



George W. Johnson Realtors

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George W Johnson

Dec. 22, 1912 - March 10, 2011

The oldest working real-estate broker in the United States, George W. Johnson, 98, of Seattle, died on March 10, 2011, from complications of pulmonary fibrosis. Up until 6 weeks ago, he was still driving himself to his Ballard office, George W. Johnson Realtors, and working 6-hour days. Jean Enersen, of King 5 News, commenting on Alan Schauffler's 2007 UpFront feature called him "The Oracle of Ballard" a moniker he proudly embraced to his final days.

George was born in Wessington, SD, on December 22, 1912, to Oscar and Johanna Johnson who were both Danish Immigrants. The second of 4 brothers, George grew up on the family farm and spent his youth helping his father with the family homestead and learning the value of hard work. He met and married Clarice A. Scandrett in 1933, while they were both attending a small Free Methodist college in South Dakota. He left South Dakota in 1934 after being recruited by the President of Seattle Pacific College (now SPU) to finish his last two years at SPC's growing Seattle campus. He earned his tuition by rising every morning at 4am to work as the school's baker. His parents followed him to Seattle, and after George completed his college degree in 1936, he and his father started a dairy farm in the Broadview neighborhood of N. Seattle, where Viewlands Elementary School sits today. Never afraid of hard work, George ran the dairy's north end milk route, worked as an elementary school teacher in White Center and, after sending \$5 to Olympia for a real estate license, started selling homes from a real estate office on 15th Ave NW in Ballard – he never left that business. Over the next 75 years, he was active in and proud of his profession. He was an early pioneer in the Seattle Real Estate Industry, a founding member of what evolved into today's regional Northwest Multiple Listing Service, serving multiple terms as President of Seattle Board of Realtors and was a career-long, 75+ year, member-emeritus of the WAR & NAR. His Ballard office continues in its original location at 7016 15th Ave NW. He was equally proud of his long association and life long involvement with First Free Methodist Church, Seattle. George's commitments to his family, to his church, and to hard work were the prized benchmarks of his life.

George was married to Clarice until her death in Jan.1993. Then at 81 years of age he found the second love of his life in his widowed sister-in-law, Esther Johnson. In late 1993 George & Esther were married and spent the next 17 wonderful years together until her passing at age 101 in 2010.

George is survived by his loving children and step children, Jim Johnson and his wife Barbara; Joybelle Johnson-Eriks and her husband Paul Eriks; Karen Johannsen; Robert Johnson and his wife Karen Hoven; JoAnne McDonald; Carolyn Murphy and her husband Gerald; and Janet Henkel. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great-grandchildren.

A memorial service honoring George's life will be held at Seattle First Free Methodist Church at 1 PM Sunday March 20, 2011. A reception will follow at the church. Memorial donations may be made to First Free Methodist Church, Seattle, the Clarice A Johnson Memorial Fund Seattle Pacific University, Operation Night Watch Seattle, Warm Beach Retirement Health Care Center, Stanwood, Wa. or New Horizons Ministries, Seattle, Wa.

There is a special place in our hearts for all of the wonderful loving home care provided to George by his extended family in his final weeks, but an "extra"ordinary heart felt thanks go to Keri Pederson and Kurt Johnson "Grandchildren Extraordinaire", upon whom an especially heavy portion of his care fell and who handled it with an unbelievable outpouring of love and patience, compassion and care. Thank you both so much.

If history and habit is any predictor, "Time to Get Up!!" will be among the first words spoken by dad as he greets his long unseen friends and family.