

Friends News

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Celebrating our Super Friends Place Staff

Reflecting back on the blessings as 2015 comes to a close, it is easy to appreciate what each member of our staff “brings to the table.” Collectively, they compose one of the most important aspects of providing and maintaining the high standards of member care and stellar programming that we enjoy here at Friends Place. Please indulge a quick bragging session about this wonderful group of people who often take the back seat to others and don’t get nearly enough recognition. We certainly appreciate each and every one!

Take a moment to consider the many roles that our staff members fill, not only each day, but throughout the year. It takes a unique person. This job requires special skills, but more importantly, the necessary character traits. Our staff members are caring, compassionate, energetic and enthusiastic, encouraging, adaptable, genuine, and possess the ability to meet constantly changing needs for many different people.

Our dedicated staff is continually willing to go the extra mile in making each day, special event, or even just a moment in time, meaningful for our members. They participate in regularly scheduled, leading-edge training, implement proven best practices, and ascribe wholly to the wellness philosophy of care that is implemented here at Friends Place.

“We have the most amazing, dedicated, creative staff,” according to Founder & Executive Director, Pam Johnson. “They have the most caring hearts. I think this staff is exceptional. It is too hard to be brief about them...I mean look at our staff! WOW!”

A few more “Quotables,” about our staff members, garnered this Thanksgiving season:

- “The staff here is so friendly. They are focused on the involvement of the members and work to make everyone comfortable. It is immediately evident.”
- “At first, I didn’t want to come here. My daughter asked me to try it and if I didn’t like it, I could sit home with the TV. Well I LOVED it, from day one! All the people that work here just made it so comfortable, like I was right where I needed to be. There isn’t one staff person who sticks out to me; it is just kind of everybody.”
- “This staff is outstanding. Everyone is very helpful and knowledgeable. They know what we need and provide it.”
- “I come here because I love you. I love ALL of you who work here. You make my day.”

I do believe that last heartfelt comment might be the most telling one of all. As you can see, our staff considers this more than “just a job,” and operates from the “right place.” They truly respect each person, just as they are. We thank them for an amazing job-well-done!

A Season of Joy and Giving

Pam Johnson

Most of us would agree that the best gifts are the ones we give as a caring expression of our love or concern for another. Throughout the year, Alzheimer's caregivers give many "gifts" to those they love on a daily basis. But, caregivers are often much better at giving than receiving.

As a caregiver of someone with dementia, we have the opportunity every day to give them the gift of memory because we, as family or friends, are the keepers of those great stories and adventures. With a few key words or cues, we can help them unlock the window into their long-term memories and recall, once again, some of their most enjoyable experiences and escapades.

Despite the many challenges of caregiving, one still encounters special moments of joy. A family caregiver suggested that each of us might replace feelings of sadness, grief or frustration with feelings of gratitude. It would mean that we recognize each minute of our time or caregiving task as a reflection of our love – our gift to them. And, in giving in this manner we receive feelings of accomplishment, satisfaction and pleasure in return.

With a belief that it is better to give than receive, caregivers can also provide the gift of joy to others that want to help. When we graciously accept their offers of time, talents and gestures of concern, we give them feelings of fulfillment and gratification in exchange.

All caregivers need support at some time during this journey. Before family members and friends stop asking, consider these tips that make it easy for everyone. Use posted notes on a bulletin board or refrigerator to indicate specific tasks that would be helpful. Also, consider asking if you can call on them at a future date, as other needs might arise. Practice saying "thank you" instead of "no". Just think about how good it feels to help support a charitable organization or do a random act of kindness, and let good works begin at home.

Let this be a season of love and joy for all. Wishing you and yours, many **Blessings** and **Joyful Gifts**.

Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Groups

Meetings are open to everyone. Please let Anyone who may benefit know about these!

Activities provided at no charge for those needing care. Please call for a reservation.

- Normally held 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month
- 2:00-3:30 pm at FP in the resource room
- Due to the upcoming holiday break, there will be only one meeting: **Thursday, December 10.**

Lue Taft, LMSW,C-ASWCM

The Senior Source

will be presenting

***"Learning Community Resources,
Planning for 2016"***

Lewy Body Caregiver Support Group

- December 2, 1st Wednesday of the month
- 5:00-7:00 pm in the FP resource room
- Light sandwich supper provided

Need a holiday gift idea?

Consider FIT Kits

Dementia Engagement Products

A big challenge for many families is finding appropriate activities that effectively engage a person who has dementia.

FIT kits are collections of dementia engagement items that spark laughter and enjoyment for people living with dementia and their care partners.

"FIT Kits make it easy for my daughter to spend time and laugh with her grandmother."

