



Kiwanis Club of Kennewick Member

Walteen L. Corson

Walteen Corson was born and raised in a small town in Southwest Oklahoma named "Frederick." After high school, she moved to Arizona and worked as a civil employee on a military base. There she met her first husband Herman Cox, a sergeant and airplane engine mechanic. They were married and after serving his tour of duty, they moved to Alhambra California. While in California they had two boys Rickey and Alan.

In the early 50's they moved back to Frederick and farmed with her father. About this time, 40 acre tracts of land were open to purchase in the South Columbia Basin Irrigation District, referred to as Block 1, about 8 miles North of Pasco Washington. In 1952, Herman and Walteen purchased one of these 40-acre tracts and planned to start a farming future. The main roads going through Block 1 were Road 68 and Selph landing Road. Today Road 68 is referred to as Columbia River Road. In September of 1952 Herman, Walteen and their two boys were moving from Frederick Oklahoma to their farm 8 miles North of Pasco Washington. They ran out of gas outside of Tremonton, Utah. Herman caught a ride with a passing car to the closest gas station to obtain gas. The car was involved in a fatal automobile accident and all of the occupants were killed. After burying her husband in Frederick Oklahoma, Walteen and her two boys continued to Pasco Washington and lived with her sister and her husband on their farm about 3 miles from Walteen's farm north of Pasco.

While living with her sister, Walteen met John Corson who had an auto repair shop in Kennewick Washington and in 1954 they were married and moved to Walteen's farm. Their house is located approximately 1 ½ miles south of Selph landing Road on Road 68. John adopted Rick and Alan and they had three other children - two girls and a boy.

John and Walteen expanded their farming operation to four other farms located in block 1, block 15, and block 16 where they raised corn, fresh potatoes, wheat, alfalfa, cattle and beans. While raising her children, Walteen was a 4-H leader, a cub Scout Den Mother, as well as belonging to various organizations in Block 1. John and Walteen were members of the Cattleman's Association and John was a board member for the National Potato Board where they traveled to other countries promoting Washington Potatoes. In the late 80's or early 90's they moved from the farm to their house in West Pasco where they continued to live. Walteen became involved in various organizations after moving to Pasco such as Red Hatters Club, Soroptimist Club, Toast Masters, volunteered at Kadlec Hospital for 31 years and served as a board member on the Kadlec Foundation. After retiring as a volunteer at Kadlec, Walteen joined the Kiwanis Club of Kennewick to continue to do public service. In 2017, due to health reasons, Walteen was unable to attend regular Kiwanis meeting but remained a Kiwanis member of the Kiwanis Club of Kennewick still supporting the club financially as a member. She started the Walteen L. Corson Scholarship fund to provide educational opportunities to college students that were majoring in Agriculture related careers, however, if no applications were received for Agriculture degrees, then she requested the scholarship to be given to other career minded students.

Walteen passed away in her sleep on October 19, 2021, at the age of 96.