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Post

Westwood Commons resident renews writing passion

COURTESY OF DEPAUL

In an effort to pass the time and cope during the pandemic, many have rediscovered hobbies or found new creative outlets over the past year. At Westwood Commons, a DePaul senior living community in North Chili, resident John Smith rekindled his love of writing by penning some poetry.

Smith has been writing since his youth. He never favored any specific style, just writes whatever comes to mind in the moment. He's written two books: an autobiography, "The Story of John Smith," and "The Kitchen 46 Cookbook," which is sold on Amazon and at Barnes & Nobles.

Smith said the inspiration for his cookbook came when he was watching a cooking program on TV that featured an Asian-style soup.

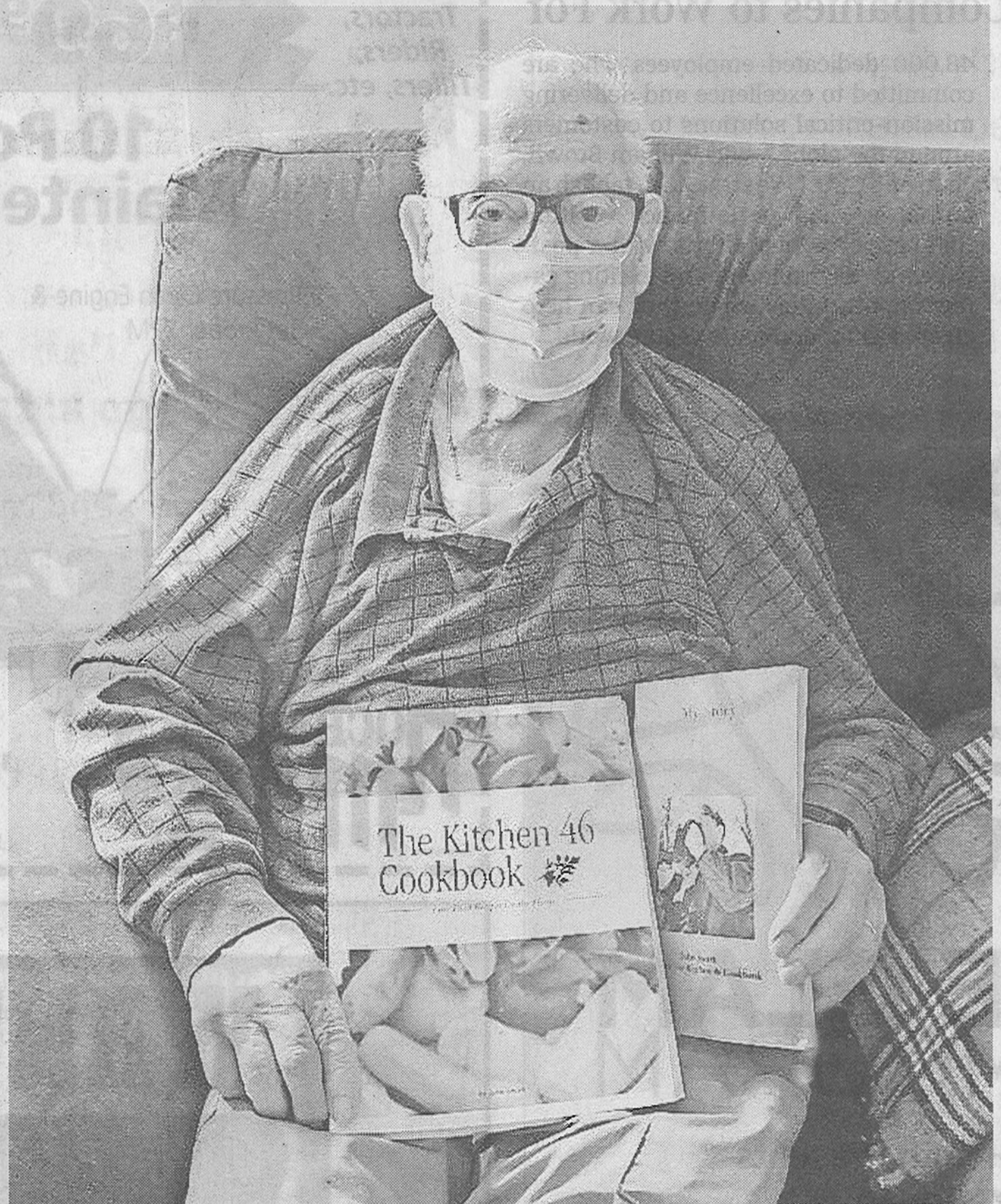
"I had never seen people so happy eating soup before and I wanted to try the recipe," he said.

His daughter, Nancyjean, happened to stop over and stayed for dinner. She loved it, afterward encouraging him to write a cookbook. Smith insisted that every recipe in the book have a picture, which caused the price to go up, but he didn't care. He wanted it to be perfect.

He bought a copy and donated it to every local library in the area, so people could read it without spending a lot of money.

"This is a great example of how John cares about other people around him and puts others before himself, which is later reflected in his poetry," said Brenna Orlop, activities director at Westwood Commons.

With time to think during COVID-19, Smith started experimenting with poetry.



Westwood Commons resident John Smith holds copies of his published works.

AMY CAVALIER

"I was sitting and my mind started to wander and next thing I knew, I was writing a poem," he said.

Smith wrote poems for the staff at

Westwood Commons and his great-granddaughter, along with a handful of others. He said he's excited to have a reason to keep writing.