

Couple honored for community work

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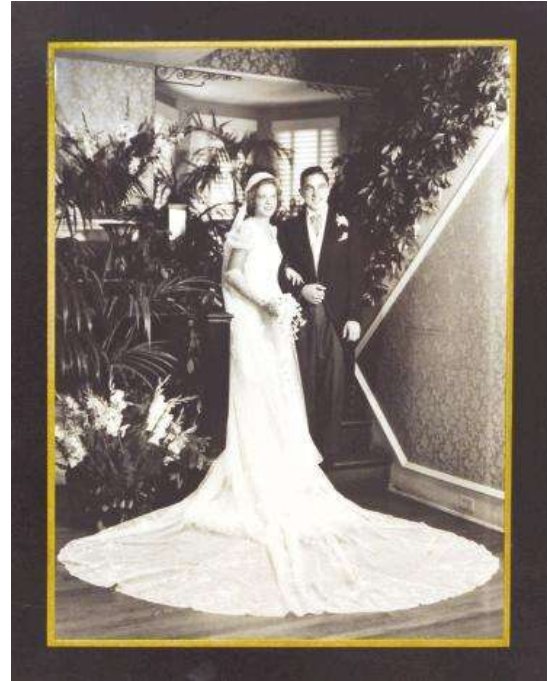
The walls in one room of the Clompus home in West Chester are filled with citations and awards for the couple that has devoted much of their lives to helping the community.

Another award will be added to the wall next month when Martin and Jackie Clompus will be honored with the Jordan Award by the Chester County Community Foundation.

The Jordan Award, named in honor of county philanthropists Barbara Jordan and the late Henry Jordan, one of the founders of the Community Foundation, honors a lifetime of philanthropic leadership. The award carries with it a \$5,000 grant to the charity or charities of the award winner's choice.

Martin Clompus credits the Daily Local News with a choice he made several decades ago. He read stories in the paper about the men and women helping out in the community. "I remember saying, 'I want to be just like those people.' We've got to do for the community."

And he and his wife, Jackie, have really done just that.



Both natives of West Chester, the couple married right after Jackie graduated from high school. They celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary this month. They are now the parents of four children, 11 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

"It was a very short engagement," Martin said, laughing. Shortly after their marriage, Martin, now 89, entered the Navy and served as a meteorologist on an aircraft carrier during World War II. After returning home, he took over his father's junkyard business and in the evenings worked as a welder at Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. in Philadelphia.

But that didn't stop Martin from giving back to the community. His first step into the world of service was when he joined the Kiwanis, becoming its president in 1954. He later served on its board of directors and helped establish Circle K, a youth philanthropy group at West Chester University.

The list of his accomplishments and service is long. He has served as president of the West Chester Civic Association which provided funds to help found the West Chester Daycare Center.

Martin was one of the organizers of Chester County Adult School Night. "It started off with 32 courses. Now there are well over 100."

He recalled one of the first dance classes the school provided. "I was sitting on the bleachers watching, and a man came up to me and told me to go out and dance. Jackie and I took dance classes for 30 years after that."

He is also active in B'nai B'rith and Keshet Israel Synagogue, serving as president of both. The Keshet Israel community played an important role in the couple's lives. Jackie served as president of the Sisterhood and as president of Hadassah.

Jackie was also the first female president of the United Fund of West Chester, which later merged with other United Funds to become the United Way of Chester County.

But what she sees as her greatest accomplishment took place in her backyard. There, for 45 years, Jackie taught swimming for the American Red Cross in their pool. "Over 1,000 children learned to swim in this pool," she says with pride.

Jackie believes it is important for people to give back to their community. "I see it as rent for living in this town," said Jackie. ##