

## **Norman Desautels**

**With the arrival of the warm Spring weather, William Albert House residents and families are overjoyed to finally be allowed to have family back for outdoor visits, and starting on May 25, for indoor visits in residents' rooms. What a treat this is, after waiting some 14 months for the in-room visits to take place. I met Norman's daughter Amy, from Regina, when she enjoyed a window visit with her Dad in early May. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon, Norman had a great outdoor visit with his son, Leon (Gene) and his wife, Laurie. Norm and so many of the residents are taking advantage of the pathways around the Home and getting some fresh air and exercise.**

**Norman grew up on a farm near Riceton, SK, took his schooling at Richardson School and, for a time, at the convent in Sedley. High School years were spent at Scott Collegiate in Regina. In 1951, at the age of 18, he left for Portland Oregon, where his sister and her husband lived. He soon settled in and went to work at a plywood mill that his father had shares in. He was living near Trohs Airport and became very interested in airplanes. He even received some free instructions from the guys he befriended there. The interest in planes grew and grew and by his early 20s, he became a small plane pilot. During the 18 years he spent in the United States, Norm worked at many trades, including spray pilot, aviation mechanic for Pan American Airlines, funeral home worker, and electrician. Many years later, in his 60s, Norm decided to get his pilot license back and took flying lessons.**

**He met the love of his life, Shirley, at a dance in Belleview, Washington. She was a beautiful, petite young woman and Norman was immediately smitten. He says that Shirley's father was quite strict, so "I kept my boots well shined". Norman and Shirley married in 1961 and family life began. In 1969, he and Shirley and their two small children, Gene and Amy, returned home to the farm in the Riceton area. During those early years, they lived in various homes in Regina and Norm worked on the farm. Later, when his parents left the farm and moved to Kelowna, Norm and Shirley moved to the farm. While farming, Norman was a Rural Municipality councillor and Reeve for many years. During their years on the farm, their family vacations included BedRock City, Banff,**

**Lake Louise, Hawaii, Cuba, Las Vegas and Disneyland. In approximately 1992, Norm and Shirley retired and moved to Regina.**

**During their retirement years, Norman and Shirley enjoyed travelling and spending time with family. They took a dream trip to Australia for a month and had a wonderful time. They fell in love with the Gold Coast and spent most of their time there. For their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, they went to Lake Chapala, Mexico. During their travels they met many new friends and stayed in touch with them for years. Over the years, they made many trips to the United States to visit Shirley's family and to Kelowna to see Norm's parents.**

**Norman's children have many fond memories. Amy remembers going to town with her dad and always getting a treat. Another favourite memory is riding in the tractor with her Dad and enjoying the one-to-one time with him. Gene remembers his Dad being well-read and quite the history buff, which led to many interesting discussions with neighbours and friends.**

**Norman's interest in airplanes led him to an interest in building model airplanes, too. He has always been handy and enjoys working on various wood projects. He likes visiting with the staff and residents here at William Albert House. He enjoys good conversation and has a great sense of humor! Although he sometimes feels quite lonesome, he always seems to find a way to make the best of his situation.**

**We are so glad that you have chosen William Albert House as your home, Norm. We enjoy your friendliness and your warm personality! Thanks for everything you do to make this a wonderful place to be. We love you Norman!**