

"Crackerjack" is a familiar expression meaning "excellent." There is also a popular confection called Cracker Jack. Building One resident Howard Arkin is both.

For many years he was known as an excellent sales representative for a large company that represented many popular candy products, including Cracker Jack. His story is a familiar one, growing up in a family of modest means and pulling himself up by his bootstraps to forge a lucrative career in sales and raising a successful family. He is an important member of the North Shore Towers Men's Club.

HOWARD ARKIN - Crackerjack Sales Rep



By FRED CHERNOW



Janette and Howard Arkin

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

I was born in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn in 1934. With my parents and younger sister Carol, we then moved to the East New York section of Brooklyn. Five years later we then moved again, this time to Cypress Hills, where I attended Franklin K. Lane High School. Not having much money at the time, my family resembled the family in Woody Allen's film, "Radio Days." We had aunts and uncles galore coming and going at our small three bedroom house.

WHAT DID YOU DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?

In 1952 I enrolled in Brooklyn College. At that time my interest in sports ran deep—I could tell you who won every World Series from 1903 to 1954, but could not conjugate a verb. I left after two years. At the time my father was a member of Local 3 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and he was able to get me a job in the electricians union. For that time, the money was pretty good, but that wasn't for me either.

During this time we still had a draft. I wasn't too interested in spending three years in the army, but there was a program which allowed me to spend 6 months in active service and five and a half years in the army reserves. I joined up and spent all of my six months of active duty at Fort Dix, New Jersey. I will always remember those six months for two reasons. The first was getting into the best physical condition of my life and the second was learning how to type. Needless to say the physical improvement is long gone and has anyone seen a typewriter lately?

WHAT CAME NEXT?

After my army discharge I went to work for a manufacturer's representative. For over 49 years I was employed by the same company. We represented major brands such as Cracker Jack, Fleer's Double Bubble, Lindt Chocolate and Tootsie Roll. I primarily sold these products to grocery chains, tobacco distributors, and dollar stores. I was elected president of the New York Candy Club. In 1985 I was installed into the Candy Club Hall of Fame, which is in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Vice President with the Trump Organization. Their son, Austin, graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 2018 and their daughter, Camryn, will graduate from there in 2021.

WHERE DID YOU LIVE BEFORE COMING TO NORTH SHORE TOWERS?

When we first married we lived in a co-op in Flushing called Electchester, which is a group of buildings built in 1940 by Local 3 of the electrical union. In 1971 we moved to a private home a few miles east in Hollis Hills. Little did

I know at the time that I would spend the next 45 years in that house. We still see many of the friends we made there and have fond memories of parties at the Hollis Hills Jewish Center and the vacations we took.

I have special memories of Halloween. Because I was in the candy business, it was easy to be generous and for kids, and 70-02 214th Street was the place to be on Halloween. It was one-stop shopping.

WHEN DID YOU MOVE TO NST?

In 2015 it was time for us to put our house up for sale. I opted for Boca Raton, Janette had North Shore Towers in mind. Janette won out and here we are. We had been to the movie theater here many times and we would grab something to eat at what is now Buffy's. It was called Wolfie's or Pumpernick's in those days.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE ACTIVITIES AT NST?

I remember going into Buffy's one morning shortly after moving in. I saw a few men having breakfast and I thought I would join them but was told I had to be a member of the NST Men's Club. Joining has given Janette and me an opportunity to meet lots of great people and eat in restaurants new to us.

Last year I was asked by the president to write a monthly article on Men's Club activities for our community newspapers. I agreed, and now I can say I am getting the hang of it.

We enjoy the many programs and look forward the re-opening of those activities the virus has forced to suspend.

WHERE DID YOU MEET JANETTE?

After getting out of the army I was ready to hit the "dance circuit" and look for Miss Right. Dances were held weekly at New York City hotels, Jewish centers, and churches throughout the metropolitan area. These dances were a challenge for me for two reasons. Being somewhat shy, I found it difficult to speak to girls and more importantly, I didn't know how to dance.

On a cold Saturday night in November of 1959 I arrived at the Forest Hills Jewish Center with three friends and my life was about to change forever. After some small talk I asked Janette Brody for her phone number...and she gave it to me. Less than two years later, on May 29, 1961, we were married at the Avalon Ballroom on Bumside Avenue in the Bronx. After 59 years of marriage there are not enough superlatives to describe Janette. To know her is to love her.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?

We have two wonderful daughters, Korey and Andrea. They are both married: Korey to Sam, a real estate developer and president of Rolling Cash Equity Group. They both graduated from CUNY, Korey with a B.S. in Economics from Queens College and Sam as a C.P.A. from Brooklyn College. They have two children, Chelsey and Michael, who are both at Hofstra.

Our younger daughter, Andrea, is married to Larry. They both graduated from Albany State, she with a psychology degree and he with a degree in marketing. Larry is an Executive