



Creating Powerful Family Connections Without Effort

By Pam McDonald

My dad could not tell a joke. Even though he was quick-witted and known as a very funny guy, he never could tell a joke well. However, what he could do was tell a story – and milk it for laugh after laugh.

Dad would regale us for hours, recounting his life's adventures and misadventures.

Like what happened when he was a kid and got his first BB gun (it involved the biggest plate glass window in the neighborhood). Or his shipmate's reaction to the "pet" spider monkey he'd stowed away on their Merchant Marine vessel.

Seniors' Stories Can Disappear Forever

And even though Dad had one of those massive, shoulder-hoisted "home" video cameras in the 1980s, we didn't have any videotape of him. Selfies were unheard of then, so he passed away before we captured him telling those beloved stories on tape. Regretfully his 5 great-grandsons will never experience the delights of his storytelling.

I realized that the other day while talking with Clint Lee, co-founder of [OneDay](#) for Senior Living, a powerful, yet easy-to-use video-making app and Senior Housing Forum partner. He says, "If unrecorded, the memories and stories of our senior loved ones will disappear forever."

So Simple Anyone Can Be a Spielberg

Thankfully, John Boaz and Clint developed the OneDay app and launched their company in November 2016. Their program brings affordable video-making to senior living. Already over 650 senior communities across the nation are subscribers and have captured nearly a thousand resident stories for posterity.

Here, in its most basic use, is how it works:

- A community sets up an account and downloads the OneDay app onto a smartphone. The app is packed with conversation-starting questions, like “How did you meet the man/woman you married?”
- Staff records a resident and then clicks “Create a movie”. OneDay’s app edits the video, adds the community’s and/or company’s logo, and renders a branded, YouTube-formatted and quality video in about a minute.
- These completed “mini-films” are saved for posterity and can be shared widely – on websites, via social media or by email. All residents also have their own webpage, which family members can access through a link.

Clint points out that “over time with 6 or 7 recorded videos, you kind of get a ‘life story’ webpage for each resident. Grandkids and generations yet to come will be able to watch them.”

An Invaluable Legacy

Jane Randolph, VP of Resident Engagement for Civitas Senior Living, is a happy OneDay client. About 20 Civitas communities are making videos on an ongoing basis. Jane says, "I encourage the team to create a video a day. It's an opportunity for them to spend one-to-one time with residents.

“And,” she continues, “we get video that's typically a couple of minutes long. You'd be surprised how often after viewing a video families say, ‘I had no idea about this’ or ‘I didn't know that happened when she was young.’”

The videos become even more treasured when a senior loved one passes on. Clint says, “We’ve had families reach out and say, ‘I loved these videos before, but now they are priceless; they’re our world.’

Clint is convinced of the power of storytelling. He says, “I think if we knew our parents’ and our grandparents’ as people – before they were mom, before they were grandpa . . . if we knew their stories – their successes, their struggles – we’d essentially be better parents, better neighbors, and better members of society.”

He concludes, “Videos help us connect with those who really, truly matter.”



This article has been brought to you by [OneDay](#) in partnership with [Senior Housing Forum](#).