Developed by two gerontologists and funded by the National Institute on Aging, FIT kits are researched, tested and loved. Don't wait, order online today!

www.fitkits.org

December Member of the Month

Our dear Doris Gauthier is the quintessential genteel woman, a true southern belle. Growing up on a Mississippi farm with several siblings, Doris came by her 'green thumb' naturally. Her mother had a large garden, with roses, magnolia trees and plenty of fresh vegetables to tend to. Doris has always enjoyed gardening, sewing, puzzles, reading, animals, and was quite the painting talent. She met her future husband, Wallace, on a blind date, and they married in 1951. The couple worked together in their small grocery store before their children were born. They raised son, Brian, and daughter, Lauren in New Orleans. The Gauthier family was deeply involved with their Southern Baptist Church, where Doris volunteered for many years. She still loves the old Baptist hymns, with her favorite being Amazing Grace. In keeping with her inherent southern tradition, one of Doris's favorite meals is red beans, rice, and cornbread. She is so proud of her son-in-law and daughter, Lauren, a high school history teacher. Their little girl, Annalee, named after Doris's own mother, is the apple of her eye. Take a moment to say hello and chat with Doris. With her honeyed drawl, lilting giggle, and sweet nature, you will quickly agree that she should be featured as December's Member of the Month.



Happy December birthdays to:

Michael Steig 9th

Pat Worth 24th

Doris Gauthier 26th

A warm welcome to newest members:

Wanda Browning

Jean Caldwell

Rachel Charles

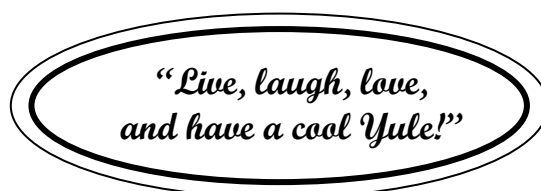
Volunteers of the Year!

A big shout out to the many people who have spent their time volunteering for us in 2015. All of our volunteers truly make a positive difference for our members, the staff, and our programs, by offering invaluable assistance and support in our mission. There are honestly too many to name here, but Cindy, Shirley, and Debbie do need special recognition. They have faithfully been here week after week throughout the year, helping with everything from scraping dishes, to dancing, and helping set up our many special events.

Members of Altrusa International of Richardson, a women's service organization, lend many helping hands at our special Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations. The antique car owners who exhibit for us every Father's Day were here once again. And of course, our Veterans Day Salute was made so very special by General Richard E. Carey, Reverend Tracy Adams, the PSHS ROTC, and the Wells Elementary Brownie Troop. And of course, we appreciate Barbara Wilson organizing our weekly Heart of Texas Therapy Dog visits for ten years now! They offer so much love from our four-legged friends!

The partnerships between Friends Place and several highly respected university programs located in the area is a testament to the outstanding quality of services that our program here provides. The TWU School of Occupational Therapy, the UTD Collier Center of Speech Pathology graduate program, & Baylor's Louise Herrington School of Nursing have all collaborated with us to develop personalized projects as well as to integrate intergenerational perspectives into their graduate study programs.

**Volunteers,
YOU ARE DEEPLY APPRECIATED!!!**



December 2015

Friends Place Adult Day Services
1960 Nantucket Dr.
Richardson, TX 75080

December 2015

W	2	Entertainer Tommy Ray	1:45 pm
Th	3	Heart of Texas Therapy Dogs	11:45 am
F	4	Berkner High Holiday Choir DJ "My Music Guy"	11:00 am 1:45 pm
M	7	Accordianist Eli Davidsoher Hanukkah Celebration	11:00 am
T	8	Norris Perry entertains	1:45 pm
W	9	Plano Sr. High Chamber Choir "A Dicken's Christmas"	11:00 am
F	11	Heart of Texas Therapy Dogs	11:45 am
M	14	Singer Cherie Watson	1:45 pm
T	15	Class Act Tap Dance Holiday Show	1:45 pm
W	16	Interactive entertainer Marty Ruiz	1:45 pm
Th	17	Heart of Texas Therapy Dogs	11:45 am
F	18	Texas Winds Shelly & Eli Welcome to Broadway	11:00 am
M	21	December Birthday Party w/Toney Walsh	1:45 pm
T	22	Mrs. Claus & Cookies w/special guest preschoolers from Oak Park School of Garland	10:30 am

Friends Place will be closed

December 24-January 3, 2016, to celebrate the holidays.

We will reopen Monday, January 4, 2016.

Peace to all, both far and near.

Prayers for your good health and cheer.

***Wishing very rich blessings for you
and for those you hold dear.***

To our wonderful friends and families,
we wish you a lovely, safe, peaceful,
fulfilling holiday season and new year!

Happy, Happy Holidays!

With love from your Friends Place staff

Pam, Jane K, Claire, Jackie, Trudy,
Malissa, Leanne, Lisa, Jocelyn, Joel,
Teri, Chris, Paula, Mary, AD, Jane T,
Shirley, Sandy, Danielle, Stephanie
