

A Neighbors Who Care Couple Meet Volunteers Randi and Jerry

Although we didn't know it yet, Randi and Jerry Rex had decided to become Neighbors Who Care volunteers before they even lived in Arizona.

“We came here from Southern California to house hunt because we were planning to retire in Arizona,” explains Randi. “Jerry picked up a copy of *Splash* after we had made an offer on a house in Sun Lakes and read about Neighbors Who Care.”

Jerry said he knew Neighbors Who Care was where he would invest his time after he retired. Previously, Jerry and some coworkers in Illinois had adopted a local senior citizen home years before.

“We'd have fun,” Jerry said, “We even built them a bowling alley inside with actual bowling balls and a traveling trophy!”

Once settled into their Arizona lifestyle, between their tennis matches--a real draw for the two enthusiasts--at first, Jerry would help clients with minor home repairs and driving the NWC van. Randi did transportation, respite, and served as a friendly visiting coordinator. It wasn't long before she was asked to be a scheduler in the office. The two have been helping neighbors for 15 years.

Jerry eventually served on the board of directors and as chair, continued a particularly exciting time when the previous board launched a campaign to purchase our office building. The office purchase was paid thanks to many efforts of then executive director, Leslie Lindquist, board members, and generous donors.

A retirement lifestyle in Sun Lakes offers endless possibilities of pastimes to participate in. With all the competition vying for their free time, the Rexes say it is not just one thing that keeps them coming back, there are many!

“Well, first off, there is definitely a need,” Jerry says. “I am glad to help change filters and light bulbs for people who cannot do these things. But truthfully, more than a new lightbulb, these people really need someone to talk to, to connect with.”

Randi says, “The people are so appreciative. Clients, often sad that they can no longer drive, will start the visit off by saying how they miss driving.”

“I remind them that we volunteers enjoy taking them to their appointments, and then we have a nice chat and visit.”

Jerry, former military, occasionally repairs items for retired veterans. The couple explains the people they help are so very appreciative for the help and the conversation. Randi recalls one gentleman who swapped “war” stories with Jerry, and even showed him his military medals.

Another benefit Randi and Jerry say keeps them helping out is connecting to the people.

“Many volunteers say this, and it's true, we feel like we gain more out of helping out than the clients do.”

Additionally, Randi pointed out how simple it is to volunteer with Neighbors Who Care.

— **Randi and Jerry** cont. on page 6



Inside the Connection:

Save The Date: Aging Made Easier What You Need to Know, Before You Need to Know It

COVID Volunteer Thank You Luncheon Highlights

Medicare Education For New Enrollees - Coming Up this Fall

OUR MISSION

Neighbors Who Care inspires a robust network of volunteers who respond to our ever-changing needs of our aging community, helping them live at home with pride, dignity and independence.

OUR VISION

An interdependent community of neighbors supporting those in need.



Sheryl Keeme
Executive Director

**All services per
Calendar Year 2019**

Volunteers: 374
Clients: 657
Hours: 7537
Miles: 76552
Occasions: 5985

The Care Connection is the official newsletter of Neighbors Who Care, Inc.

This newsletter is delivered to all volunteers, clients, donors, and associates of Neighbors Who Care, on a quarterly basis. You have received this publication because we believe you take pride in your community and service to improve the quality of life for others, one neighbor at a time. This newsletter provides you with wellness information and advertising that enhances your awareness of other services in our community. We are always interested in your comments or suggestions.

While efforts to ensure accuracy are exercised, the publisher assumes no liability for the information contained in either editorial or advertising content. Neighbors Who Care does not endorse any commercial products or information that may be advertised in the newsletter.

If you no longer wish to receive this publication, contact us at the address/phone on the front page.

Connect with Neighbors Who Care on YouTube, Next Door and Facebook for videos and updates, and please like, subscribe and follow our social media channels!

If you would like to experience the deep personal satisfaction that comes from volunteering to assist your neighbors or if you know of someone who needs our help, contact us at 480-895-7133.

