



Ralph Erling Johnsen

February 23, 2011

Conway-.. Ralph E. Johnsen, beloved husband, father, grandfather and brother, went home to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Wednesday, February 23, 2011 at his residence. Ralph, born in Yonkers, NY on August 16, 1934 to Ralph and Ellen Eriksen Johnsen, lived briefly in Brooklyn, NY before returning to Yonkers, where he completed his education at Westchester Community College. Ralph and his sister, Gerrie, came from a musically talented family. Ralph learned to play the violin and knew music theory by the age of five. He also played the banjo, and had a wonderful tenor voice, which could be heard throughout the church. He became an accomplished guitar player and formed a country western trio, The Hillbilly Hotshots, and performed in the NY area in the mid 50's, in addition to calling square dances for various organizations. This love of music was passed on to his two daughters, Susan and Dawn and their children. It brought Ralph great joy to see his family continue this legacy especially when he performed with his daughters at Thistle Masonic Lodge in Yonkers, NY where Ralph was a past Master. He had the honor of inducting his own father as Master after his term was completed. Ralph played various sports including soccer and college basketball. He was an avid sports fan, and was always hopeful that his NY Jets would repeat their 1969 Super Bowl victory. He was fortunate to have played in seven ShopRite LPGA Pro-Golf tournaments in Absecon, New Jersey. He was also proud of his Norwegian heritage, having heard of his parents' life in Norway. Wanting to keep this heritage alive, he and his sister

organized four reunions bringing family members together to celebrate and share their traditions and love of family. Ralph held a variety of engineering positions during his career, having worked in Connecticut, NY and Philadelphia at Phelps Dodge, Crawford & Russell, Bechtel Engineering, Heyward Robinson and Herman Goldner before forming his own successful pipe and valve sales company, Rejay Engineering. Ralph, having a love of golf, traveled to GolfSmith in Austin, Texas where he became proficient in creating custom made golf clubs, establishing another successful company. At Asbury United Methodist Church, Tuckahoe, NY he was Superintendent of Sunday school, taught the 9th grade confirmation class and was a junior and senior youth leader for many years. Ralph introduced many of the youth to skiing on week-long outings and enjoyed canoe trips with them on the Delaware River. He was also coach of the Christian High School Basketball team in the Yonkers, NY league. Ralph's faith in Jesus Christ gave him a desire to share the Gospel and he took every opportunity to do so. He attended Evangelism Explosion in order to be better equipped to share God's Word. With what he learned there, he initiated and led a Sunday church service at Evergreen Campground in Pamona, NJ during the summer months, he opened his home to Bible studies, taught Sunday School and became a member of the Gideons International, all with the purpose of bringing people to Jesus Christ. He retired to Conway, SC and found a new church home and extended family, whom he grew to love, at Homewood Baptist Church. He served as Deacon, assisted with leading an Adult Sunday School class, and was a member of the Men's Discipleship Group. Ralph always had a concern for those who were experiencing difficult times, and faithfully served on the Benevolent Committee at Homewood. Surviving are his wife, Mary Johnsen of Conway; two daughters, Susan Fanok and husband Jeff of Skillman, NJ, Dawn Potter and husband John of Freehold, NJ; six grandchildren, Matthew, Michael, Sarah, Jeffery, Katie, and Kimmy; one sister, Gerrie Riker of Mastic Beach, NY; several nieces and nephews, and other loving family members. A funeral service will be held 11:00 AM Monday at Homewood Baptist Church

with Rev. Earl Spivey officiating. The family will receive friends from 7-9:00 pm Sunday at Goldfinch Funeral Home, Conway Chapel. Memorials may be sent to Homewood Baptist Church Benevolent Committee, 3290 Hwy. 319, Conway, SC 29526. Sign a guestbook at www.goldfinchfuneralhome.com Goldfinch Funeral Home, Conway Chapel is in charge of arrangements.

Tribute Wall



“ Dear Mary, We returned today from a week long trip and was surprised and sad to hear of Ralph's passing. Our prayers are with you and your family. He will be missed. Beth and Ronald##imported-begin##Beth and Ronald Crow##imported-end##

March 01, 2011 at 09:12 PM



“ I have very fond memories of my uncle Ralph. He was always smiling and very jovial. I remember swimming at the pool at his fathers house in yonkers. We used to smell and taste the honey suckle blossoms that came through a fence at the pool area. One year he hosted a golf dinner for about 20 people at my home near Absecon NJ. He cooked huge steaks for all of the guests. He got me tickets to the LPGA that same year where he worked on the course during the event. I loved when he and his father played guitar and banjo together, you could see it gave him great joy. He was a very smart man and a great uncle. I loved him and will always remember him. God bless him and all of you especially Susie and Dawn. Sincerely, your cousin Mark##imported-begin##Mark M. DeNicholas##imported-end##

February 27, 2011 at 09:12 AM



“ Dawn, John, Matthew, Michael and Sarah - We are so sorry to hear the news. Rachel spotted it on facebook somewhere. We are so sorry for your loss and hope that we can all catch up soon. We have all been through too much lately! Love you all.##imported-begin##Laura & David Austin##imported-end##

