



# THE BRIDGE

BRIDGING GENERATIONS WITH AGELESS FRIENDSHIP  
*Friends Across the Ages • Nursing Home Outreach in Gainesville, Florida*

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JON SHINN

## President's Message

*We live in difficult times, and not only because of the current economic situation. Our culture is so busy and so "me-centered" that it becomes easy to lose our grounding by paying too much attention to ourselves. Selfless action is not just about being a "better" person; it's about being a happier person because it cultivates the sense of gratitude and reverence for life that leads to happiness.*

*When I joined Friends Across the Ages, it was an attempt to step out into a world that was bigger than my self-centered concerns. Seven years later, and through various roles as volunteer, mentor, board member and now president, Friends continues to play this role in my life. In the new position of leadership to which I've been entrusted, I look forward not only to helping our organization serve more residents, but to helping more people discover the way in which selfless action restores balance and joy to our hectic lives.*

*However you are currently connected to the Friends mission, I encourage you to think about how you might make that connection a little stronger. Are you a long-time volunteer who might be able to help with mentoring or coordinating other new volunteers? Or someone who has thought about volunteering but never made the leap to commit yourself? Finding time to be a friend to someone in need may provide the opportunity to reach beyond yourself.*

## FRIENDS ACROSS THE AGES PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

By Jean Lansford

As part of President Obama's pre-inauguration activities, he asked Americans to volunteer on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, by performing acts of service across the country. Board member Donna Mitchell brought this to our attention, and as a result, our Friends' group that visits Signature Healthcare every Monday signed up on the national website to host an event. It encouraged the community to join in visits with our residents and we are happy to report that nine people answered the call for action and signed up to join us.

The combined group of newcomers and our own regular volunteers began with everyone sharing their thoughts on the significance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday and the Day of Service. Steve Blay followed by speaking about the background and

goals of the Friends organization. The group divided up and our guests shadowed one of our regular volunteers to meet with individual residents.

All our guests worked well with our volunteers and did a great job of interfacing with the residents. Several expressed an interest in returning and we are in the process of following up with them. One couple brought several dozen doughnuts to share with residents, some frosted in white with red and blue stripes, and these were very popular with residents. We learned that this couple owns the Dunkin Donut franchises in Gainesville and we appreciate this extra show of support for the event.

Our regular Friends volunteers in attendance were Katie Appold, Steve Blay, Kim and Andrew Mitchell, Huy Pham and Jean Lansford.



Residents Elizabeth Fowler and Betty Edenfield and Friends' volunteer Verda Naylor (with flag) celebrate the inauguration Palm Gardens.

Rhunette, a resident at Parklands, holds a calendar donated by Barnes and Noble to each resident.

# Resident Spotlight...Roy Burnett

BY BEN STEWART AND ROSS SIMON, ROY'S Friends



ROY BURNETT was born December 18, 1920 in Cleveland, Ohio. At the young age of three, Roy demonstrated a love for writing and began piecing together his first words on paper. Roy's talent developed so much at such a young age that he was able to publish his first article in his school newspaper by age five. Although Roy's passion for writing continued throughout his childhood, his dream of being a writer was put on hold as he volunteered for the Army three days after the bombing at Pearl Harbor.

Weeks after enlisting, with very little training, Roy found himself amidst the dangerous war zone of the South Pacific in the famous battle at Guadalcanal. After 34 straight months of combat in the Solomon Islands, Roy decided to stay in the military and moved to a base in Jamaica. While there, Roy met the love of his life, Barbara. They married shortly thereafter in a small Jamaican Church. Roy took on the daunting job of managing many military hospitals in Puerto Rico and Jamaica. After staying in Jamaica for a few years, Roy decided to move back to

America and start a family near his home town of Akron, Ohio.

Once he was back in the U.S., Roy began to pursue his writing career again and published many articles in nationally-recognized magazines. To help support his family, Roy used his knowledge of mechanics to start various repair businesses. Shortly after, Roy and Barbara expanded their family with a son, Cris, and a daughter Barbara. They were also soon joined by adopted twins Brenda and Glenis.

Roy and Barbara lived happily for 18 years until she tragically died of cancer and Roy was left to raise their children. After raising his children, Roy managed to travel all over the United States. He utilized the traits he had learned in the war to supply him with the funds and the knowledge to do so.

Today, Roy finds himself in Gainesville where he enjoys to read and cheer on the Gators. Roy also enjoys telling stories of his interesting past to his new friends Ben and Ross. Every Monday, at Signature Healthcare, they wish they could one day live a life as adventurous as his.

## 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!!!

After training over 200 one-on-one volunteers and providing the means for countless friendships, *Friends Across the Ages* is ready to celebrate its 10th Anniversary. To help commemorate this meaningful date, we will be hosting a celebration on Saturday, April 4th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. in the courtyard at Barr Systems.

To thank all our wonderful and dedicated volunteers who have made this momentous date possible, we are in the process of designing a 10th anniversary shirt which will be given to all volunteers in attendance.

We welcome you to bring your friends and family for an afternoon of food, fun and celebration!

### The Bridge

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### Welcome New Volunteers

☞ KARAN GOESER at *Palm Garden*  
☞ KATE KENNEDY at *Park Meadows*  
☞ SUSAN OH at *Parklands*

### Memorial Donations

IN MEMORY OF ELLEN AND PATRICK HEALY, by *Marion Healy Freund*  
IN MEMORY OF WINIFRED BLAY, by *Dennis and Joan Blay*  
IN MEMORY OF HER FATHER JOHN UTESH, by *Dianne Walsh*