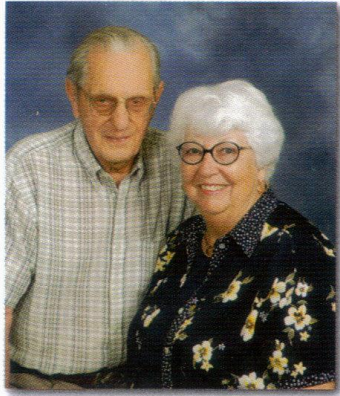


Siesta Retirement Village Outstanding Volunteer Recognition

All the residents of Siesta Retirement Village benefit greatly by the efforts of volunteers and some volunteers simply stand out from the rest by going above and beyond.



**Gerald & Helen
Lamson
3103 Boca Chica**

Helen & Gerald



Helen and Gerald Lamson came to SRV in 2005 from the Weslaco Trailer Park and with this move they brought with them a wealth of skills to share with us. You might think of her as the Shuffleboard lady since you see her talking at the Monday meetings about Shuffling but they are both that and so much more! Helen has been the shuffleboard chairperson in SRV for many years. She is also the chairperson when it comes to SRV Shuffleboard tournaments which includes getting workers for parking, waxing discs, cleaning chalkboards, runners for picking up discs and placing them on courts, referees, washing the 24 courts, entry fee clerks, setting up courts with cushions on benches, etc. She said it is not hard to find help people just come forth and really help out! Helen and Gerald have also been extremely generous with their own funds as sponsors for the Siesta Pins given to Expert Shufflers at Tournaments which helps cut down on costs of trophies. They also donated generously to the 5 permanent court shades installed in 2016 and they host a spring shuffleboard party at their beautiful home. They organize the popular Friday Friendly from scheduling it with neighboring parks to organizing help. Helen writes the seasonal schedule for the five parks who share "Friday Friendly". She also organizes the playoff for the Olympics so we can find our best players. Basically if it involves shuffling they are involved! Gerald started shuffling in 1979 and it is no wonder he and Helen are in the Hall of Fame for Shuffling as expert players. Gerald had been the skip while curling in Saskatchewan so it was natural for him to excel at shuffling.

They were extremely fascinating to talk with about their lives and how they got to SRV. Helen was never married until later in life and traveled and work abroad most of her life 22 years at the American School in London, 3 years in Beirut Lebanon, and a few in the Dominican Republic. She has her Masters and taught Art and 1st Grade. Her friends have told her she should write a book on her adventures. She said it would be titled "A Broad Abroad". In 1968 she even rubbed elbows with Peter Jennings of NBC Nightly News. Gerald was a canola grain farmer in Saskatchewan. He also had never had children but did end up helping raising his brother's two girls. So you wonder to yourself how two people with such different backgrounds crossed paths to end up being married to one another. Well it is both of their mothers lived here in the valley at Weslaco Trailer Park. They both took care of their mothers for 10 years and the mothers were best friends and also shuffled. Gerald's Mom Bessie lived to be 109 and Helen's Mom, Pearl lived to be 103. So either they took extraordinary care of them or shuffling increases longevity. Helen knowing the secret to long life wanted to learn to shuffle so she asked her brother Ollie Bentson and he sent her to Gerald Lamson. Well you know the old story of instructor and student and love bloomed. The rest is history.

Helen has used her art talent to help paint the mural we love in the pool hall. She said each of the girls picked one of the dogs as their own and made their own touches. She took the bulldog so think of her and smile when you see him shooting pool. She is starting up a class on watercolor and has in the past done lessons on calligraphy. Helen also enjoys the quilters group on Mondays. The Lamsons also hosted one of the homes in the 2016 Christmas Tour of Homes. She also was the coordinator of "Better Things & Antiques" when Flea Markets were annually and held in the hall. And currently she is teaching a class in watercolor.

Gerald also keeps busy and is a Ham Radio Operator and talks to Arizona, Australia, Saskatoon and others in-between. He is well read and reads about 3 books a week. You will need to ask him what his handle is as a Radio Operator. They summer in Fargo, ND and Gerald enjoys his dual citizenship and they travel back to Canada in the summer to visit relatives. They are constantly on the go.

It was enjoyable to talk with them and learn about their lives and everything they do for Siesta. So the next time you see them ask Gerald if the secret to long and active life is shuffling. Because believe it or not he is 95 years young and still an expert shuffler. Keep the cue-stick handy and those colored disks close by!

We simply wanted to say Thank You for all you do! When you see Helen and Gerald please go out of your way and give them both a personal thank you for going above and beyond the call of duty and being an inspiration to others.

THANKS Helen and Gerald!

