

North County neighborhood celebrates 50th anniversary

By Kit Bradshaw
Staff Writer

For Margaret Okerson of Juno, the "good old days" in real estate never ended.

Okerson, who now lives with her daughter Judy Vargoshe in her home in Pleasant Ridge, has been in the same home in this neighborhood since 1956 — the longest living resident in the neighborhood.

As Pleasant Ridge celebrated its 50th birthday on Saturday, with a neighborhood get-together, complete with covered dish foods and photo albums of the homes and their residents, Okerson recalls coming to Pleasant Ridge in early 1956.

"My husband, Don, worked for Jerome Kelly, who built Pleasant Ridge with his brother, Walter, so we were able to buy 2 lots for \$600 each. Together, the lots were 120' by 120' and our home was a three bedroom, one bath home that we built for \$12,500."

Okerson said she and her husband came to the area from West Palm Beach to buy a house in the country.

"We thought it was getting too crowded in West Palm at the time, and now look at how this area has grown up," she said.

On June 20, the plat of Pleasant Ridge was approved by Palm Beach County into 138 lots. But several people, including the Okersons, purchased more than one lot, so only 110 homes were actually built over time.

Kelly was ahead of his

time. He had the admonition not to have "cookie cutter" homes included in the covenants and restrictions and he also provided two lots for boat storage, intracoastal access and a day dock.

Until his death last November at the age of 94, Kelly would travel throughout the subdivision in his late model white Cadillac, with his dog "Bama," and complimented the efforts of the neighbors to keep the property updated and in good shape.

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KIT BRADSHAW The Jupiter Couri

Margaret Okerson, right, stands with her daughter, Judy Vargoshe, during the Pleasant Ridge 50th anniversary celebration. Okerson has lived in her home in this small neighborhood since 1956, and if then-\$12,500 home remains essentially the same as it did when it was first built.