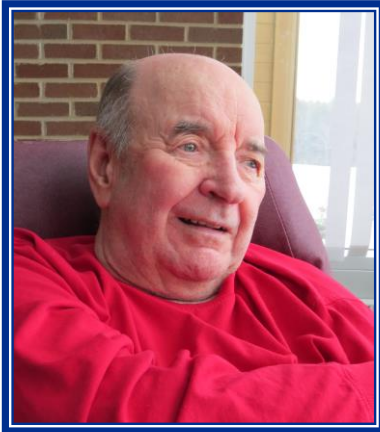




New Hampshire Veterans Home

139 Winter St.
Tilton, NH 03276



Willard "Willie" Oja *Resident Spotlight - Mid-January 2020*

Willard, or "Willie" as his friends know him, is a native of Jaffrey, NH. When he told his mother that he was joining the Navy, she said "I don't know why; you can't swim!" It turns out that Willie was also prone to seasickness. While in the Navy, he crossed the Atlantic Ocean four times by ship, and the only time he didn't get seasick was on his trip home to be discharged in 1964.

As he had done prior to enlisting, Willie went to work for New Hampshire Ball Bearing after his years of service. He married Linda and they have now enjoyed over 50 years of marriage. Together, they have a daughter and a son. Willie has always enjoyed joking with his children and used to ask them "Is Mickey Mouse a cat or a dog?" just to throw them off.

In 1973, Willie passed the Civil Service exam and joined the post office as a letter carrier, later working his way up to become the Postmaster in Dublin, NH, for 40 years. Willie's advice to anyone new in town? "Get a generator."

Everyone adored Willie. So much so that when he was thinking about retirement, Willie never told anyone when his last day would be. But eventually, one person found out and started a chain of phone calls that ended with hundreds of people coming to the Post Office on his last day to wish him well. Even during his celebration, Willie continued to shovel the snow at the post office, as he would always make sure the job was finished.

Willie was very involved in his community. He served on the zoning board, the 'dump committee' and even counted ballots on election days. When he lived in Peterborough, NH, he joined the Fire Department and worked on the rescue squad.

A lover of both NASCAR and Indy Car racing, he has seen the races at many of the racetracks on the east coast, including the NH Motor Speedway and the Indy 500.

His love for socializing and sense of humor is enjoyed here at NHVH, where he has resided since December of 2015. Willie enjoys exercise groups, animal visits (especially cats), music and visits from family, friends and staff. Willie often greets you with a smile and a hearty "how you doing, pal?"

Thanks for bringing your smiles to the New Hampshire Veterans Home, Willie.

