visit him each week when he was on duty in the wards. From that time on, we saw each other every day.

Several months later, when he got his orders, he asked me to marry him.

We were very young but absolutely crazy about each other and did not want to be apart. We were so in love. Larry was under 21 and needed his parents' consent.

I was Catholic and it was Lent, consequently we had to wait until Easter Sunday to marry. Larry was a different religion which meant we had to get married outside the altar.

In spite of all the complications, we had a beautiful wedding in March of 1959 in Massachusetts. Our first daughter was born in February of 1960. We had three other children. Larry has been romancing me for over 51 years and we still love being together.



Never Say Never

Couple: Blaine and Mary

On the night my divorce was final, March of 1964, I wanted to hear piano music at The Peacock Inn (which was my husband's restaurant). I sat at the piano bar with my girlfriend.

Blaine came over and sat next to me. I told him I was never getting married again. I was 31 years old and he was 36 years old.

He asked me out four times and I turned him down until he said he had tickets to Camelot.

He had 4 children; I had 2.

Eight months later we married in his lovely 7-bedroom home.

The children were 2, 6, 9, 11, 13, and 14. It was not the Brady Bunch.

Fortunately, I was 32 years old when we got married.

We have a "special needs" boy in Penna. He went to five schools and is very much a part of our life.

We have 7 children, 11 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

How did we get here? A lot of patience.



Love In The Audience

Couple: Robert and Violet



I have been a professional singer, musician and entertainer for over 60 years, and the first time I saw the girl who was to become my wife was when I was the first rock & roller in the mid-50s and she walked into a club where I was appearing.

This tiny, beautiful girl just hooked me good, and in about a year when I graduated from college we began our 54 years together.

By then I was the #1 nite club floor show act in New England and our daughter, Kim, was born.

As the English bank invasion changed the music business forever, I became a folk singer then a folk/rock singer in clubs and on the radio with my solo shows.

Violet was not only beautiful but smart, a great homemaker, mother and well-liked by everyone.

As music changed I became 'New England's Mr. Country Music' and had the

only country music TV series ever produced in Boston that ran for two years every week, LIVE from a nite club with a full house.

Following a heart attack and by-pass surgery I had to walk away from the band business and now at 65+ I created Legends of Music where I sang with full orchestra background all the great musical standards made famous by people like Frank, Perry, Nat, Tony. I found the ideal audiences who loved and wanted to hear again the great songs WE ALL grew up with: fellow seniors in nursing homes retirement facilities. It became a huge hit until I had to finally - due to health reasons - call a halt to my over 60 years of performing.

My beautiful wife, who put up with all the late hours and fickle entertainment business, has given me the happiest and most wonderful life I could have!



It's Never Too Late To Find A Soul Mate

Couple: Leonard and Sharon

Submitted by: Samantha (Photo credit: Sarah Beth Glicksteen/Tribune-Review)



Many widows, especially those over 75 years old, give up on the idea of ever finding love again. Yet from the moment 80 year-old Leonard laid eyes on 76 year-old Sharon, he knew he wanted to be with her.

The two residents of Redstone Highlands Senior Living Communities, a continuing care retirement community outside of Pittsburgh, met through Redstone's new resident mentor program. This program is designed to get new senior residents acclimated by partnering them with a "mentor" who shows them around, takes them to dinner, and essentially takes them under their wing.

Right away, Leonard knew he liked Sharon, but jokes he wasn't sure if he could warm up her "cold heart."

Leonard worked to develop a friendship with Sharon first by solving jigsaw puzzles together in the library late into the night. His persistence and charm paid off, and eventually Sharon finally agreed to a date after six months of resisting.

They were married in a large ceremony on Saturday, June 20, 2009, just 18 months after they met. Nearly 200 family members and friends attended the wedding at Newlonsburg Presbyterian Church in Murrysville, Pennsylvania.

A reception was held afterward at the community. Sharon donned a three-piece blue dress while Leonard looked handsome as ever in a suit. Their combined eight children were all a part of the ceremony as they looked on with joy at their parents who managed to find love again so late in life.

So while Sharon may not have been looking for anyone when she became a resident at our community, she is happy to now be sharing the rest of her days with Leonard.

The two share a love of bowling, golfing, volunteering and traveling, but are most enjoying their unexpected, yet now miraculous matrimony.



Finding Mr. Right

Couple: Peter and Dale

I met Peter on April 19, 2007 on Match.com. We are getting married soon! Peter will be 70 on Oct. 11. I will be 67.