Message from the Executive Director:

Join Neighbors Who Care November 13th for a morning of fun, learning, and being together!

Neighbors Who Care is in the business of making friends.

In the past, the Fall Fair was one way we interacted with our neighbors yet with all the communities holding their own shindigs in their own neighborhoods, we thought there was a better way for us to connect.

On Saturday, Nov. 13, we are planning a free program meant to engage, inform, help, and tickle the funny bones of the people we already call friends as well as new friends we want to meet. Join us, and Aging Made Easier Honorary Chairperson, Chandler Councilwoman, Christine Ellis, at Tumbleweed Recreation Center in Chandler, and Sun Lakes/Chandler area service providers for a great morning!



Christine Ellis
Chandler Councilwoman

Mark your calendars to join us for aging made easier, useful information and entertainment meant to help those staring down that AARP membership envelope at age 50 to those helping aging parents prepare for life's last act. The morning will begin with breakfast and vetted representatives of the community that provide services in the aging space. Ask your questions, one on one, and pick up tips and information about aging well.

Then settle back and listen in as two engaging, sought after presenters deliver talks with the information you may put to work to make your aging experience easier. End the morning with comedian Mark Cordes, whose aging antics will make you smile and let you know that getting older is as funny as it is puzzling.

Registration is now open on Eventbrite.com. Just search Aging Made Easier to sign up. Seating is limited so save your spot now. For registration without using Eventbrite.com or for information about how you can support the event as a vendor, please call our office at 480-895-7133 x170 or email sheryl@neighborswhocare.com.

Watch your emails for more details in the days ahead.

Board Summer Update:

- NWC Board of Directors welcomed new members since the beginning of 2021: **Jena Luga, Trust Bank and Mike Amato, Volunteer/Retired**
- Van committee comprising board members, staff and volunteers is exploring options for a purchase of a new Neighbors Who Care transportation vehicle. Vehicle shortages aside, the best option for our drivers and clients is now being sought.
- Neighbors Who Care was fortunate to benefit from the Paycheck Protection Program during the pandemic to help us ease the crunch many nonprofits experienced. Our application for forgiveness of this debt has been approved.

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Is Your Trash Can TOO Heavy to Handle?

Neighbors Who Care is Partnering with the Redeemed Team's "Stay Off the Ladder" Service to Gauge Needs and Find Solutions

When Realtor Suzy Steinmann reached out to Neighbors Who Care for help in solving a new problem among Sun Lakes households, we were delighted to learn more about the Stay Off the Ladder service her team has established. Suzy and her real estate partner Michelle Hudak, both from the Redeemed Team at Realty ONE Group, began offering Sun Lakes residents free help with replacing smoke alarm batteries, A/C filters, and lightbulbs last year during COVID when Neighbors Who Care was forced to halt these contact-to-contact services.

Suzy and Michelle volunteer their services each week fielding requests submitted on their website. During their weekly visits, the two women began to recognize another problem: Trash Bins.

"Recently, I came upon a woman who was passed out in her driveway," Suzy explained, "She had fallen while trying to drag her heavy trash bin to the curb."

People with mobility issues, using canes or walkers, struggle with the bins, even when they aren't very full, she said. The size and weight of the bins create potential hazards for some of our residents.

We discussed the problem and agreed that the challenge of helping individuals on a weekly basis with their trash bins was a logistical mountain to navigate for both the Redeemed Team and Neighbors Who Care, but nevertheless wanted to figure out a way we could help.

As the COVID landscape continues to shift and change, Neighbors Who Care continues to struggle to recruit new volunteers to fulfill our client's resurging individual requests for help. Adding a new service would not be prudent for our agency nor the Redeemed Team, since their main focus is real estate sales. However, we arrived at a joint decision to try and gauge the need in the community and see if we could come up with a solution.

Do You Need Help with Your Trash Cans? OR Can You Help a Nearby Neighbor With Their Trash Cans?

We Want to Hear from You!

