



THE BRIDGE

BRIDGING GENERATIONS WITH AGELESS FRIENDSHIP

Friends Across the Ages • Nursing Home Volunteer Network

Vol. 15 Fall - 2015 Winter - 2016

HOLIDAY MEMORIES ... FAVORITE GIFTS

During the holiday season, we like to hear about the holiday memories of our friends at the nursing homes. This year, we decided to ask a number of residents this question:

“What is your favorite gift you ever received for the holidays when you were a child?”

Some of the replies were sweet, some funny, some very touching. Not all of them limited their replies to gifts they received when they were children. Here's what they said:

“A doll named Jeanette (after my mom) and a carriage for it, in which I used to wheel around my little sister Frances.”
... Phyllis, age 90

“We were very poor, and so we didn't get much, but being with my family was gift enough.” ... Norma

“A doll that I liked to call Shirley, like Shirley Temple.”
... Irma, age 87

“I would get a doll and I'd get toys.” ... Eula, age 99

“My favorite gift was pearl earrings because I bought them for myself!” ... Mary B.

“My favorite gift was my son, Howard Glenn, born December 13.”... Gloria C.

“My favorite was a bike.” ... A.C.



Ginni's favorite gift was an organ—and she still likes to play organ and piano whenever she gets the chance.



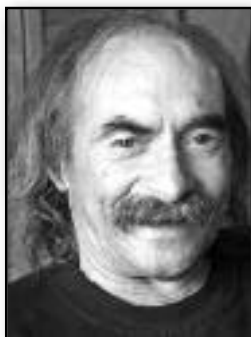
Donnie, our resident rocker, said his favorite gift was a guitar.



Doris' favorite gifts were candy and clothes. She still has a sweet tooth, and also is a very sweet lady!



"I liked my dollhouse with dolls best." ... Bernice



"When I was in my upper teens, my grandma bought me a Honda 160 Motorcycle with an electric starter. Brand spankin' new, right off the showroom floor!" ... Art



"A football." ... Mitch, resident Gator fan

The birth of Kim and Andrew's baby, Will. I have two other baby grands, but this is the one...the one!" ... Elsie (See accompanying story below about baby Will.)

These days, most of the residents seem to agree the gift they like best is just people coming out and visiting them, and showing them they care. We hope to do a lot of that this holiday season!



WELCOME WILL!

Our newest little "Friend Across the Ages" has arrived! Kim and Andrew Mitchell, who are such an important part of our *Friends Across the Ages* family, welcomed their newest little family member, baby Will, in November. In October, we held a "Welcome Baby" party for them at Signature Health Care, where they have volunteered for many years. They also have coordinated our group of Signature volunteers for the past several years. We wanted to give the residents at Signature a chance to celebrate with them, and also the chance to attend a baby shower type party-something they probably don't get to do very often! A wonderful time was had by all, and now that the little man has finally arrived, we are all so thrilled for Kim and Andrew. Welcome, Will!



Kim and Andrew opening gifts at their "Welcome Baby" party at Signature Health Care in October.



Our newest little "Friend Across the Ages," baby Will Mitchell.

President's Message



ANDREW
MITCHELL

Recently, my wife and I welcomed our first child to the world. In the past few weeks I have learned more than I ever thought possible from my 7lb little guy. This experience has opened my eyes to an aspect of volunteering with seniors that I had yet to realize. The joy that we feel from giving to others is the best type of joy that we can experience. In our society, we have so much to give, that it is often difficult to find someone who wants to receive our gifts. For many of the friends that we make while volunteering, it is nearly impossible to find something to give and harder to find someone to receive. In this holiday season, we should try to be the receiver for our friends. Whether they want to give a small token or simply tell a story or give advice, we need to find a way to be great receivers of their gifts. Thank you all for your contributions to Friends Across the Ages.

CONGRATULATIONS, KAREN TECLER!

One of our student volunteers, Karen Tecler, was recently was inducted into the National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS). She decided to apply for a scholarship they offer called The Engaging Race Scholarship where members propose their own service initiatives. Five winners were chosen and given \$1,000 scholarship and another \$1,000 to fund their service initiative.

