

Resident Highlight

John D. and Sue Dorchester



John was born in Oklahoma City in 1935. His father was a Big Band Leader who turned down a Hollywood career and joined the military.

During WWII John moved 27 times following his father's military assignments. While living in Virginia John attended school and worked with wounded soldiers who were returning from European battles and German POWs, learning a bit of the German language.

After WWII he had several short term moves. He had an opportunity to meet General Dwight Eisenhower and Colonel William Westmoreland. He turned down a professional baseball offer, going to college instead. In 1953 John started his military journey in the Army ROTC and was part of the military community until December of 1968.

During his service years, among many other duties, he trained soldiers in combat techniques and tactics, transferred to Germany and served in the Allied Sectors including Berlin, and observed the build-up prior to the announcement and construction of the Berlin Wall.

John worked nationally and internationally as a consultant in various specialized fields serving both government and non-government agencies on a world-wide basis.

RV LIFE

According to Don, "Sue came from a family that considered 'camping' staying late at a neighbor's evening party. From my Ranger background, camping was finding a scardie hole to nap in. So, it was a major move for both of us when we purchased our first real RV in 1992."

During a business trip to Las Vegas they bought their Country Coach. Short story: Dorchesters arrive Las Vegas — Portland vehicle dealer arrives Las Vegas in new Country Coach — Dorchesters and dealer meet — Dorchesters drive away in Country Coach and dealer has new camper. Moral: real love for camping is a true love — when it bites, it bites.

The Dorchesters have an amazing life story, one that requires more than this small article to give it the attention it deserves.

They have been actively involved with the military, they have worked in businesses allowing them access to people most of us only hear about, conducted various special assignments for the United States in the U.S. and abroad, they have traveled as campers and met the "most wonderful people on the planet" and they have faced challenges head on.

They are survivors. In 2016 John received a diagnosis of 41 metastasizing melanoma tumors, with at least 10 in the brain. The original diagnosis projected as little as three weeks to three months to live. He was one of the last participants accepted in a cancer research program and one year after starting his treatments his cancer was in remission. Sue has been to the Mayo Clinic as an out-patient over the same amount of time.

Because of their subsequent physical limitations, they are not able to participate in the Mesa Spirit activities as they would like, or even spend time indoors with small crowds — but even so, they are grateful for the wonderful friends made here and are appreciative of Mesa Spirit's efforts on their behalf.