

Healing with hobbies

In an effort to pass the time and cope during the pandemic, many have rediscovered hobbies or found new creative outlets over the past year. John Smith, a resident at Westwood Commons in North Chili, rekindled his love of writing by penning some poetry.

John has been writing since his youth. He never favored any specific style, just enjoying writing about whatever came to mind in the moment. He's written two books. One is an autobiography called **The Story of John Smith**, which is not currently for sale. The other is a cookbook called **The Kitchen 46 Cookbook** which is currently available. The inspiration for the cookbook came when John was watching a cooking program on television that featured an Asian-style soup.

"I had never seen people so happy eating soup before and I wanted to try the recipe," he said.

His daughter, Nancyjean, happened to stop over and stayed for dinner. She loved it, afterwards encouraging him to write a cookbook. He was instantly inspired. John insisted that every recipe in the book have a picture, which caused the price to go up, but he didn't care. He wanted it to be perfect.

John bought a copy and donated it to every local library in the area so people could read it without spending a lot of money.

"This is a great example of how John cares about other people around him and puts other before himself, which is later reflected in his poetry," said Westwood Commons Activities Director Brenna Orlop.

With time to think during COVID-19, John began experimenting with poetry.

"I was sitting and my mind started to wander and next thing I knew, I was writing a poem," he said.

John has written poems for the staff at Westwood Commons and a poem for his great-granddaughter along with a handful of others. He's excited to have a reason to keep writing.

Provided information and photo



John Smith displays the two books he has written.

What makes a person choose to serve those who are old or disabled to a curve or who have problems with their mind? Not just cleaning, cooking and more grind, also bathing, and other personal tasks. Bad tempers, why on me one asks? It takes a great heart, love and devotion. My hat goes off to them with great emotion.

– by John Smith