Additionally, if you are willing to help a person on your street or in your nearby neighborhood a few times a month with their trash bins, we also want to hear from you, too. Please email Sheryl Keeme at Neighbors Who Care at nwcexecdir@gmail.com or call 480-895-7133 X170. OR visit The Redeemed Team website at www.RedeemedTeamAZ.com and click on the YELLOW circle called "Stay Off The Ladder" to submit a request for help. Be sure to indicate you are seeking trash bin help, rather than the normal Stay Off The Ladder requests.

After we document the need, we'll work to find a solution to get weekly or bi-weekly help coordinated through neighbors living nearby. Look for the Stay Off The Ladder signature purple truck with the bright yellow magnets that say "Stay Off The Ladder" driving through the community each week!



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NEIGHBORS WHO CARE COMMUNITY COMES THROUGH School Supplies Donations Help Launch 2021-22 School Year



New Board Member Mike Amato and wife, Debbie, also a Neighbors Who Care volunteer, display dropped off school supplies. Neighbors Who Care, a member agency for For Our City Chandler, hosted a drop-off site for Chandler Unified School District students' school supplies. The community came through in a powerful way for the kids with volunteers, staff, neighbor, and community members dropping off goods.



Randi and Jerry

- continued from page 1

"Sometimes, agencies that offer volunteering often have restrictive hours, or rigorous training," she says, "At Neighbors Who Care, there are no weekly or monthly minimums. There's even an easy-to-use portal where people can find times, dates and experiences online that will work specifically for them."

Many move here to Sun Lakes for the amenities, say the Rexes. They had heard it was great for tennis and both agree, it is!

"At some point, though, you discover that you want to do something other than just play! We feel so fortunate that we can live here and we are happy to be able to help people in our neighborhood, too."

CHIROPRACTIC WITH A VIEW!

Contributed by
Ann Gifford, Aaaah
Wellness



Aaaah Wellness in Mesa is not new to the chiropractic industry. We have been serving the community—and seniors, in particular—for more than 28 years. With incredible views of the Superstition Golf Course, Aaaah Wellness is a great place to achieve optimum health.

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If you are interested in learning more about how we can help you, call us today at (480) 396-4400 for a free consultation to all readers of this article. Just mention that you saw us in the Neighbors Who Care newsletter, Care Connection, when you call to schedule your appointment.

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NWC and The Park shower Pandemic Helpers with Love and Lunch

On Tuesday, June 29, Neighbors Who Care thanked volunteers who served during the Covid-19 pandemic with a luncheon hosted by The Park at Copper Creek in Chandler. Held in The Park's elegant Monticello restaurant, those in attendance were treated to a delicious Italian-themed meal complete with pasta, wood-fired pizza, salads, and dessert.

This luncheon was an opportunity to show our gratitude to those who helped to keep Neighbors Who Care services going during a time when our daily operations were anything but normal. "Covid-19 hit us hard," said Bonnie Kosar, NWC Care Manager. "With stay-at-home orders and social distancing in place, we had to figure out how to continue to serve our clients and get them the services they still needed."

As a response to the pandemic conditions, Neighbors Who Care had to scale back on some of our services and completely put others on hold. Fortunately, however, we were blessed with volunteers who were able to adapt with us and help us care for our clients. According to Bonnie, "We would not have been able to meet our clients' needs if it weren't for these amazing volunteers."

When addressing the volunteers at the luncheon, NWC Executive Director Sheryl Keeme stated that, "In a year of a constantly changing landscape full of challenges, all of you pulled through...not for Neighbors Who Care, not for our staff, board, or our office, but for our clients. Today, we thank you and share a meal together to celebrate getting through it."

In addition to the luncheon meal, guests were treated to the melodic sounds of harp music from Pam Hahn, Executive Director and harpist for the Chandler Symphony Orchestra. Pam played while everyone ate and socialized.

She also had the opportunity to share the news of the return of the Chandler Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Concert on December 5, 2021. Pam noted that the venue of this concert, which also benefits Neighbors Who Care, will be at the brand-new worship center at Risen Savior Lutheran Church on Alma School Road. More details will follow about this event, but please mark your calendar so you won't miss the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate this annual event.

