



Mr. and Mrs. Robert Williamson are celebrating their 70th wedding anniversary today, November 25.

WILLIAMSON

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ington, Del. Two years ago, Elsie and Robert became great-grandparents to Caleb Williamson Ross.

"He is special," Elsie said of the family's fourth generation member. "The happiest little boy I've ever seen."

Health issues have posed some of the biggest challenges for Robert and Elsie during their marriage as both have had multiple surgeries. High points in their marriage have been the birth of their son, three granddaughters and one great-grandson while the lowest point, both admit, was when military duty took Robert away from home.

"It was rough," Elsie said, remembering that time. "I got \$80 a month and \$30 of that went for rent."

Elsie doesn't hesitate when explaining what she loves most about Robert.

"I think everything," she said. "He helps a lot around the house, he's sentimental, affectionate. I'm grateful for little things."

And Robert gladly supplies reasons why he loves Elsie.

"Everything," he said. "Because when I saw her, she's the one I wanted and she's the one I got. I couldn't be happier."

As for marriage advice, they have some to offer.

"I think you have to work at it (marriage)," Elsie said. "Everything isn't going to go easy or smooth. You have to accept little upsets or difficulties."

"Have a little argument each day, never go to bed mad at each other and say 'I love you' a lot," Robert added.

Now 88 and 94 years old, Robert and Elsie admit to never having gone to bed mad at each other and, although they have minor arguments, always laugh them off. They're together 24 hours a day and, to keep busy, do crossword puzzles and housework. Until one year ago, Robert still mowed the lawn.

A family dinner was held at Lums Fernbrook Inn in Dallas to celebrate the anniversary. All of the couple's descendants and their spouses, including Elsie's 92-year-old sister, Alice Kishbaugh, attended.



Mr. and Mrs. Robert Williamson enjoyed a mini vacation at Mount Airy in the 1940s.

PARTNER

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performance.

Second-grader Brianna Gula, 7, of Dallas, was very nervous to be on stage even though she was in a holiday performance last year at the school.

"There's lots of people in here," Brianna said after the hoedown.

But Brianna's parents, Louie Bailoni and Stacey Gula, were pleased with their daughter.

"I loved it," Stacey said. "She did good."

Ryan Spears, 7, of Dallas, was also nervous to be in the limelight.

"Because I'm shy," said the son of Arthur and Diane Spears.

The hoedown was started in the early 1970s at the former Westmoreland Elementary School in Kingston Township when the late Edyth Kromelbein, a teacher at the school, introduced second-grade teacher Beth Faerber to the songs and dances the children would perform. Faerber and now retired second-grade teachers, Suzie Hersteck and Marsha Paczewski, would teach the children the music and moves during recess in wintertime and throughout the year. Eventually, they started having an end-of-year performance for parents.

Faerber says the hoedown began with an old-time prairie theme like on the television show "Little House on the Prairie." The girls wore long dresses and bonnets and students danced to music on records. But the clothes went out of style and it became difficult for parents to dress the children to the theme so the teachers decided to let the children be little cowboys and cowgirls instead.

The hoedown made the move from Westmoreland to Wycallis Elementary when the new school opened in 1999. But eventually, educational standards in Pennsylv-



CHARLOTTE BARTIZEK/ FOR THE DALLAS POST

The annual hoedown at the Wycallis Elementary School saw Rachel Rollman, left, and Caitlyn Pike enjoying themselves.

"I think it's a great tradition with the arts and dance, especially at that age."

Matthew Krivak
Parent

nia kept the classroom teachers from preparing the children for the hoedown and the music and gym teachers had to take over most of the preparation. The hoedown is now held every year in conjunction with American Education Week, Nov. 11-17.

Music teacher Debbie Pike started teaching the children their hoedown songs in September. While the students learned the songs, Pike also taught them the history of the cowboy folklore and about the lives of cowboys.

"It takes a little bit of time, but they really do well," said Nicholas in kindergarten at Pike, the music teacher at Wycallis. "I'm really impressed with all the lyrics they learn."

Physical education instructor Karen Arnaud began the school year by teaching the

second-graders basic motor skills including hopping, skipping and jumping, then began showing them dance moves about the second week of October.

"The kids love to do this; it's funny," Arnaud said. "When you start, out you wonder if they're ever going to learn this."

Matthew Krivak, now 41, had Faerber as a teacher and remembers being in the hoedown. After living out of the area for years, the Krivaks moved back to Dallas in 2001.

When they enrolled their son in kindergarten at Wycallis two years ago, the couple was surprised to encounter Faerber at the school.

"I think it's a great tradition with the arts and dance, especially at that age," Matthew Krivak said.

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SEAN'S SKI TIPS



Q. How should ski and snowboard boots fit?

A. Comfortably snug. Boots should offer good ankle support with room to wiggle your toes. Too big a boot will be cold because you may tighten it till your foot is pinched, which cuts off circulation.

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