


CONNECTING THE NEIGHBORS OF OAK RUN

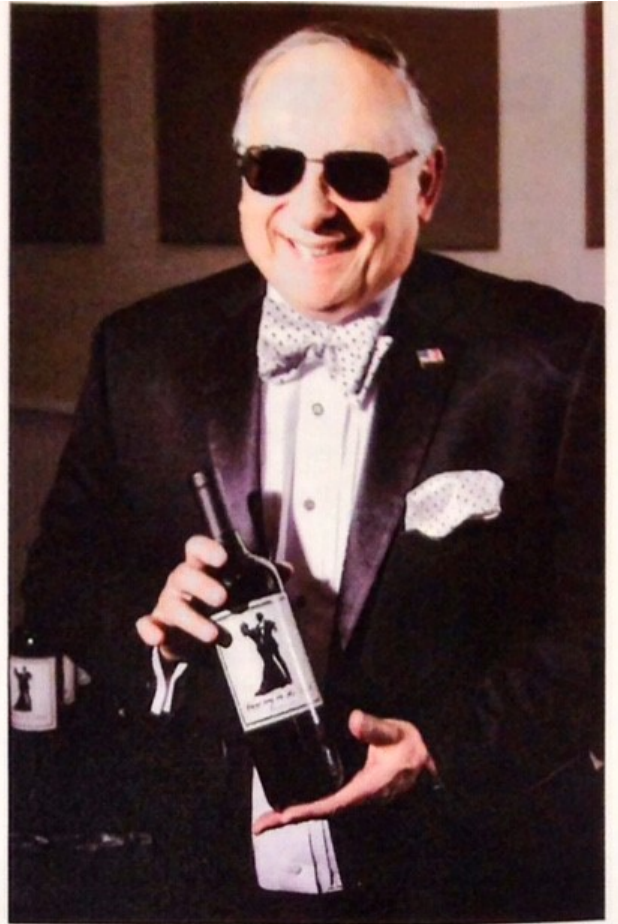
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# Southwest Neighbors

## Meet Ted Warner

Cover photo by  
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# Meet Ted Warner

Blindness doesn't hold him back, even from dancing!

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This wounded Vietnam veteran was not about to let the loss of his sight stop him from living and enjoying life. This is Ted Warner enjoying life in Oak Run and his story.

Ted Warner was born in Washington, DC and grew up in Arlington, Virginia. In 1966, he was drafted into the Army and at the age of 20, was accepted into the Officer Candidate School, becoming a Second Lieutenant and then a Captain. On his second tour of duty to Vietnam in April 1971, he was wounded and shipped to a hospital in Japan for three weeks of rehab and then back to the states. He not only lost his sight, but also had to deal with loss of voice, as he had a paralyzed vocal cord that eventually healed naturally. He is proud to say he did not let his blindness stop him from earning two degrees, a MSW and a BS in

Psychology. He suffered a setback in 2001, when a kidney was removed due to cancer. He attributes the success and treatment to his sister, who looked into the best medical personnel for his treatment.

Ted lived in Orlando for 25 years before deciding to retire. A friend of his sister told him about a house here in Oak Run, so he came to take a look at it and moved in in May, 2012. He loves living in Marion County, describing Ocala as having "a big city mentality with a small city look and a lot to offer." Regarding Oak Run, he is known to say, "Oak Run is a cruise on land," because of the wide variety of clubs, entertainment... something for everyone. He says the residents are wonderful, caring, smart and enjoyable, and he should know because he is surrounded by these very people.



Above: In April, Florida Center for the Blind celebrated the opening of a new training facility located at 1411 NE 22nd Avenue in Ocala.

When guests enter his home, they immediately see that he is a movie buff. His living room walls have beautiful framed posters of well-known stars: Marilyn Monroe, My Fair Lady and others. He has an extensive collection of movies and a large screen TV. The screen is for the enjoyment of friends when they come over to watch a movie with him. Ted says he is used to being asked how he can watch movies! He was a movie buff years before his blindness, and he would watch some of his favorite movies several times. The scenes are etched in his mind, so you might say he watches movies in his own way. He remembers when his dad took him to the movies.

Ted also has another extensive collection and that is a library of CDs. He has a love for all music and this, is obvious to all who visit. He calls his taste in music eclectic. Technology has reintroduced him to reading, which he had gotten away from, and

he is looking forward to audio books.

Ted has a new passion, and according to him, it has become his favorite. He is known around Oak Run as the "blind dancer." His passion for dancing has opened another door for him, ballroom dancing classes, which means he has been able to meet more people. Dancing and the Florida Center for the Blind came together in an exciting way recently. Ted became involved with the Center for the Blind when he became a client several months ago. He was thrilled when they sent an instructor to his home weekly for four months to instruct him on communication technologies that others take for granted. He started as a client, but was soon involved in this very worthwhile organization.

Recently, he was elected as a member of the board, and the beginning of a dream he had been ascertaining to help raise funds became a reality. He formed his

"dream team" and a successful first annual event "Dancing in the Dark" took place in the Oak Run community, raising \$3,705 for the Center for the Blind. He looks forward to being involved in the Center's annual fundraiser, "Dining in the Dark" which is to be held on October 24, 2015. He continues to love the ballroom dancing lessons.

What is Ted most proud of? He is proud that his blindness has never held him back from enjoying his life. He is very proud of his two sons, Jeremy, Noah and granddaughter Kailla. He is proud of the fact that even though returning home blind, he could move on. He knew he had to retool and be reborn as a blind man. He will tell you, "Life is too short. Live it to the fullest, as best you can!" He and Jeanne, his girlfriend, are looking forward to an Oak Run Travel trip to Las Vegas this June.

Last but not least, is his four-legged friend Sparkle Plenty (named from the Dick Tracy comic strip), an Australian Shepherd who is cute, lovable, affectionate, and a great companion! They share a home very comfortably together. ■