



THE BRIDGE

BRIDGING GENERATIONS WITH AGELESS FRIENDSHIP

Friends Across the Ages • Nursing Home Volunteer Network

Vol. 20 Spring/Summer, 2019

SPRING FESTIVAL 2019 — CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF *Friends*



Board of Directors

Every year, *Friends Across the Ages* holds a “Spring Festival”—a week of festivities at various area nursing homes. This year was particularly special as we celebrated our 20th anniversary as an organization! See inside for photos of the various spring festival events, as well as a few more “throw back” pictures from over the past 20 years.

We ended the week with our annual Volunteer Appreciation Party. We gave out special 20th anniversary t-shirts, appreciation gifts to all volunteers, and a few special awards:

- ✧ “Stick-To-It Award”—Monika Caffier and Dominika Burbul—for sticking with volunteering through challenges
- ✧ “Friends Across the Nations Award”—Zuzana Majcikova—who hails from the Czech Republic, and has been a wonderful volunteer
- ✧ “Dedication Award”—Samantha Stilley—for dedicated service up through her graduation from UF
- ✧ “Resident Artist Award”—Betsy Thewes—in appreciation for her beautiful design for our anniversary t-shirt, and her dedicated service as a volunteer
- ✧ “Rookie-of-the-Year Award”—Julie Nguyen—for excellent service as a brand new volunteer
- ✧ “Spirit Award”—Janet Wise—for embodying the spirit of *Friends Across the Ages*

Thank you so much to all who participated in our festival, and to all our wonderful volunteers and supporters who have helped us reach this 20 year milestone!

VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARIES

Winter and Spring 2019

12 years

ROBBIE CURRY, Parklands

11 years

KIM & ANDREW MITCHELL, Signature

4 years

BETSY THEWES, Parklands

3 Years

CASSIE COOPER, Signature

1 Year

MONIKA CAFFIER, Terrace
DOMINIKA BURBUL, Terrace

Welcome New Volunteers

SHAYNICE BROWNPark Meadows
RAMANIYA DE JONGEParklands
LESLIE RADFORDParklands
CAMILA SANCHEZParklands
VERNIKA WILLIAMSPark Meadows
KRISTYN WONGSignature

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019

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President's Message

ANDREW MITCHELL



Spring is in the air and 2019 is off to a great start! We just finished a great spring festival with events at many nursing homes around the city. I personally had a great time at the Family Feud event and also dealing blackjack. It is very gratifying to be able to provide these events for the residents that we visit, and this is all made possible by our volunteers and our donors.

This year, we participated in The Amazing Give for the first time. We had a goal of raising \$2,000.00 and we exceeded that by 40%. It is a great feeling to have the support of so many people in our community. Thank you to everyone who gives time and funding to our organization. Have a great, safe summer.

Friends Across the Ages SPRING FESTIVAL 2019



Karaoke Party at Park Meadows. Here are some volunteers singing "Dancing Queen."



Bingo and Trivia Party at Terrace Health and Rehab--over 30 residents participated.



Family Feud at Signature Health Care hosted by Steve (Blay) Harvey!



Casino Party at Parklands--Andrew Mitchell dealing winning blackjack hands.



Luau Bingo at North Florida Rehab--Kim and Will Mitchell teaming up with one of the residents.



Resident Memorial: PHYLLIS MCGUINNESS AND PATRICIA LEE

by Laura Londono

"Be good girls, now" is how Ms. PHYLLIS would always close our weekly meetings with a twinkle of mischief in her eyes and a smile. Ms. Phyllis was a spunky character, always telling us funny stories about her life or the latest gossip going on between the residents. She had many friends in the nursing home and despite her age she was very involved in the resident committees, helping to shape the activities and make changes within Park Meadows. One of the things I admired most about Ms. Phyllis was her positive spirit and never faltering sense of humor. She lived in Park Meadows for over 15 years but was one of the happiest residents in the whole establishment. Instead of focusing on her limitations (being wheelchair bound), Ms. Phyllis would enthusiastically throw herself into various projects and hobbies. These phases would last anywhere from a week to a month and ranged from Sudoku puzzles and word searches to coloring books. Every week she would be so excited to show us her new accomplishment or ask for our help on a particularly difficult puzzle. Ms. Phyllis touched our lives and taught us many valuable lessons, most importantly to be grateful for what you have and to always keep your sense of humor alive.



Ms. PATRICIA LEE was a light in Park Meadows, she was an incredibly sweet woman with whom I had the honor of becoming very close. She loved her family and would talk about her kids and grandkids at length, showing me pictures and cards they had sent her. I felt as if I knew them personally. I would also show her pictures of my family and keep her up to date on any happenings and events. My parents would send their regards every time I visited her. We became a part of each others' families. Ms. Patricia had a large box with old photographs that she had never had a chance to sort through and organize. This was a special project that we embarked on together during my visits. We would sort through the photographs and I would record the estimated date and location of each one she remembered to make an organized album. I learned so much about her life while helping her do this and was in awe of the incredible experiences and wisdom she passed on to me through this relatively simple task. Ms. Patricia was a go-getter, motivated and determined to always do her best at whatever job she had no matter how insignificant it may have seemed. This is something I will take with me forever.



Friends Across the Ages 20 YEARS RETROSPECTIVE



Our longest running volunteer: Florence Van Arnam--pictured here in 2007, has been volunteering in nursing homes for 44 years!



Our longest running resident: Ms. Cooper--has been there at least since we started 20 years ago, if not before!



Long time volunteer, Agnes Bierbaum, in 2001 visiting Thomas Jones.



John's Joke Corner

Thanks to the suggestion of John Hobbs, the volunteers at Parklands have been telling jokes with the residents about once a month. It has been a real hit, as residents and even the staff have gotten into it. We keep the jokes clean; websites with children's jokes have been helpful. Here's a joke John selected to share:

*A man was telling his neighbor, "I just bought a new hearing aid. It cost me four thousand dollars, but it's state of the art. It's perfect."
"Really," answered the neighbor. "What kind is it?"
'Twelve thirty'*

Amazing Give 2019

This year for the first time, *Friends Across the Ages* participated in The Amazing Give. This was a 24-hour fundraiser hosted by the Community Foundation of North Central Florida as a way to help nonprofits connect with donors to raise funds for their critical missions. We set a fundraising goal of \$2000, and were amazed and touched by the response we received--with a final donation tally of \$2801! Thank you to all who donated and helped spread the word! It really was an amazing experience, and the funds raised will make a big difference for *Friends*.