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Samira
Says



Samira Davi is a Nurse Liaison for ManorCare Health Services in Walnut Creek. Samira has over 10 years of experience working in health care in Contra Costa County, which has gained her a wide view of what is important to the health care consumer. She will be posting common questions and comments in each issue of the Lamorinda Weekly. You are welcome to contact Samira directly at 925.270.8766

It's All About Who You Know

Navigating the healthcare system is no easy task, especially when you are in a medical crisis. Post-acute rehab centers can be a maze, and it's important to know who your "inside advocates" are—the people on staff who can help you figure out how things work. Being familiar with the people and processes in the facility will help reduce any anxiety you may feel and ease you through your stay.

Who's Who?

THE ADMINISTRATOR: Every Rehab Center has a Licensed

Administrator—the person responsible for ensuring that the quality of care in the center is maintained. Don't be shy—at ManorCare our Administrators have open doors, they expect patients to come by and chat about any number of things. Our Administrators really want patient feedback—excellence in patient care starts with them!

YOUR CHARGE NURSE: Each shift, you'll have a charge nurse assigned to you. Your charge nurse is responsible for your medications, treatments and communication with your physician. If you have questions about your medical care and recovery, you should direct those to your charge nurse.

YOUR SOCIAL WORKER: This person is your point-person throughout your admission. It is their responsibility to help explain your Medicare benefits and work with other staff members to determine your continued eligibility during your stay. At ManorCare, you and/or your family can expect to hear from the Social Worker weekly to get a status update on coverage and progress towards Graduation.

YOUR CASE MANAGER: ManorCare hires RN Case Managers to manage private insurance coverage throughout your stay. We hire RN's so that we can professionally communicate your clinical needs to the medical review teams at your insurance company. You know how convoluted those insurance companies can be—it's our job to keep it straight and ensure you are maximizing your benefits. Your Case Manager will help you throughout your admission and will help coordinate the best day: your discharge home!

Remember that the most important person in the healthcare system is YOU! I talk with a lot of patients, and a lot of family members. I hear from them that they feel lost in the system, like a number or a diagnosis. Knowing which staff members can provide you with information, guide you through insurance, help 'translate' your physician visits, and most importantly help you get home safe and healthy, is the key to understanding your recovery.

For more information please visit www.manorcare.com.
For a short video visit us on YouTube: www.youtube.com/hcrmanorcare

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Pearl Harbor Survivor Left His Heart on USS San Francisco

By Cathy Dausman



From left, California State Senator Leland Yee with "Chief Johnson" during the 2001 USS San Francisco memorial service. Photo provided

Richard "Johnny" Johnson, until recently a Lafayette resident, turns 90 Dec. 6 but you wouldn't know it. The retired Navy chief still has a full head of hair and an unlined face. He was just a boy at 17, a self-professed high school dropout, when he enlisted with his mother's permission on his birthday in 1940.

"Join the Navy and See the World" – that was the poster which inspired the Minnesota farm boy and his older brother to enlist. "Chief Johnny" passed the physical, his brother did not.

In April, 1941, Seaman Third Class Johnson boarded the USS San Francisco in Pearl Harbor. He worked in the galley throughout his entire enlistment preparing meals for the crew, and never left the "Frisco."

Johnson recalled how Pearl Harbor was awash in young sailors as the Navy built its forces for the war they feared was coming. "Saturday nights in Honolulu were [so] packed with servicemen; you had to walk in the streets," he said.

The Frisco should have been in dry dock, positioned differently within Pearl Harbor. Instead, Johnson said, his ship was being repainted; half its food and all its ammunition was unloaded. The USS New Orleans was in dry dock in its place.

The morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Johnson was drinking coffee on the ship's fantail, preparing for a day on Waikiki Beach. He noticed planes flying overhead.

He waved, not realizing they were the Japanese fleet.

When the bombing started, the Frisco was overlooked, likely because it was unarmed. As for the response to the attack, Johnson said, "We were just young, dumb kids." They couldn't quite believe what was happening. The

rest of the country was angry, mad and frightened to death, he added.

Repair crews "flocked like bees to get the San Francisco ready," Johnson said.

For Johnson, the big picture was not as important as the personal battles he and his fellow servicemen fought to win the war: His buddy, Charlie, who survived naval fights aboard the USS Chicago and the ill-fated USS Arizona; a corpsman whose job it was to identify close to 200 dead and injured soldiers and sailors, most of whom were without dog tags; and another sailor who survived the sinking of the USS West Virginia.

Equally important to Johnson's Pearl Harbor experience was his involvement aboard the Frisco during the battle of Guadalcanal. Yet Johnson saves most of his reminiscing for military reunions, explaining Pearl survivors don't tell their kids about their experiences because "they wouldn't really understand."

Johnson founded the nonprofit USS San Francisco Memorial Foundation (www.ussanfrancisco.org) which conducts an annual memorial ceremony at Lands' End in San Francisco to honor the 107 sailors and Marines killed in the action there Nov. 12-13, 1942.

Speaking as foundation president, Johnson said, "It is essential that this history is remembered for future generations."

To that end, Johnson keeps the flame alive, giving interviews, attending presentations and memorial services. Johnson has since returned to Pearl Harbor – his daughter lives in Hawaii – and calls the Japanese "really wonderful people" who first experienced liberty, freedom and democracy at the war's end.



Richard Johnson

Photo Cathy Dausman

Submit stories and story ideas to
storydesk@lamorindaweekly.com