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Darlene & John Crawford - Long time Seldovians *by Charity Winters*



John and Darlene Crawford are the kind of Seldovians that have been here for years and have given their lives to making this community what it is today. Both heavily involved in the community life of Seldovia, it's obvious that they are the kind of people who believe that everyone has to do their part to make things happen in a small town!

A native Alaskan, John was born in McGrath, Alaska in 1936 to Hettie and Leroy Crawford. His family spent a short time in Fairbanks before moving to Seldovia in 1945. Leroy worked as a mechanic and as a fisherman. John began working on his father's fishing boat when he was 13 years old. He later took over the fishing and met and married a local girl. The couple had one son named John Tollak Crawford.

positions as treasurer for both the Seldovia Bible Chapel and the Seldovia Arts Council. Darlene has served on both the Seldovia City Council and the Chamber of Commerce. From 1970-1971 and from 1978-1985 she served as Seldovia's mayor. One of the most well remembered accomplishments of her term was Seldovia's beautification project in the 1980's. With the help of people like Marilyn Standifer, Joe Hayes and Doug Peiren, Seldovia was given a beauty treatment of flowerbeds, trees, picnic tables and more. Darlene commented on how well everything has lasted because people have worked so hard to take care of it all. House numbering and leash laws were a few other things that were done during her office. Today Darlene continues to work as the SNA CFO and is considering retirement next year. She volunteers her time to play the organ at the chapel and to teach Sunday school. In 2004, Darlene began Seldovia Photography and takes portraits and other such pictures for townspeople.

While John was growing up in Seldovia, Darlene was born in Michigan in 1941 to Millie and Chris Sorenson. Her family moved to Seward, Alaska in 1947 where her father worked as a longshoreman on the Seward docks. Darlene graduated from Seward and met a young Seldovian named Norman Kashevarof, who had moved to Seward to complete his senior year in high school. The two were married and moved to Seldovia in 1959. Darlene and Norman had four children together: Kimberly, Crystal, Norman, and Donald. John and Darlene are very proud of their children and their achievements. Kimberly is CFO of Native Corp. in Anchorage, Crystal is CEO of the Seldovia Village Tribe, Norman owns Integrity Drywall in Minnesota, John Tollak has "Crawford's Pressure Washing" in Edmonds and Donald is President and Chairman on the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium that operates the Alaska Native Medical Center.

John had grown up with Norman in Seldovia and was a close friend of the family. When John and Darlene's marriages ended in divorce, they later married in 1972 and have been sharing their lives together for 34 years. As community members, both John and Darlene have such an extensive resume that is difficult to include everything here! We'll touch on some of the highlights.

Darlene has worked in finances for many years working as a treasurer for the city, an accountant for Wakefield Seafoods, Inc. and now as the CFO for Seldovia Native Association. Her experience made her an ideal person for her other current

John has also been heavily involved in Seldovia matters. He has been a council member for both the city and the Seldovia Village Tribe. He has also been involved with SNA since 1974 and is now president of the association. John was on the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly for 12 years and the Alaska Coastal Policy Council for several years. After working for forty years as a salmon seiner and crab fisherman, John has sold his fishing boats and is now retired. Any time he spends on a boat now is spent trying to fix up his new pleasure boat. Darlene says he is often out of town to attend meetings for the many organizations he is part of.

Even though Darlene and John claim to have "passed the gauntlet down" it's obvious that they are still a large part of making things happen both here and on the peninsula. Both enjoy any time that they can spend with their 5 children, 17 grandchildren, and 2 great-grandchildren. Most of all, they desire to give God the credit for everything that they have achieved. "We couldn't have done any of this without the Lord!" explains Darlene. And with that, Darlene and John hope to encourage others to pick up where they have left off – to get involved in this small town and get things done. They know from experience that it only takes a few hard working, dedicated people to make a lot of great things happen.



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