

Take on the Lake

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR GEAUGA LAKE & WILDWATER KINGDOM EMPLOYEES



YOUNG AT HEART — ARCHIE HOWARD

- By Lexi Robinson

It's amazing to think that team member Archie Howard has worked in Food Service for 13 seasons at this property. But what's more amazing is that Archie Howard is 91 years old.

Now, I have a grandmother who clocks 92 years to her name, but Gram's usually accustomed to daily naps on her beloved Lazy Boy while entertaining herself with hours of knitting and watching the FOX News Network.

And though Archie has also been through both World Wars, the Great Depression, the Civil Rights Movement, the first lunar landing, Woodstock and much more, he's not like many of his fellow nonagenarians.

According to Lisa Gillespie, Food Service Area Manager, "Archie is a great role model for all of our team members. And no matter how many years go by, Archie's always so young at heart."

Born in 1914 in Alabama, Archie was the brother of six siblings. Back in Alabama, bedtime was when the streetlights came on and kids made money for themselves. As a child, Archie would find old car tires and re-sell them for a couple bucks. And at a young age he took a job as the local paperboy.

But in 1923, Archie's family made their way to Cleveland where they rented a split-level apartment in the Flats for \$14 a month. This was before the Big Dipper and the famed Terminal Tower were constructed; a time when people took five-cent street trolleys to work while corner paperboys shouted the daily news to passersby.

Archie, who's African American, remembers when segregation was a constant across the nation. He'd visit a local watering hole and order a drink

— only for the bartender to break the glass afterwards preventing a white patron from having to drink from it.

Among some of his more positive memories, Archie smiles when talking about amusement parks. He'd visit Geauga Lake and Euclid Beach as a child during the summer. But his all-time favorite amusement park was Luna Park on the east side of Cleveland.

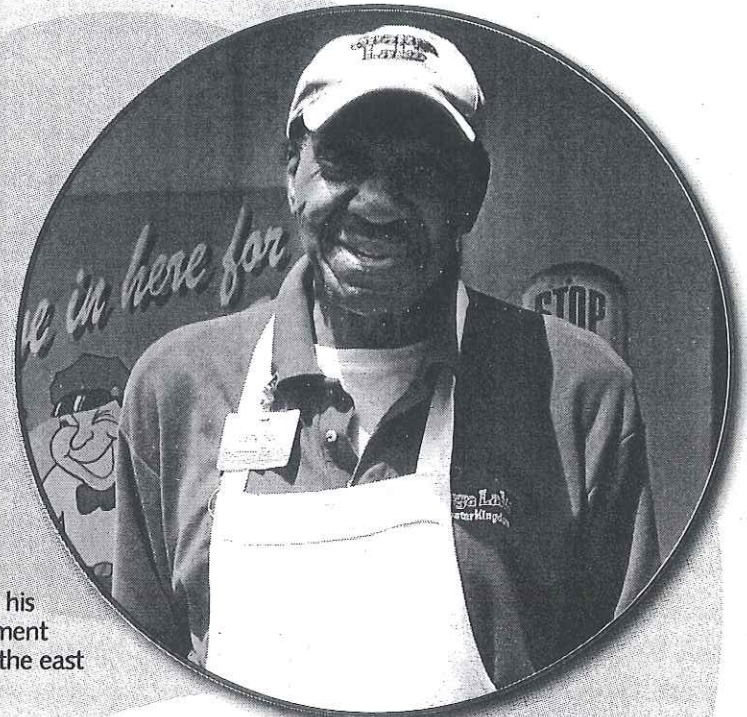
Another great memory is of his wife, Ruby, who passed in 1993.

"She was the most wonderful person I've ever known," Archie smiles. Ruby and Archie had one daughter, one grandson and four great-grandchildren.

Over many years, he has worked many jobs. But Archie started his time at this property when it was Sea World. He worked in a commissary-style restaurant where he ran the slicing machines. Over time, he made many great friendships, most of which he still maintains to this day.

As we sat in the Cornerstone Café during this interview, it became apparent that I was one of few team members who didn't know Archie. As employees entered one-by-one, they'd shout a big hello to the gentleman sitting across from me in his white apron. Archie would give a big smile and wave back.

"All the kids come in here and yell 'Hey Archie!' — that's my favorite part," he beamed.



Archie loves acting as a mentor to these younger team member and teaches them through example three life-long lessons: to stay away from profane language, to be polite and to learn to respect oneself and one's parents.

But it's not these three lessons alone that have helped Archie live such a long and prosperous life. He not only strives for good character but good physical health as well. He's never smoked a cigarette, gets plenty of exercise and indulges in a healthy appetite with little alcohol.

All in all, Archie has no regrets. He's learned that if you make two real friends in life, you're truly blessed. And I think it's safe to say that Archie's got enough blessings (and friends) for all of us.

