Joy Johnson loved music as a little girl growing up central Texas during the depression. Following a family tragedy, funds were available for piano lessons for only one child, so Joy used her sister’s books and learned to play on her own. Little did she know her musical skills would one day enable her to support herself and her children.

Joy’s father was a pastor who also worked as a carpenter. He was killed in an accident on the job when Joy was four, leaving her mother a widow with seven children. The family raised chickens and tended a garden on their property outside of Lufkin until each child was of age to find work.

Joy moved to San Antonio in 1964 with two young sons. She took a job at Hammond Organ Studios as a receptionist, learned to play organ, and eventually performed in demonstrations across the city. When the Hammond store closed, Alamo Music invited Joy to become their first female sales associate. She stayed with the company for more than 20 years and set an overall sales record.

When her boys, Walter “Dub” and Mark Jones, were in high school, she met Frank Johnson through a friend. They dated off and on for seven years as Joy patiently waited for him to grow serious in his walk with Christ. Eventually, Frank realized what a gem Joy was, and they were married in 1978 by Pastor John Hagee himself. The Johnsons shared 23 years together until his death in 2001.

Faith and music have been the hallmark of Joy’s life. She remembers happy days around the piano with her sons — Joy harmonizing at tenor with the boys. Favorite hymns are Great is Thy Faithfulness and Amazing Grace. Both sons embraced her Christian example. Dub was the pastor of Boerne Assembly of God church for 27 years and led Living Sound International, which performed in Europe. Mark has been a Christian licensed marriage and family therapist since 1992. He’s participated in the music program at Cornerstone Church and sang the National Anthem before the San Antonio Rodeo for decades.

Mark and Dub live close by. Although she moved into her beautifully decorated apartment just a few months ago, Joy has already met a group of ladies with whom she enjoys meals. Her tree-shaded patio is filled with plants and overlooks Independence Hill’s attractive gazebo and flowerbeds. She eagerly attends the campus’ Sunday morning chapel before heading to Cornerstone’s 11 a.m. service. Joy looks forward to playing Canasta and sharing the fruit of the spirit with her new friends. For more information on the lifestyle offered at Independence Hill, call (210) 764-5260, or go to www.independencehill.com.