The Park at Copper Creek team also provided tours of their elegantly appointed community, which impressed all who participated. Cyndi Pollard, Executive Director of The Park, graciously invited our volunteers to return anytime to dine at the Monticello as it is a restaurant open to the public.

To round out the event, raffle prizes were drawn by Jennifer Gustafson, NWC Community Engagement Manager, with help from guests in the audience. Prize winners included Ana Metzger, who won an assortment of German chocolate bars; Dwight Snyder, who won a potted orchid; Jim Paplaczky, who won a \$25 gift card to Macy's; and Delores Anderson, who won dinner for two at The Park's Monticello restaurant. Congratulations to the winners!

As we look forward to resuming all of our client services, we want to once again thank all who served during the Covid-19 pandemic. We could not have done it without you! Of course, we are always grateful to all of our volunteers and invite everyone to come back when they feel comfortable doing so. We also encourage

new volunteers to join us in our mission to serve seniors in our community. The need is still there and continues to grow. Together, we can do so much good and bring so much joy to those who truly need us!



Volunteering: A Little Goes a Long Way

Contributed by Paul Feeney, Neighbors Who Care Volunteer



I expect most people reading this article know that Neighbors Who Care is an organization that enables elderly people needing some help to lead a better life. It is easy to imagine an example of a widow or widower who is no longer able to safely drive, and how they would appreciate someone taking them to the doctor or the grocery store. The same

goes for having someone bring over a meal or reach out to talk and break up a lonely day. Many people want to stay in their homes as they age, and Neighbors Who Care volunteers provide assistance that makes that easier. I hope you see that this is valuable.

But what does it mean to be a volunteer? In all honesty, many of us have a few hours a week or a month to give. What better way to use this time than to help others? In my experience, volunteering helps fill up the day with

something important. When I first joined Neighbors Who Care as a volunteer a few years ago, I learned first-hand how meaningful volunteering is. What surprised me, though, was that it turned out to be much more fulfilling than I imagined. I started mostly giving clients rides. What I found was that they all seemed to have an interesting story about their life, and I enjoyed listening to them. They also seemed to enjoy having someone to hang out with, too! As a volunteer, I felt good about providing more than just the physical ride.

Early on, I also found that clients asked for help in small ways. One woman who didn't walk very well asked me to roll her trash can out to the street. Another asked if I could replace a light bulb that she couldn't quite reach. Both took only a minute to do, but both elicited a nice smile and a thank you. These were great win-win situations. And something that took very little of my time meant the world to someone who could no longer do some of the simplest tasks. I feel good every time I'm able to help in this way.

I soon started asking each client if they needed help with anything else. Here are some examples of how I've been able to assist clients in small ways:

- Changing a furnace filter that looked like it hadn't been changed in years;
- Realigning a closet door that had fallen off its track prohibiting a lady from getting to her things;
- Tightening a couple of screws on a mailbox nameplate that had fallen down;
- Changing a smoke detector battery that had been beeping and keeping a sweet client from getting a good night's sleep for days;
- Resetting a clock with large numbers for a lady with sight impairment. The numbers on the clock were large, but the instructions on how to reset the clock were in tiny letters!

These are just a few examples, but I'll tell you that each time I help someone with something so simple, I feel the appreciation from our clients, and I walk away with a huge smile on my face. Can you see how these things are great for both the client and the volunteer?

Given what I have shared, can you now see yourself becoming either a client or a volunteer? I hope so! If you want to feel really good about helping out a senior in need, please go to www.neighborswhocare.com and click on the Volunteer tab or call the office at 480-895-7133. I think you will be glad that you did!

