

Big family stages a big luau to note couple's 50th

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

GREECE — He was 22 years old; she was all of 15. Only days after they were married on July 5, 1944, he went back into the service ... without his bride.

"There were those who said it would never last," Allen Jackson remarked with a hearty chuckle.

Yet Allen and his wife, Pat, have indeed earned the last laugh over those skeptics.

Pat eventually joined Allen as he traveled to various parts of the United States with the U.S. Army. When the Jacksons returned home at the end of World War II, they settled in Greece and quickly got down to the business of parenting, producing 11 children.

Their offspring, as well as all 34 of their grandchildren and their one great-grandchild, gathered with other Jackson family members and friends earlier this month for a colossal party at Hamlin Beach State Park to honor Allen and Pat's 50th anniversary.

Hawaii was the day's theme — from the participants' colorful garb to a pig roast, followed by a Hawaiian wedding-song dance performed by 14 of the Jacksons' granddaughters. Climaxing this gala was the Jackson children's gift to their parents — a one-week trip to Hawaii in early September.

"We never, never expected it," Allen said of the upcoming vacation.

"It took three or four days for us to come down," added Pat.

Lately, Allen and Pat have been on the same high that they experienced from the time they went on their first date some 51 years ago while Allen was home on leave. It started out with a movie and a trip to Sea Breeze, where they rode the bumper cars. They talked long into the night by lake-side, and the next day Allen returned to Army duty.

Their relationship grew by way of frequent letter-writing, although it wasn't until then that Allen discovered Pat had been only 14 and on her first date when



Allen and Pat Jackson hold up a picture of their children, one of the many gifts they received during their 50th wedding anniversary celebration held at Hamlin Beach State Park in early July.

S. John Willkin/Staff photographer



Pat Jackson reacts after being given surprise tickets for a Hawaiian anniversary cruise.



The theme party featured a Hawaiian wedding song dance by 14 of Allen and Pat's granddaughters.



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they initially got together.

"She told me in a letter. I was rather surprised, but I was already hooked by that time!" Allen remarked.

At Christmas they were engaged, and the following July they were married. The Jackson children followed as rapidly as the courtship had unfolded: Connie is now 46 years old; Paul, 44; Sharon, 41; Pam, 38; Renee, 34; Kim, 33; Mark, 31; Allyn, 30; and Shawn, 28. Sons Robbie and George, who would have been 47 and 42, respectively, are deceased.

Despite an ever-growing household as the years went by, the Jackson clan stuck together like glue. "We had a house full of love," said Allen, who has now been retired for 12 years from Eastman Ko-

dak Company.

Pat gives her husband credit for enhancing that love, saying that "he never involved himself in any activity outside of his family."

Allen and Pat, parishioners at Holy Cross Church in Rochester, maintain that their marriage's longevity has been enhanced by sticking to similar priorities.

"When my girls have occasion to get upset, I tell them that all you have to decide is do you love each other," Pat stated. "If that's where it's at, then nothing else is important."

"Priorities have a great deal to do with it," Allen added.

"And you have to keep your peace with God," his wife of 50 years concluded.

Christophers offer brochure on support for caregivers

NEW YORK (CNS) — "Care for Caregivers," a brochure offering support and helpful ideas to those who look after loved ones in need of special attention, is available from The Christophers.

The latest *Christopher News Note* describes caregivers as "quiet heroes" and offers several ideas for supporting them in their daily life. The suggestions include sharing a meal, being a good listener, providing useful information and sharing the workload.

Caregivers are urged to take care of themselves, reach out for support, be positive and keep a spiritual focus.

"Caregivers need respect and appreciation from within themselves and from those around them," the brochure says.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Single copies of "Care for Caregivers" are free of charge. Bulk orders are available for \$5 per 100 copies or \$40 per 1,000. Write to: The Christophers, 12 East 48th St., New York, NY 10017.