



## A tribute to **Prescott K. Johnson**

by **Jerry Prado Shaw**

*Pres was a veteran of the Korean war, Platoon Commander, U.S. Army Intelligence Division. After the war armistice he was commissioned by the U.S. Army to coordinate humanitarian aid for war orphans. His diligent work received high humanitarian commendations. Until today the orphanage bears the name, "Lieutenant Prescott K. Johnson."*



*He was an Olympic prospective for the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki. He was awarded the John R. Mott Fellowship Award (1960), the Robert Gulick Memorial Award (1971), and received a special commendation from the New Jersey Legislature, Governor's Office.*

*Pres served with honor and dignity in the U.S. YMCA movement in various YMCAs: Greater Westfield Inc; YMCA of the USA; San Mateo; Greater Metropolitan Milwaukee Inc. Greater New York.*

*He was very active in his own YMCA Alumni Grand Canyon Chapter, serving as President (1997-2000), as well as WFYR President (1997-2000). He was Inducted into the YMCA Hall of Fame (2003) and named a Life Honorary Member of the Latin America & Caribbean YMCA Retirees (2016).*

*Pres received many other prestigious recognitions, but probably, one of his most cherished recognitions was that of his peers, and that from his students, who regarded him as an inspiring, honest, and courageous leader, faithful and passionate to serve others. His heart could hold the whole world, and he had a*

*genuine love and concern for all people, which he demonstrated throughout his lifelong love for and involvement with the YMCA work.*

*Pres and his beloved Dee were special “angels” sent on a mission to Latin America. Every professional they touched felt their lives richly blessed for their future work, and they always kept a special place in their hearts for both, but they also knew that the “Prescotts” always kept them in their hearts as well.*

*He was an expert in physical education, and a humble and highly effective master of human relations. Of his many gifts, probably one of the most important was the ability to teach by example. Students may remember his technical teaching in physical education or may not. Peers and colleagues may remember his wise advice or may not.*

*But all who had the blessing to cross path with Press will remember his caring ways, but also his firm passion to help young people mold their character, to incorporate Christian values in their life. He showed by example that the essence of our existence is to become a good citizen, an excellent father, a devoted husband, and a friend and leader. That can always thrust and followed.*

Still fresh in our memories are the great times we shared, his distinctive voice, and his wise and deep thoughts about life. He always went beyond his duties making his students part of his family. For those of us who were coming from the so-called “poor countries,” with very limited resources, he always invented jobs to help us financially to “survive,” like painting walls, cleaning the already very clean den, or even taking the risk to trust us with his three beautiful children.

The earnings for those jobs were lifesaving, but the real reward was to share a real family meal, plus the ultimate reward of Mom Dee’s cookies! We will never forget those wonderful moments of love, camaraderie, and fun.

As a man who loved God, Pres was setting an invaluable example to all of us, in showing his “agape” love and devotion to his wife, his beloved Dee, to his family, his work, his country, and the whole world, because that was the size of his giant heart. He knew how to love, and how to make us and others feel special.

Pres, we will keep remembering you with great affection and gratitude, as our distinguished and deeply loved professor, our mentor, colleague, and loyal friend, who with self-denial and passion dedicated your life to helping others build their own, and how we could serve God by serving others through our movement, the Young Men's Christian Association.

Pres, like many others before him will continue enriching our lives by their enduring legacy, a bright light left shining for this present and for future generations.

**! May God keep you and Dee happily reunited in His eternal Home! We love you both. —*Jerry Prado Shaw.***