Our courtship has been absolutely extraordinary. We've felt like absolute teenagers. Viva Viagra!

I dated hundreds – yes, hundreds – of men over a three-years while I was doing online dating. I had been married for almost 25 years when – quite unexpectedly – my husband left me for a man!

Peter had been married for 37 years, and getting back into the dating scene was especially daunting. He had only been online for three months and having a blast. Women were all over him. In fact, he was dating four women when we met.

It was love at first sight for both of us.

People don't think that "at this age," unmarried people can meet, fall in love, marry, live happily ever after. Obviously, they're wrong.

Our wedding is even making it to the wedding pages of The New York Times. Our wedding is small – about 28 guests in Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts.

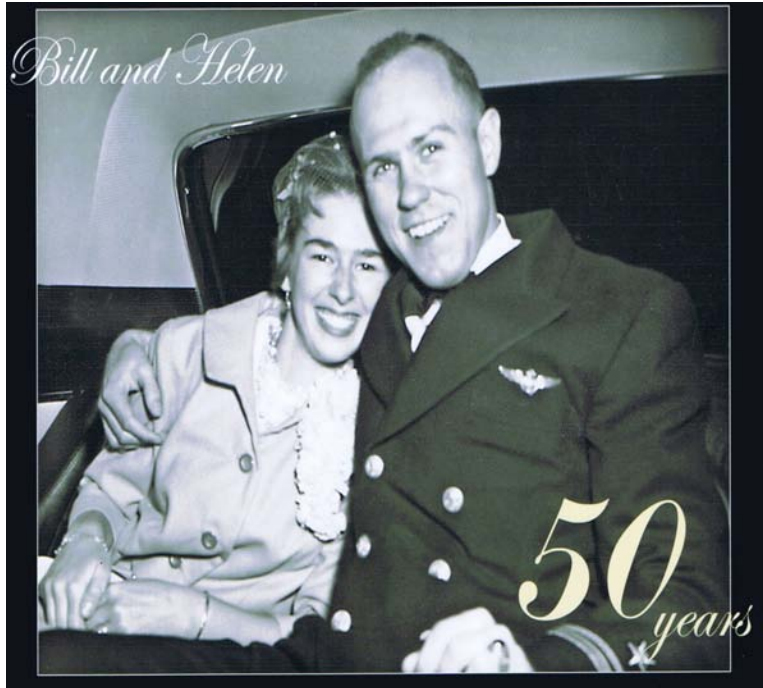
My 95-year-old mother is going to be there. So is my ex-husband and Peter's ex-wife. So is a disc jockey. (There absolutely has to be dancing. We like Meatloaf and Led Zeppelin.)

We are honeymooning in Amsterdam and London (for a Mark Knopfler concert). Life is good!



Military Meet-up Brings Happiness

Couple: William and Helen



After receiving my wings of gold in 1959, the Navy sent me to the Top Gun School at Moffitt Field, CA. I flew the F8U Crusader, a supersonic fighter plane, often called the window maker due to its accident record.

I met Helen at the Officer's Club by chance. I asked if I could call her. She gave me her phone number. I called later, making a date. She admitted that another aviator had also requested her phone number, and she didn't know which would show up.

Six months later, on April 9, 1960, we skipped into marriage at Palo

Alto, CA. I knew her family, but she knew no one in my family, probably lucky for me.

My fellow aviators made up for my family. They came in dress blues and formed an arch with their swords. As we passed through, Dave, my best man, gave Helen a traditional swat on the back with his sword. She whirled and glared at him and saw only grins.

Dave and two of our three ushers died in aircraft accidents. I had a demanding but fulfilling Navy career. Upon retirement, I went to law school and became a lawyer.

Recently, our children threw us a shindig for our 50th anniversary. After reviewing our amusing family incidents, I made this toast:

TO HELEN

I had the degree and the career
When we were married, yesteryear
I was the knight who flew the sky
While you stayed quietly standing by

The children came; we had four
The memories rich, our pockets poor
I stayed so busy, often gone
You raised the kids, mowed the lawn

The children also had college schemes
You told us all to follow our dreams
I started over, went to law school
You took a job to help us through

Through life's adventure I happily ran
While your love made me a better man
While on my work I was firmly mounted
You did the things that really counted
Along the way, not being rehearsed
Our roles somehow became reversed
The world's brass rings merely illusion
My work so important only a delusion

I look with delight at our family
Now it's your helpmate I try to be
I cannot express this feeling of pride
Just to be happy at your side



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