



THE BRIDGE

Bridging Generations with Ageless Friendship

Faith in Action Friends Across the Ages is a Nursing Home Outreach in Gainesville, Florida

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Directors' Message

Branching out to Gainesville Health Care Center

STEVE and ALLISON BLAY
Friends Across the Ages, Inc.



To our volunteers and supporters,

We are very pleased to announce that as of May, we have branched out once again to include another nursing home among those served by *Friends Across the Ages*. Gainesville Health Care Center, located near Shands and the UF campus, has over 150 residents. Sandy Johnson, the activity director, has been extremely enthusiastic and helpful as she has welcomed *Friends Across the Ages* volunteers. She says she thinks that *Friends* is an important organization, and she is thrilled to have us on board.

We began our volunteering venture at GHCC on Mother's Day when nine volunteers went there to distribute carnations as part of our National Nursing Home Week activities. We are now working to get our one-to-one visitation program established at GHCC and so far have met many wonderful residents. A small group of one-to-one volunteers will continue to visit there every Sunday.

The addition of GHCC brings the total number of nursing homes served by *Friends Across the Ages* to six!



James Chandler and Stephanie Smith enjoy a round of Bingo with the help of volunteer Suzy Diner (middle) at the Friends Across the Ages 2nd annual "Bingo-a-thon."

Friendship, Fun, and Future

2nd Annual Bingo-a-thon a success in many ways

On Saturday April 2nd, excited cries of "Bingo!!!" echoed across nursing homes in Gainesville. That's because *Friends Across the Ages* held its second annual "Bingo-a-thon" that day. Over 70 volunteers and over 100 nursing home residents participated at 5 different nursing homes, and over \$4300 was raised for *Friends*.

The concept of the "Bingo-a-thon" was developed last year. The event has three goals: to provide an opportunity for nursing home residents and volunteers to interact and have fun together, to raise awareness in the community about *Friends Across the Ages* and its mission, and to be an annual fundraiser for *Friends* so that it can continue its mission for many years to come. Thanks to many volunteers, donors, and supporters, this year's Bingo-a-thon was even more successful than last year.

Although the idea of a "Bingo-a-thon" might be new to many people, the concept is quite simple, and it works much like a walk-a-thon or dance-a-thon. Bingo games were held at each of the five different nursing homes that *Friends* served. 10-15 volunteers were recruited for each nursing home to help the residents play Bingo for fun and prizes. The fundraising aspect of the event involved donors pledging a particular volunteer a certain amount per Bingo game, or pledging a certain amount for every volunteer that participated.

Prizes for the residents were donated by various supporters of *Friends* and included lotions, powders, jewelry, knick-knacks, clothing, hand-made pillows and afghans. Each winning resident also received a small "winner" medal, and many residents liked these so much they have decided to keep wearing them every day!

After the Bingo games were over, the volunteers came together for a wrap-up party in the beautiful courtyard at Barr Systems. Salads, sandwiches, and cookies donated by Crispers were served, as well as ice cream donated by DeConna and other delicious dishes prepared by board members. Prizes (gift certificates donated by local businesses) were awarded to all volunteers, in appreciation for their participation.

We would like once again to express our deep gratitude to all volunteers and donors who made the event such a success!



The youngest "Bingo-a-thon" volunteers: from left to right, Ena Schentrup, Max Schentrup, (held by his mom Anne Schentrup), and Ashley Sarkees.

New volunteers and Board members

We are pleased to welcome the following new volunteers so far this summer:

Teresa Abercrombie--Gainesville Health Care
Celeste Meyer--University Place
Anees Moopen--Park Meadows
Nettie Van Wjyen--The Manor at Gainesville

We are also pleased to welcome two new members to our board of directors:

Gretchen Grigsby and Dianne Walsb,
 Both are *Friends* volunteers at Palm Garden and both are also retired teachers.

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Resident Spotlight: Warren Bowshot

by Eric Dorman,

Mr. Bowshot's
 Friend Across the Ages

(pictured are Mr. Bowshot and Eric with Mr. Bowshot's model of the *Mayflower*)

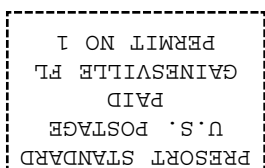
Before I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Bowshot, I was shown to his room; it was truly a spectacle. Most nursing home rooms I had seen in the past consisted of a bed, a television, and perhaps a few personal trinkets scattered around. His was much more complex. Besides those usual items there were shelves put into the walls and a full dresser filled to the brim with all sorts of paperwork overflowing out of each drawer. Underneath the shelves was a makeshift desk on which were set numerous little containers, each with its own set of tools within, and in the center was a half completed model of the Titanic.

On the first shelf, lined up in perfect rainbow order, were little paint cans. On the second were glues, pencils, brushes, and a stack of old instruction booklets. Finally, on the third shelf I saw a beautiful replica of the Wright brothers' first flight, complete with details and historically accurate specifications. I recall wondering where he purchased such an exquisite piece, only to find out later that it was of his own construction, and what significance it had to make it here with him. As I stood there in

awe I heard the gruff voice that I would recognize so well in so little time asking what I was doing at his desk.

The last four months have been a wonderful experience for me as I take an hour every week out of my busy student life to come sit with one of the most interesting men I have ever met. Mr. Bowshot has done more in his life than most could imagine. He spent a few years in the military during the Second World War, flying in planes over Europe. He pursued his incredible musical talent by touring the country and even playing in Dean Cooper's band for some time. After that, Mr. Bowshot entered into the field of engineering and built steel mills, among several other things.

Above all, his stories of wanderlust and the value of hands-on experience have really made an impact on my life. I can relate to his desire to travel and his views that only so much work can be done from behind a desk. Every day I go in I see some new model sitting on his desk and I know that this simple hobby is representative of the life of Mr. Bowshot and I feel privileged to be even a small part of it.



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