



Still golfing at 90

Age no barrier for her

How does that old saying go? Age is a thing of the mind, or you're as old as you think you are? Anyway, the idea is that you can be as young as you want to be.

Mrs. Helen Pearce is one person who has taken those thoughts to heart.

In fact, she may have been the model for those sayings. Mrs. Pearce turned 90 on Aug. 20, an event which prompted her golfing buddies to throw her a birthday party at the Pine Lake Country Club, in West Bloomfield.

That's right, her golfing buddies. Mrs. Pearce started playing the game 30 years ago because her late husband, Harry Pearce, played quite often and, as she puts it, "it wasn't going to become a golf widow."

Despite taking up the game late in life (she was 60 when she first played), Mrs. Pearce has proved quite adept. She has won seven trophies, although she claims that mostly beginners took part in the tournaments.

She still plays twice a week, though, and shoots in the low 60s for nine holes. "This (Pine Lake) is the only course I've played in Michigan," Mrs. Pearce said. "I guess I'm the matriarch of the golf club. I'm the oldest one going anyway."

marrying her second husband, Harry Pearce owned the Pearce Floral Co. of Pontiac, which has been in business since 1899.

Mrs. Pearce's son, Charles Copersmith, still operates the business.

Until recently, Mrs. Pearce lived alone in her Pontiac home. But in January, two men broke into her house. Aroused by her dog's barking, she walked down her staircase and confronted the men by saying, "What the hell are you doing in my house?"



Helen Pearce, at 90, is an avid golfer. (Staff photo by Charlie Kidd)

As the two men fled, one knocked Mrs. Pearce down on the floor and a marble-topped table fell on her, cracking a vertebra in her back. She was in the hospital for two weeks, after which her son, Charles, insisted she move in with his family.

She didn't mind the move. It gives her more time to do what she wants to do—like play golf. "When I first started playing the game, I didn't even know what par was," Mrs. Pearce said. "I just played for the exercise."

But her antics and humor have made her a favorite of all her golfing friends. "DID SHE TELL you who she wanted to marry next?" one of her friends asked me. Mrs. Pearce had revealed to me, in confidence, that her next would be the one knocking at door that carried the fewest cans. But that wasn't the answer her friend gave.

"She wants someone who's 40 and unused," she blurted out before I could give her my answer.

One time, while out golfing with her late husband Harry, Mrs. Pearce got riled at his choice of parking spots for the golf cart, another of Mrs. Pearce's friends related.

"Put that cart where I want it," she reportedly demanded to her husband, "or you won't get anything tonight."

Mrs. Pearce plans to keep on golfing for as long as she can. "Why not? They can print my funeral notice, but they'll have to get me off the golf course to attend."

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