

Creating LOVE later in life

BY AMY JONES
PROVIDED TO THE COURIER NEWSWEEKLY

The very best “love stories” start with deep friendship and develop into something stronger.

That happened to 76-year-old Edwina and 80-year-old Ralph Scofield.

The couple met nearly 50 years ago, but they didn't marry until 15 years ago. So, when both lost their spouses later in life, they leaned on each other for support.

The sparks started to fly.

Through the years, the couple has relied upon each other through thick and thin — like the time Ralph was diagnosed with Alzheimer's eight years ago. To this day, the couple still calls themselves “soul mates.”

They was recently honored as

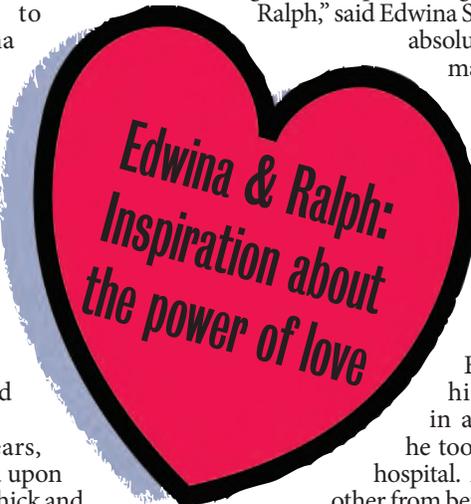
“Sweethearts” at a special “Love is in the Air” celebration at Tequesta Terrace Assisted Living.

“He is the love of my life. He is so special. Ralph is a loving, caring person, and God gave me a precious gift when he gave me Ralph,” said Edwina Scofield recently. “It is absolutely wonderful being married to Ralph.

“I have saved all of the cards and notes he has written me over the years. He always writes, ‘I love you forever and ever.’”

Ralph was an emergency medical technician, and Edwina got to know him when she rode in an ambulance while he took her parents to the hospital. Also, they knew each other from being active in the same church. She was an organist, and he was a deacon.

Actually, Ralph did the eulogy when Edwina's first husband passed away. Six



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CommunityFeatures

LOVE

FROM PAGE 47

months later, Ralph's wife passed away.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

They both believe that divine intervention led them to each other.

And when Ralph proposed to Edwina, he had to get permission from Edwina's son, daughters and friends. He promised all of them that he would take care of her.

"We both feel that this 'second chance' at this wonderful life was all the Lord's doing, and we are very thankful for what we have," Edwina says. "You can always find us holding hands and kissing ... as much as possible."

Ralph moved into Tequesta Terrace Assisted Living a year ago after he broke his wrist. Since Edwina still lives in the couple's condominium in North Palm Beach, she feels like they are dating again. Edwina visits Ralph several times a week. They enjoy sitting in the garden and going to the beach together.

"After the Alzheimer's started affecting Ralph more, we knew we were going to have to make some changes," said Edwina. "Even though Ralph and I live apart now, I have peace of mind knowing he is being cared for and that he is surrounded by neighbors in the community that are going through similar experiences.

"I am excited when I know I am heading over there. We still do all the things that we have always done together. We talk at least three times a day on the phone. And when we are together - nothing else matters," Edwina said.

The community looks to provide many different resources and activities to the residents and their families, so they can continue enjoying the hobbies and entertainment they have always had fun experiencing together.

"We are a big family, and we enjoy seeing the residents and their families build new memories together at Tequesta Terrace," said Lisa Gallagher, executive director of Tequesta Terrace Assisted Living. "It is important for our spouses and family members to feel loved, and to still find fulfillment in experiencing things together."



Ralph and Edwina Scofield enjoy the first dance at Tequesta Terrace Assisted Living's "Love is in the Air" celebration.

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