Karen thought this would be a great opportunity to focus attention on nursing home residents. Her proposal challenged all 345 chapters of NSCS to establish a program for regular visits to local nursing homes, similar to the program run by *Friends Across the Ages*. She went into great detail in her proposal as to how this might be accomplished, and how it would benefit all involved—volunteers and residents alike. She saw this as a way to raise awareness and promote consistent involvement of the members of NSCS in active service, and also to address the fact that perhaps 60% of nursing home residents will never be visited.

We are happy to announce that Karen won the scholarship! We are grateful to her for her interest in spreading the mission of *Friends Across the Ages* in this way, and wish her well as she strives to implement her proposal. We will certainly support her in that in any way we can. Congratulations, Karen!

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Welcome New Volunteers

Summer and Fall 2015

KATHERINE BUDGEPARK MEADOWS
KARA HALFAKERPARK MEADOWS
KELSEY JORDANPARKLANDS
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JAMIE LAVIGNESIGNATURE
RACHEL LEVINEPARK MEADOWS
DEVON LEAHY.....PARK MEADOWS
MARILENE MORETON.....PARKLANDS
CHELSEA VERHOEVEN.....SIGNATURE

VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARIES

Summer and Fall 2015

9 YEARS

DONNA, KYLE, & CHASE MOORE—NRFC

4 YEARS

MORGAN WITTER—*Park Meadows*

2 YEARS

ARTHUR DONNER—*Signature*

ALEC NELLER—*Signature*

LEAH SPELLMAN—*Signature*

PRAVEEN VARANASI—*Signature*

1 YEAR

LAUREN GRIMSLEY—*Signature*

JOHN HOBBS—*Parklands*

ROSHA POUDYAL—*Park Meadows*

PAUL VOLPE—*Parklands*

Resident Spotlight ... Rhunette Clark

BY JOHN HOBBS

When I visit Rhunette at the nursing home she is usually in bed with the cover pulled up over her head. I always say: "Rhunette, are you in there?" She then looks out and says "Hi, it's nice to see you!" I asked her once what was her favorite thing to do at the home and she said staying in bed. The thing she disliked most in life was arguing and fighting. While she is a somewhat private person, she is well liked by her roommates. She brings about a sense of responsibility, fairness, and sincerity. When I'm leaving her room I tell her "I will see you next week." She says "I'll be looking for you," which means I'll take your word for it.

Rhunette's character comes from her tough upbringing as a farm girl in rural Macon, Georgia where she was born. She was the oldest child with four brothers and one sister. She was ten years old when her next sibling was born! So Rhunette then became the third parent. When mom and dad were not around, Rhunette was running the household—a lot of responsibility at a young age. I asked her if she enjoyed fishing as a child; she did not. She had the responsibility of babysitting while her parents fished. Also, she did not know how to swim.

Although times were hard and she had a lot to do, she did manage to get an elementary school education. The book in school that she remembers the most and wishes she still had was called "Baby Ray." I looked the



book up on the internet but could not find one for sale. I did find out that it was published in 1927. The activity she enjoyed most on the playground was hop-scotch. The children would play to a tune: "Sally goes round the sunshine, Sally goes round the moon, Sally goes round the sunshine, every afternoon."

In almost all her childhood activities was her pet horse, Peo. Peo always seems to come up in our conversations. The horse would follow them to church and be waiting

at the church when they came out. Rhunette loved Christmas even though most of her gifts were food items like potatoes. Her family was very poor. She said her best Christmas was when she was 11 and she got a "show doll." Her favorite food was collard greens and pork chops with coconut cake for dessert.

Rhunette, who was born in 1921, lived in Macon until 1960 when she moved to Gainesville, Florida with her son and daughter. Her husband was deceased. Her son has passed away while her daughter and her only living sibling (Clarence) both live in Los Angeles. Rhunette worked 29 years for a Gainesville family as a housekeeper and babysitter for their children.

She has strong religious beliefs, is of the Baptist faith, and loves Jesus. She is now 93 years young, and has a better memory than myself. She enjoys talking and I enjoy listening to her. I know that she appreciates me being there. She has a great sense of herself and the world around her. A very wonderful lady.

We would like to thank and recognize these special "Friends of *Friends*."
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