



THE BRIDGE

BRIDGING GENERATIONS WITH AGELESS FRIENDSHIP

Friends Across the Ages • Nursing Home Volunteer Network

Vol. 17 Spring/Summer - 2017

President's Message



ANDREW
MITCHELL

2017 has been a great year so far. If you watch the news every day, that might come as a surprise. However, if you look in the right places, you can see the overwhelming good that is out in our community. Friends Across the Ages has continued to provide volunteers to form bonds with the most vulnerable in our society. In February, we had a wonderful craft event and in March and April we had our spring festival. All of our events were great successes. I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all who helped in any way, and encourage you to keep in touch with any resident friends that you have throughout any summer travels. Remember to look for the good in others, and to be the good for others to find.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S AFTERNOON OF ART

By Robbie Curry

This is the most fun I've ever had," said Kathy as she painted a picture at an "Afternoon of Art" Friends Across the Ages hosted at Parklands Nursing and Rehab in February. This seemed to be the feeling of a number of the residents as they colored pictures, made flower necklaces, made potholders, and more. It was also a good time for the volunteers—another example of how helping others helps us, too.

I know when I helped Virginia finish her potholder, I was laughing at the results. It wasn't as easy as it looked. (Unless one is an engineer, like Andrew Mitchell, and can make the perfect potholder!) Virginia also enjoyed making a bead bracelet. Even Ms. Cooper seemed to enjoy the picture she colored. Bernice, with some help steadying her hand, also did some pretty flowers with magic markers.

The "Afternoon of Art" was held to honor a resident friend of ours who went by the name "Queen Victoria" who recently passed away. She was an artist, so we decided to set up a number of different art stations for the residents, led by one of our volunteers, Carolina Porras, who is also an artist and had become friends with Queen Victoria.

So thank you, Queen Victoria, for bringing out the artist in all of us. Your love for flower pictures left an imprint on both residents and

volunteers. I'm sure many of us have one of those flowers on our refrigerators, and think of you whenever we look at it.



Afternoon of art at Parklands...

VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARIES

Winter and Spring 2017

10 years

ROBBIE CURRY, Parklands

9 years

KIM & ANDREW MITCHELL, Signature

6 years

CHRISTINE HALL & LENA
MELENDEZ, GHCC

3 years

ROSHA POU DYAL, Park Meadows

2 Years

ERIKA KRAUS-THEIS, Signature
KAREN TECLER, Park Meadows
BETSY THEWES, Parklands

1 Year

CASSIE COOPER, Signature
JAMIE KISTLER, Parklands & Terrace
MAUREEN MOHAN, Signature

Welcome New Volunteers

CLAIRE FISHER.....Signature
LAURA LONDONOPark Meadows
GARRET MANNOTerrace
ANDREA OLLARVES.....Park Meadows
STEPHANIE SANTOS.....Park Meadows
KASSIE SOLMSTerrace

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017

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Friends Across the Ages SPRING FESTIVAL 2017

Every spring for a number of years now, *Friends Across the Ages* has held a "Spring Festival"—a week of festivities at various area nursing homes. This year's events included a Karaoke Party at Park Meadows, Bingo and Trivia at Terrace Health and Rehab, a "Spring Break in Las Vegas" Casino Party at Parklands, Spring Arts N' Crafts at North Florida Rehab, a Luau Bingo Party at Gainesville Health Care Center, and a Spring Hat Decorating event at Signature Health Care.



Our volunteers got into the moves while singing "Y.M.C.A." with the residents of Park Meadows at our Karaoke Party which kicked off the festival.



The competition was intense at our Bingo and Trivia event at Terrace Health and Rehab.



The residents of Parklands enjoyed a variety of games at our "Spring Break in Las Vegas" casino party. Pictured is volunteer Robbie Curry dealing poker as volunteer Betsy Thewes cheers on the players.



A group of volunteers from St. Augustine Church/Catholic Student Center came out to help us with our "Luau Bingo Party" at Gainesville Health Care Center.



A group of homeschool families, led by our longtime volunteers Keri and Jon Shinn, came out once again this year to help the residents of North Florida Rehab decorate potted plants for their rooms.



"I could write a sonnet... about your Easter bonnet..." --The residents and volunteers of Signature Health Care decorated hats for spring. This was a new event, and was such a hit, we are sure to try it again sometime.

We ended the week with our annual Volunteer Appreciation Party in the beautiful courtyard at Barr Systems. As always, we gave appreciation gifts to all volunteers, and a few special awards. This year's special awards included the following:

"Spirit Award"—CASSIE COOPER: Every year we give this award to someone who seems to embody the spirit of our organization, and Cassie certainly does! She has been a consistent and committed volunteer at Signature Health Care for over a year, and brings much joy to the residents she visits.

"Stick-To-It Award"—CAROLINA PORRAS: This is Steve's favorite award because he likes to give a roll of duct tape to the recipient, as a sign that they have really stuck to volunteering through many challenges. Carolina has indeed persisted, despite losing the resident to whom she had become close, "Queen" Victoria, shortly after she began volunteering. We are grateful that she has continued to share her friendship and her art, and is even starting to teach some of the residents to crochet.

"Dedication Award"—ROSHA POUDYAL: Rosha has been a deeply dedicated volunteer for three years now. She has served on our board for two years, and for the past year has served as board VP, and also as



our volunteer coordinator at Park Meadows. We have really come to rely on faithful service in so many roles in this organization.

"Ten Year Award"—ROBBIE CURRY: Robbie has been a loyal volunteer at Parklands Nursing and Rehab for a decade, and has also recently joined our board of directors. Her sweet and caring presence at the nursing home is a gift to both residents and volunteers. We are grateful she continues to volunteer so faithfully.

Thank you to all who participated in this year's Spring Festival festivities. We look forward to next year!



As we do every year, we wrapped up the festival with our annual Spring Volunteer Appreciation Party in the lovely courtyard at Barr Systems.

FRIENDSHIP SPOTLIGHT: MR. EDDIE AND "BO-BO" - *Friends Across the Ages*, Leaf Edition By Kim Mitchell



Every Monday evening two unlikely friends meet at the patio at Signature healthcare with a common goal: picking up the dead leaves. Admittedly, the smaller of the two enjoys throwing, stomping and occasionally eating them while the other concentrates on organizing them on the table. Will Mitchell, age 17 months, has become a regular visitor and enjoys helping Mr. Eddie with his perpetual leaf project. Being a bit closer to the ground, he grabs handfuls of leaves and delivers

them to Mr. Eddie, who organizes them on the table by some unknown system. Occasionally a rogue pine cone or stick makes its way into that day's display. He never has too much to say, which is just fine with Will, or Bo-Bo as Mr. Eddie likes to call him. Picking up leaves is serious work, but having found a friend to do it with seems to delight both of them. It's an unlikely friendship as is their common goal, but it works despite the years that span between them.