

Personality Profile: Marion Welborn

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Marion Welborn's life story almost didn't begin.

He was born at his parent's home in Hamptonville on December 23. It was the coldest recorded Dec. 23 on record.

"I wasn't breathing when I was born, and my mother begged the doctor to not let me die," Welborn said. "The doctor told my father to go outside and get a dish full of snow. The doctor put me in it and covered me up, and I screamed. I guess if there hadn't been snow that

night I might not be here today."

These days Welborn is a well-known name in the Yadkin community. He serves as a county commissioner and has made many donations in the community.

Welborn said that he was raised on his father's chicken and dairy cow farm in Yadkinville. He started working when he was just 6 or 7 years old.

"I would get home from school, change clothes and go straight to the chicken house," Welborn said. "I was born working, I guess, and I enjoyed working."



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He was the oldest of six siblings, and when he turned 15 his father sold the family farm and the Welborns moved to Brookshire's Crossroads.

When Welborn finished high school he went to work for Hanes Hosiery Mill. He spent six months in the job before he realized this wasn't how he wanted to devote his entire life. He decided to join the United States Air Force.

Welborn said he was shipped to Alabama for basic training.

Welborn made it home for leave during Christmas after basic training. While he was home he started looking for job possibilities after the military. He took courses in real estate and business law while he was in service and looked into the option of joining a real estate company after his return.

"I went to Hubbard Real Estate, and he wanted to two references. I provided those," Welborn said. "He told me when I got out to come back and I would

that he had a job prospect when he came home, but he wanted options. He returned to Hanes Hosiery to touch base with his former boss.

"The foreman there told me if I came back after the military he would send me to the first fixing school available," Welborn said. "At that time Hanes paid better than Reynolds or anybody did, so I decided I would go back there. The real estate was going to be all commission, and I had no experience."

With a plan following the military he traveled back to base and was transferred to Amarillo, Texas for fighter mechanic school.

Once he received his mechanic training he was sent to Tucson, Ariz. for 18 months to work on planes.

"Then I went to Japan for two years," Welborn said. "While I was there I worked at Mitsubishi aircraft factory. There weren't but about 18 Americans there, and I was a quality control inspector."

After Welborn completed his service he returned to the job

sent to fixing school in 1957 and started making \$148 a week.

"That was good money then," Welborn said with a laugh.

That same year he would meet his wife, Jewel. They were introduced in his parent's kitchen at his sister's birthday party and were married a year later.

"When I married Jewel I didn't realize this, but the biggest decision you'll ever make is who you choose to live with for the rest of your life," Welborn said.

That theory would change for Welborn a few years down the road and three children later.

"I told my children that too," Welborn said. "Well one day my son Mark and I were coming back from Winston after looking for a truck to buy him and we both changed our minds and said that the biggest decision might actually be what kind of vehicle I want to buy."

Welborn said that he and his family lived in Clemmons for nearly 20 years and he started to dabble in land purchasing and eventually building apartment complexes.

work on his first complex called Brewer Apartments in Clemmons.

Over the next 20 years Welborn would pursue his original goal of real estate, building two more apartment complexes in the Clemmons area and would buy and sell land that would become the location of the former Sara Lee plant in Yadkinville.

Following his retirement from Hanes and slowing down with real estate and construction of property, Welborn found himself talked into the idea of running for local office.

"People called me and asked me to run," Welborn said. "I had thought about it but I am not well known in the county. I was born in Hamptonville and I was gone from the county for over 20 years. I had never been to the eastern part of the county that much and I didn't figure I'd have that much of a chance of winning."

Despite his doubts he ran, making it into the elections office just 30 minutes before close for the filing of office. Out of six candidates Welborn was

He went on to win the general election and has been re-elected once more in 2012 to serve as a Yadkin County Commissioner.

"I've enjoyed being a commissioner," Welborn said. "I think it's a good cordial group, and I don't feel that anybody on the board has their own personal agenda. I think we make good decisions."

While Welborn says that he does enjoy his work as commissioner there are things he could live without when it comes to the job.

"I've done more reading since I've been a commissioner than I did all through school," Welborn said with a laugh.

When he's not serving his duties as a public servant, Welborn said that he enjoys spending quality time with his close-knit family. Along with his siblings, who all live close by, Welborn has two sons, a daughter, 11 grandchildren, a great-granddaughter and another on the way.

Welborn said that he also likes traveling the world with his family and friends. His latest travels took him to Cape Town, South Africa.