Jim and Mona Koonce, a perfect partnership 62 years in the making

By KELLY HAMILTON
Photography: ROBIN JERSTAD

Once in a while, you meet someone you just click with. If you're me, it's usually someone with a life history you can't make up. Recently, the honor was all mine to sit down with Jim and Mona Koonce, residents of Independence Village. The Koonces are not your ordinary couple and by no means are they slowing down. Within their 62 years of marriage, they have experienced more than most: a childhood Arkansas romance, a top-secret government military career, an Air Force career, three children and a lifetime of wedded bliss. Jim and Mona are now living a more relaxed lifestyle than they knew the first few decades of their life together. Having moved into Independence Village II and a half-years ago, the Koonces are enjoying the full-service, resort-style life, which has allowed them to travel and enjoy their retirement after a lifetime of blowing and going.

Hailing from the great state of Arkansas, Jim and Mona met at a dance when she was 13 and he was 14. From that point on, they wrote letters to one another before he left for college, he expressed his desire to date her. Her family loved him. He proposed after they dated for a while, and then, in Mona’s words, “we were off and gone.”

Finally retiring from the Air Force, Jim accepted an information systems management position at USAF, where he remained for the next 15 years, retiring as a vice president. The intelligence andsubteef man met and married his wife, saying, “I never turned down a chance to go to school and learn.” Holding a degree in chemical engineering, he passed the Air Force’s in-house clearance with his government position.

Every aspect of Jim and Mona’s life together exemplifies community involvement. As long-time residents of Sonterra, they still serve as ambassadors for the Club at Sonterra, where they welcome residents and guests and enjoy events and social gatherings. At such a time however, when life starts to slow down and retirement is in the horizon, a number of their friends were losing spouses and wanting to downsize, so Mona in true hostess fashion, would bring them over to Independence Village while it was being built to look at lots and floor plans.

After a number of trips to the Village, Mona was finally wowed to downsize from the Sonterra home they loved to a beautiful home at Independence Village II years ago, where they are still as happy as the day they moved in. With such amenities as housekeeping, grounds and home maintenance, group games, fitness outings, dinners and more, the lifestyle presented itself irresistible to Mona and her friends. When Jim and Mona are not serving as ambassadors for Sonterra, leading a Bible study class or traveling around the country, they are happy at home having local friends over for the evening.

Jim says, “She’s tireless and keeps me moving.” With a twinkle in his eye, Mona smiles and says, “He does what he says he is going to do.” With a twinkle in his eye, Jim says, “She’s tireless and keeps me moving.” Together, they agree that they have lived a lifetime of adventure and are eagerly anticipating what will come next.

For more information about the Independence Village neighborhood of homes for active adults 55-plus, call 210-782-9952 or visit www.independencevill.com.

Note While NSIDE officially adheres to AP style, certain exceptions were made in the editing of this article.