February 26, 2011 at 08:16 PM



“ Dear Aunt Mary, Im so sorry for you loss and i truly wish i can be here with you and he family. Uncle Ralph was always so joyful, caring and loving. I remember him always starting the "we want cake" chant at family birthday parties. My prayers are with you. Now he is in a better place and feels no more pain. i love you aunt mary<3###imported-begin##Christine Crisalli##imported-end##

February 26, 2011 at 07:05 PM



“ Dear Mary, What a bitter sweet time....so sorry for your loss, but thrilled for Ralph since he has reached the goal that we are all looking towards with blessed hope. Wish we lived closer, but no distance can hinder our prayers for you and the rest of Ralph's family. With love, Linda and Guy###imported-begin##Linda and Guy Hutchinson##imported-end##

February 26, 2011 at 06:34 PM



“ Mary and family- John and I are so sorry to hear about Ralph. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time and always. We wish we could be there with you; know that we will be hugging you from afar. Love always- Becky and John Fueger, Jack, Michael and Chris###imported-begin##Becky & John Fueger##imported-end##

February 26, 2011 at 05:37 PM



“ Dear Mary, We are so very sorry for your loss. Ralph was a wonderful person and will be missed. We are sorry we cannot be there for you as we are in Florida. Our sincere condolences. Ina & Art###imported-begin##Ina & Art Falk##imported-end##

February 26, 2011 at 04:52 PM



“ Dear Mary; The 2006 reunion you organized was a wonderful opportunity for us to reunite with Ralph, Gerri, you, the other Johnsen cousins and our descendents. It was a chance to reminisce about the early years in New York - some 60 years ago when we grew up as the children of Norwegian immigrants. Then, whenever our families met there was lots of laughter and good music, usually led by Ralph, Gerri and their father. Wonderful memories, they are. I also have Ralph and Gerri to thank for helping me locate the Johnsen ancestral home outside Oslo. Among us there was some hope to have another Johnsen Family reunion, so it is especially sad to learn of his death. Hralph will be missed. God Bless, Mary Norman###imported-begin##Norman Johnsen###imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 07:33 PM



“ Dear Mary, Our thoughts and prayers are with you in this time of sorrow.###imported-begin##The Kovacs Family###imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 06:04 PM



“ Mary- Kathy & I are keeping you and all of Ralph's family & friends in our thoughts at this difficult time. We are both thankful to have had the chance to meet and spend time with Ralph. love- Michael & Kathy###imported-begin##Kathy & Michael's Fifth Annual Christmas Eve Open House###imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 04:31 PM



“ Dear Mary and family, So sorry to hear of your loss. Sincere condolences from Gary & Holly Olsen & family.##imported-begin##Gary & Holly Olsen##imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 02:48 PM



“ Uncle Ralph was a warm, fun loving man of faith who was always kind, generous and loving to me when I was growing up. He is playing guitar and singing up in Heaven.##imported-begin##Joy Rothschild##imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 01:46 PM



“ Mary ... Dawn & John, Matt, Michael, & Sarah ... may your hearts be warmed by the many memories of Ralph - Husband, Dad, and Grandpa ... peace be with you all ... Kathy, Tom & children##imported-begin##The Linnan Family##imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 01:44 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family.##imported-begin##Mark Johnsen##imported-end##

February 25, 2011 at 06:37 AM



“ My heart goes out to you in your time of sorrow. You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless!##imported-begin##Meredith Scheer##imported-end##

February 24, 2011 at 11:31 PM



“ Mary, We are deeply sorry for your terrible loss, Our prayers and thoughts go out to you and Ralph's Children and Grandchildren. He was a very good man and you were blessed to have found eachother. Even though he is no longer here in body he will always be with you in spirit and your love for eachother will never fade. We hope to see you soon.. Take care of yourself.. We are sending our love your way <3 Love, Tim, Erica, Bridget and TJ##imported-begin##Erica Curtin##imported-end##

February 24, 2011 at 06:19 PM



“ Mary, Sue, Dawn and Family- Our sincere sympathies for your loss...Doc was a one of a kind and we have so many wonderful memories of his kindness, leadership and guidance...You are in our thoughts and prayers!##imported-begin##Linda Reich##imported-end##

February 24, 2011 at 05:58 PM



“ Mary, Kristin, Tyler and I send our deepest condolence. I will treasure the memories I had with Ralph, golf, Jets games,dinners and just spending time talking. You guys were alwways so kind and loving to me. I will be praying for you and the family and thank the Lord for Ralph and the friendship over the years.##imported-begin##Tommy Detamore##imported-end##

February 24, 2011 at 02:06 PM



“ *Mary and Family Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. We will miss Ralph also. We are thankful for the friendship that we had with him. We will be there with you in spirit on Sunday and Monday. We love you Mary. Love Tom and Debby##imported-begin##Debby Detamore##imported-end##*

February 24, 2011 at 01:52 PM