

By all measures, the winter of 2015 was a record breaker with more than 60 inches of snow falling during 20 separate storms. For 90-year-old Edward Schipritt, who was living alone in the Meriden home he built more than 60 years ago, this winter was just too much. In addition to all the shoveling and daily chores, he faced some health problems and required extra care. Each storm made life just a little more difficult. So when his family suggested he take a short stay at Ashlar Village's Pond Ridge community to rest and regain his health, he agreed.



*Ed and daughter-in-law Roxanne relaxing at his favorite spot overlooking the Ashlar Village pond.*

Ed's visit began on a Friday and by Monday he told his daughter-in-law, Roxanne, he wanted to make the move permanent. He loved every minute at Pond Ridge. He thought the staff was wonderful and loved sitting by the pond. He felt this could be home.

"Although Dad kept saying he wanted to move here full time, we held off to see if he would change his mind," Roxanne said. "By the end of the first week, an ideal apartment became available and he signed a lease. It was fast, but it was the right move at the right time."

Ed viewed the move to Pond Ridge as a great solution for his retirement living – and finding solutions is what Ed does best. As a mechanic at the GM parts plant in Meriden for 50 years, he had to keep complex machinery in working order. He and his brother, Frank (who was plant foreman) worked together to develop an overhead delivery system that brought parts to workers, a solution that is still in use today.

Although Ed grew up in a large family (four sisters and four brothers) and raised what has become a large family (three children, eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren), he does not consider himself a very social guy. Today at Pond Ridge, however, he is

making new friends and appreciates having others nearby. And while he remains active with the Bristol Fish and Game Club and the New Departure Club in Wallingford, he is considering joining the Ashlar Village Men's Group, going on some organized daytrips, and using the woodworking shop.

"Some people may have misconceptions about what assisted living is," Ed said. "But at Masonicare, I feel completely spoiled. Instead of cleaning, doing laundry, or cooking, I am able to relax and enjoy my time with no worries."

Roxanne says her father-in-law looks and feels better than he has in ages. He is receiving exceptional care, enjoys nutritious meals, and is socializing more. This is a relief for Ed's two daughters who live out of state and were worried about his quality of life. Now, days of uncertainty are replaced with a new frustration for his daughters: not being able to reach Ed by phone because he is always out building a new life and having fun. ■