



The 2023 Influencer Award recipient from The Summit is Bob Johnson!

Bob Marshall Johnson was born on July 27, 1935, in a farmhouse near Gretna, Virginia. He lived on his parents' farm for the first eighteen years of his life, the youngest of nine children of Edd Lester Johnson and Olive Hamlett Johnson.

Bob was helping on the farm from six years old, first bringing water from the spring, and then milking cows, then helping his dad work fields of tobacco, wheat, corn, and hay. When he was a junior and senior in high school, his brothers had all left the farm, either married or in military service, so when his father developed serious health problems and couldn't work, Bob did it for him in addition to going to school. It was during this time of running his father's farm that Bob decided he didn't want to be a farmer all his life!

Bob married Agnes Rowland in 1954. Agnes was one year ahead of Bob in school. When they first met, Agnes said she couldn't stand him, however their marriage endured for 65 years. They had one son Jeffery and one grandson, Blake.

After high school, Bob couldn't afford college, so he went to work with a federal agency surveying farm fields and working in tobacco warehouses during the fall selling seasons. After his son was born, Bob knew he needed a more stable income, so he became a management trainee for a savings and loan association in Danville, Virginia. He studied accounting and law by correspondence, and worked over the next nine years to advance, becoming Secretary-Treasurer of the association and began a 45-year career in finance and banking management, growing and consolidating banks in Danville, then Bristol, Virginia, then Knoxville, Tennessee.

In 1987, the Cooperative Building and Loan Association

in Lynchburg invited Bob to become their president, and through his leadership, Cooperative converted from a mutual savings and loan to a commercial bank. It grew and attracted the attention of One Valley Bank, which then acquired First Federal Savings Bank of Lynchburg and part of Jefferson National Bank of Charlottesville, growing them from a five hundred million bank to a two billion bank with 26 branches. In 1999, One Valley was acquired by BB&T and with the acquisition, Bob became a director of the Virginia Division of BB&T until his retirement from that position at age 70 in 2005.

Bob and Agnes decided to move to The Summit in 2019, after Agnes had had some significant health concerns. They moved in in January, and Agnes passed away from complications with cancer in June of 2019. They had initially chosen The Summit because of its strong community. After Agnes died, Bob knew that he needed to be around people and part of a community, so he opted to stay.

During the ensuing years Bob has served The Summit as president of the Resident Council for three years and is now President Emeritus. He also serves on the Spiritual Life Committee, the Prayer Group, and was involved in Worship Services on a weekly basis. Bob serves the greater community by working with the Vice Mayor of Lynchburg and City Council, trying to improve conditions on Enterprise Drive.

In November of 2022, Bob suffered a stroke from which he is still trying to recover. He's had some health challenges since, but he is still intent upon recovery and resumption of his life. His purposes going forward are to continue working in the interest of the residents of The Summit through its growth and expansion to include the amenities afforded by LifeSpire of Virginia. He says that living in a LifeSpire community is like having a large family to reside with. The residents are congenial, and the management and team members make every effort to create a good environment. He appreciates that LifeSpire is a well-managed, sound, and transparent business.

Bob's influencers growing up included his parents, his father, in particular. He worked hard, he was an honest person and loved people, and loved to talk! Bob is influenced today by his family and friends, particularly his friend Barbara, who he describes as a good Christian and has been so faithful and supportive during his health challenges.

In the next year, Bob would like to continue to work with Resident Council and the management team to grow The Summit and secure the additional services needed for their continuing care retirement community.