



SHIELDS CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY AT VALLEY HEALTH SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 1, 2020

Contact: Connie M. Castellano, Director of Community Relations and Fund Development

Tel. (315) 866-3330, ext. 2329 | ccastellano@valleyhealthservices.org

Herkimer, NY – Judy Shields, resident of Valley Health Services, celebrated her 100th birthday at Valley Health Services on May 27, 2020. She is a sweet, petite lady with a great outlook on life. Shields says the secret to her longevity is being active. “Don’t be a couch potato,” states Shield.

Born on May 27, 1920, Shields grew up in Elmira, NY, had one brother that was five years younger than she, and she grew up playing sports with the boys in the neighborhood. Her favorite sports were softball and basketball. Due to her love of sports, she went to Syracuse University, a graduate of the class of 1940, majoring in Health & Physical Education. She later taught Health & Physical Education in the Mohawk School system.

Shields also was a recipient of the Ford Foundation Fellowship, where she had the opportunity to study and teach Dance in Mexico for one year. At 100 years old, Shields still loves to do her dance high kicks! The Ford Foundation Fellowship is designed to increase diversity in academia by funding students, promoting engagement with other nations and sustaining human progress and achievement at home and abroad.

Shields, widow of John T. Shields, talked fondly of their 41-year union. She and John T. Shields had dated in college. They spent the following 24 years apart and then reconnected and married in 1974. John T. Shields served as past Village of Mohawk Fire Chief, World War II Veteran, United States Army and member of St. Francis de Sales Church.

The year Shields was born, there were several inventions that shaped America. Some to note are the Convertible automobile, Penicillin, the traffic light, Band-Aids, Q-Tips and the hair dryer. Jazz, Ragtime music and Broadway musicals became popular in the 1920’s. Musicians such as Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Al Jolson were iconic and musical theater began to take shape. Novelist, F. Scott Fitzgerald termed the 1920s the “Jazz Age,” as new dance styles emerged. As Jazz became wildly popular, the decade of “Roaring Twenties” showed unprecedented growth and prosperity in the United States.

Shields enjoyed her Valley Health Services birthday with some of her favorite snacks, such as Ho Hos and honeybuns. She came to Valley Health Services at age 99 and is very much proactive in her health and wellness routine. She enjoys staying fit by walking and showing staff that she can still do her dance routine leg kicks! Her happy-go-lucky personality and quest to be active keep staff in a state of awe. Shield’s advice to the younger generation is “once you decide what it is you want to do in life, work hard and don’t stop until you succeed!”

From Valley Health Services staff, “Happy Birthday, Judy Shields, and many more!”

#

