



The latest in our series..

## THE PEOPLE OF THE PARK:

### The Barlows, The Moellers & The Oordts

## “Is This the Secret to a Long, Successful Marriage?”

By Dale Dauten



Maybe it’s something in the air at The Resort, and maybe that something is concentrated on North Clubhouse Drive, because it seems to be the place if you want a long, successful marriage.



Let’s start with the photo to the left. It came to me with the subject line **THREE OLD HUSBANDS** and this message from Len Barlow: The photo shows what three old husbands look like after a combined 195 years of marriage.

Yes, that’s 195 years of marriage. And the odd coincidence is that each has been married for the same length of time – 65 years -- and each spends their winters on North Clubhouse Drive at The Resort. That’s three couples who spend their winters within four units of each other and who got married within three months of one another.

I call it an “odd coincidence” because none of the three knew each other prior to meeting at The Resort, and they didn’t even know they shared the same anniversary year until Dorothy was planning to provide a cake at church to celebrate their 60th.



And here they are five years ago with the cake that led to the discovery that they were all married within a few months of one another.



**THE CAKE OF DISCOVERY:** It was five years ago that that the Barlows decided that as a part of celebrating their 60th anniversary they'd provide a cake to share after The Resort's weekly church service. They'd been married on March 29th, 1953.

Dorothy asked her next door neighbor and old friend, Phyllis Moeller, if she'd help out with cutting the cake. She'd be happy to, and remarked that she and Moe would be celebrating their 60th that summer, on June 21st.



You meet these three couples and you immediately get caught up in their merry camaraderie. For instance, when I confessed that I didn't know the song about The Little Brown Church, Len and Moe got out their harmonicas and played it.

After I left, thinking back on how much I'd enjoyed my visit, I realized that I hadn't asked the obvious question, the one about how to have a long, successful marriage. Len got each couple to set down an answer:

**Lois & Wayne Oordt**

Say I love you to each other every day and night. Talk your problems out and say I am sorry.

**Moe & Phyllis Moeller**

Take care of each other, do things together and laugh at your own mistakes. Don't go overboard on anything and do all things in moderation.



## **Len and Dottie Barlow**

Always love and respect each other, be faithful to God, practice forgiveness and have fun together on your journey of life.

Beautiful, no? But I think there might also be some magic on Clubhouse Drive.

Len also suggested that each couple provide us with a brief background and we're pleased to pass them along:

## **Marlin & Phyllis Moeller**

Marlin (Moe) and Phyllis met while attending Gladbrook High School. They each attended country schools four miles apart, but only met at high school in the Central Iowa farming area of Gladbrook.

They dated a few years, became engaged, and Marlin was drafted in 1951, serving in the Army in the Korean War. He had gone to Iowa State University prior to that, and Phyllis was in secretarial and accounting in local business. Moe was discharged from the Army in March of 1953 after serving in Alaska two years. They were married June 21, 1953 and lived on his family farm near Berman. In 1957 he started his rural mail carrier position of 40 years. They had one girl and two boys and now have six grandchildren – four girls (including a pair of identical twins) and two boys. These grandchildren have visited The Resort every winter – 18 years for the twins.

Moe and Phyllis retired in 1993 and visited special friends at The Resort. They were asked to house-sit for three weeks and have spent every winter here at The Resort since.

☒Of the 24 years here in The Resort, 20 have been right next to Len and Dottie and Lois and Wayne, and we are observing our 65th year of marriage.

## **Wayne & Lois Oordt**

We were high school sweethearts at Sheldon, Iowa. We drove across the state to get married at the Little Brown Church in the Vale. (We stood in line to be married, three parties ahead of us on a Monday.)



The Little Brown Church in the Vale  
in Nashua, Iowa.

We have three darling daughters, seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Over the 65 years we have been married, we have lived in five different states. Wayne has been a builder of houses, silos and roads, and now enjoys woodcarving at The Resort. Lois was a clerk at JC Penney, a ladies' dress shop, manager of 50 apartments and owned a café with her sister.

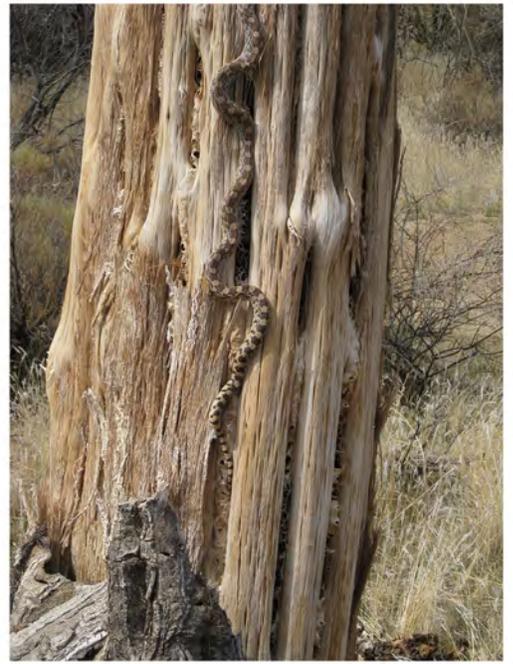
We have been campers for 55 years, coming to The Resort with a trailer, and four years later bought a park model. We have lived through a tornado that took 13 lives and a flood that took our home. We have lived at the The Resort for 29 years and have made oh so many friends.

### **Leonard & Dorothy Barlow**

Len and Dorothy met while attending high school in the farming community of Sunnyside, Washington. They became engaged and were married on March 29th of 1953 while Dorothy was still a Senior in high school and Len had been drafted to serve in the US Army during the Korean War. After Len was discharged from the Army he attended the University of Washington and graduated with a BSEE degree in 1959.

Dorothy gave birth to three daughters while Len was in college. Later a son was born. (The son died of muscular dystrophy at age 21.) They have five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Len worked for Boeing for 30 years as an Engineer and Test Manager supporting NASA and US Airforce Space and Defense Programs, including ten years on the Space Shuttle Program.

Len retired in 1989 and they bought a 5th Wheel trailer home. They traveled to Arizona and checked into Superstition Country RV Resort, now known as "The Resort." They are currently spending their 28th winter at The Resort and with neighbors Wayne and Lois and Moe and Phyllis are enjoying their 65th year of marriage.





Rhonda at  
The Resorts Western Days