

Community Spotlight

Anderson

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ion picked up the phone, she was sure to tell him off for bothering the neighbors so early in the morning.

James, unfortunately, did not learn and made the same mistake the day after. Marion was understandingly quite angry with him again. But then she did not hear back from him for about six more months.

James was enlisted in the Navy and stationed in Watson Point when he first met Marion. He was out at sea for those six months, unable to give her a call again. She remembers she was in the middle of cleaning the windows and the window sills, and starching the curtains when she received the call. He asked her out on a date once more; lucky for him, he called at a reasonable hour.

"It sunk in, that he wasn't gonna give up," said Marion.

He was persistent.

The two went out for dinner and saw a movie of Les Paul and Mary Ford, which for Marion at the time, really was the reason she agreed to the date. After that, she saw him almost every night for a week.

The two got married and lived in Rhode Island for a while. At first, they were planning to adopt a child because of the doctor's diagnosis. As a surprise to them both, Marion became pregnant with her first child, Donald Anderson — the first of 15 children and the start of a large family.

James' family was originally from Tolono. So, the young couple moved to Garrett four months after their second son, Pete, was born. They moved down in a trailer, homemade by a local, old, sea captain. They used a Studebaker truck to move to Garrett.

As Marion and Andy started their life together, they

had more kids, one after the other. Nurses and patients at Jarman Hospital jokingly asked whether she brought half the town of Garrett when she visited the hospital. Marion gave birth to 13 of her children there.

A 90th birthday party

Marion celebrated her 90th birthday last Friday, July 7, at the Community Building in Tuscola. She was welcomed with a rolled-out red carpet and a crowd of 120 family members and friends of the family. Marion received a police escort and a ride in a Studebaker car for her ride to the Community Building.

Debbie Anderson-Shields, the third daughter, said that most of the party was a big surprise for Marion, or more fondly named "Momma." Debbie said that the surprise brought her to tears with emotion.

The reception was quite regal, as the family gave "Momma" a tiara for a photoshoot in front of the Studebaker in which she rode.

The Community Building was decorated with flowers and set tables. Hand-painted lanterns with inlaid photos of Marion throughout the years set the ambiance for the party.

A projector showed photos of Marion and members



MARION ANDERSON arrives to the Tuscola Community Building in a Studebaker car. Over 100 family members rolled out the red carpet for Marion's arrival. Photo by Dominik Stallings.

of the family throughout the years. Photos of various weddings, travel and vacations, family get-togethers, graduations, and, of course, photos of Marion dancing.

The highlight of the evening was the gifting. Her family members describe Marion as a selfless person. Marion gives custom T-shirts to her 15 children and their loved ones. Everyone wore the shirts for the family reunion that happened the next day.

The family shared stories of Marion and her influences on children and grandchildren growing up.

Some were of memorable moments in Marion and Andy's life. Debbi Anderson told

the story of when they got up close and personal with Wayne Newton in Las Vegas with a bottle of champagne.

Others were more humorous, like when Jeremy Anderson learned how to make molten string cheese in the microwave when he was 12 years old. When she saw the mess he made, he joked that it was her Tupperware.

Peggy Billman, remembered a time in 6th grade when she thought she had nothing to wear for a band rehearsal. She talked to her mother who then proceeded to stay up all night sewing together a dress for her.

"It felt incredible that I felt so special to my mom,"

said Peggy. She held onto the dress for years and showed it to her mother and the rest of the family.

Peggy said that she truly appreciated her mother once she had three kids of her own in three years. Her mother taught her how each child has different needs that you need to listen to when you are raising them.

"You can't love them all the same way. They all have different needs," said Peggy.

The evening ended with music and a sing-along to classics like Louis Armstrong's "The Saints," or Dan W. Quinn's "A Bicycle Built for Two," along with many more favorite songs by Marion.

Thank You

Thanks to all for the cards, phone calls, and social media postings for our 70th Anniversary. Thanks to our family for the great job decorating and the cake. Ta' Carbon, you did an excellent job.

Jenna & Margaret Weaver

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MARION ANDERSON stands in the middle with a tiara on her head. Her 15 children, Donald, Pete, Debbie, Sam, Linda, April, Marion, Betty, Russel, Peggy, Jimmy, George, Christopher, Denny and Helen surround her in front of the Studebaker car she rode in. Photo by Dominik Stallings.



TUSCOLIANS rush to grab candy during the Independence Day parade on July 4th. Photo by Dominik Stallings.

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