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Many of us view the pandemic as behind us. Many have received vaccines and are gathering with friends, in churches and temples, and for dances, concerts, and happy hours. Yet, with the Delta variant raging in many unvaccinated communities, and numbers are creeping up in hospitals, our agency shall continue to maintain guidelines along those lines to keep both our volunteers and clients safe. We ask both clients and volunteers to wear masks until they may have a conversation about individual comfort levels regarding masks and social distancing. Here are some updates on services:

Business Assistance - formerly stalled, this service of volunteer help writing checks, addressing envelopes, balancing checkbooks, counseling and assistance with contractors, etc., has resumed.

Other Services That Have Resumed:

- Minor Repairs
- Respite Care
- Friendly Visiting
- Welfare Visits

Caregiver Support Group - Our Caregiver Support Group, relegated to ZOOM for more than a year, has resumed in-person at Risen Savior Lutheran Church's administrative building, at 23714 S. Alma School Rd. Mondays from 1 pm to 3 pm, facilitated by NWC Care Manager Bonnie Kosar.

Speaker Series - Join us for our Summer Speaker Series being hosted at Clarendale of Chandler at Gilbert and Riggs roads.

August 26, 2021 - Create Your Legacy - How to Write and Publish your Life Story for \$5

Sheryl Keeme, Neighbors Who Care Executive Director and Writer/Publisher

If you have wanted to put your story into a book but have no idea where to even begin, this talk is for you. Even if you don't like to write, if you have a cell phone and a computer, you can get it done this summer! Learn this simple method to create your legacy, your story, and publish it in a paperback book for less than \$5.

September 23, 2021 - Asset Protection Strategies in Retirement

Francisco Sirvent - Estate Planning Attorney & Founder Keystone Law Firm

Could one accidental mistake cost you your entire life savings? Would a major medical event wipe out your retirement security and force you to become a burden on your kids? In this discussion, Francisco Sirvent will share the top 3 asset protection strategies that wealthy families have used for centuries that are now available to everyone with a Q & A to follow.

Neighbors Who Care and Clarendale Chandler are proud to be offering these topics and esteemed speakers to the community, free of charge. Bring a friend and join the group! To register for this course, visit Neighborswhocare.com, www.facebook.com/volunteerchandler, or call 480-895-7133.

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As a volunteer for both "Neighbors Who Care" and Sun Lakes United Church of Christ, I appreciate the opportunity to share in your health care journey. Thank you for placing your trust in me.

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Neighbors Who Care Eyes New Transport Vehicle

Our Goal: Let's Help Our Clients get Back to Living

When COVID hit, many things about how Neighbors Who Care helps our clients had to change. Aside from the volunteers who were forced to take a hiatus from volunteering because of their own health concerns, our staff also had to take measures to protect our vulnerable senior clients. With a few changes to our services, such as reducing services per client per week and by eliminating nonessential appointments such as hair appointments, our volunteers persevered, and we were able to keep people happily stocked with groceries, healthy with transportation to life saving medical appointments, and fed with daily dinner deliveries. Who can forget the brightly wrapped Neighbors Who Care van that chugged around Sun Lakes for the last nearly two decades. You may not have realized it was a Neighbors Who Care vehicle because of the boldly graphic GO DADDY branding on it. With COVID preventing passenger transporting in 2020, and with that van having seen its better days, Neighbors Who Care decommissioned the van.

We have resumed our grocery transportation, and more of our volunteers are returning, along with terrific new volunteer prospects, we're ready to begin looking at life a little more normally. And thanks to a fantastic restricted gift to Neighbors Who Care for the precise purpose of replacing a passenger vehicle, a project committee is now formed and is studying the specs needed and features, desired, for a new transport vehicle. Thanks to Verna Mahnke, Administration Director, who formed the task force of volunteers comprising Project Manager Sam Selby, Jim Rainwaters, Ron Chase, and Neighbors Who Care Board Member Ramon Rubio, the specs and process to secure a replacement vehicle is underway.

If you would like to help support the effort to commission a new transport vehicle for Neighbors Who Care elderly clients, visit paypal.me/neighborsvan to contribute to a vehicle specifically for transporting clients for dialysis, and other medical appointments, as well as shopping, banking, and errands. For more information, call Sheryl Keeme, Executive Director, at 480-895-7133 X170.