



Network Practices: Volunteerism/Civic Engagement

Blanketeers

TSJG

One of our goals for the Lodges was to increase Volunteerism among our residents. We began a partnership with Project Linus, a national non-profit organization, to provide an opportunity to give back to the community as well as change the lives of our residents and team members through this volunteer endeavor.

Our residents and team members have become “Blanketeers” and work together to make fleece tie-blankets to donate to our local Project Linus chapter. The blankets that our “Blanketeers” lovingly create are distributed to our local Police Department & the Police Chaplaincy. The officers carry these blankets with them in their patrol cars so that they can provide handmade blankets for children who are in need of love, a sense of security, warmth and comfort due to illness or other traumatic events. Knowing that the need for these blankets is so great, our original goal was to complete 100 blankets this year. We have been making them so fast, our goal actually increases every month. It is amazing what you can create when the whole team works together!

Hats by Warm Hands with Warm Hearts

Wesleyan Senior Living

Knitting hats for the local hospital to give to new babies can be very meaningful for residents, knowing they are able to help welcome a new baby by giving them a gift. We call this project Hats by Warm Hands with Warm Hearts. This project allows many individuals to be a part of community outreach. Residents share their skills and help teach others to knit.

Fundraising for Alzheimer’s Association

Multiple Communities

Sponsor a local Alzheimer's Walk. Many residents and team members have personally been touched by this disease, and are very committed and very involved in fund raising. Events to support fundraising efforts include: Alzheimer’s Pet Mascot contest, private wine-pairing dinner, Oktoberfest at a tree farm, raffles, bake sales & estate sales. It is a wonderful thing to watch the entire community come together to support this effort.

Salute to Seniors Annual Award

The Buckingham at Houston

The Salute to Seniors Annual Award Program was developed to recognize seniors in the Houston community who volunteer their time & talent to make a difference in the lives of others. Seniors are nominated by the agency for which they volunteer. Each quarter of the year a senior over 62 is recognized for their service to others. Each honoree selected receives a \$100 American Express gift card, and the agency receives a \$100 donation from The Buckingham. All of the honorees and their family members are invited to a lovely private dinner in their honor at The Buckingham. Each is given a crystal bowl with their name and the name of the agency they represent as a Salute to Senior Award commemorative gift. The evening is a beautiful celebration of “Living Life with a Purpose.”

Crafting for the Community

The Stayton at Museum Way

Add a "Crafting for the Community" project with a craft that would benefit an organization in the greater community. One example is Warm Place, a non-profit organization that provides free grief support for children from kindergarten all the way to 25 years of age who have lost a parent, sibling, or loved one. Residents not only contribute in making the crafts, but in assisting with delivery of the final product.

"Make It Matter" Day

Grand Lake Gardens

Residents set up a booth that provides information about volunteer opportunities available both within the community and in the surrounding area. They ask for sign-ups and a greater commitment to making a difference.

Make a List and Check it Twice

San Joaquin Gardens

Create a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities within the community, everything from folding napkins to leading a committee or program. This may bring greater awareness of ways to impact the community, even if it's a small task.

Souls4Soles

The Buckingham

This year we walked with a purpose, and for every 1,000,000 steps we donated one pair of shoes to the Soles4Souls organization. Residents could also donate money. We also had residents donate new shoes if they wanted.

Minutes for Charity

Multiple Communities

Record minutes of exercise every month and then those minutes are matched by the community towards a fund for distribution for various charities. Many participants push themselves to keep to their routine if not for themselves but for the benefit of helping others.

Animal Rescue Partnership

Las Ventanas

Partner with local animal rescue organizations to bring new life and purpose into the community. Our partnership with the Southern Nevada Parrot Education, Rescue, and Rehoming Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to the education and care of exotic birds, has blossomed into a purposeful, community-wide volunteer project. The birds, now enveloped by a foster community, have brought joy, excitement, and purpose to every level of living. "Bird Socials" and "Parrot-Ed" are now all the rage at the community. The Arts & Crafts Room was appropriately renamed "The Jungle Room" and was completely redesigned and established as a peaceful room for a cup of tea and quiet time: bright natural light coming in from many windows, neutral colors, a fish tank, jungle décor, 2 birds, and quiet music in the background. Engage residents by asking their advice and assigning specific tasks to specific people. The residents' understanding, collective interest, care, work, love, and nurturing environment have helped save the lives of two majestic parrots, one of whom is on the "rare birds" list.

Donation Drive

Las Ventanas

Las Ventanas in partnership with The Salvation Army and Heaven Can Wait Animal Society executed a donation drive to collect items for people and animals in need. Residents and team members worked together with a response so tremendous that extra donation boxes had to be added. The drive for pet supplies continued for a second and third pick up. Donations were staged at one central location in the main lobby surrounded by Las Ventanas marketing banners. Every vendor and visitor passing by stopped with many making donations before leaving. Participation was quiet and determined. There were few words, but the effort spoke volumes.

Pillow Outreach

Heisinger Bluffs

When families are torn apart by domestic abuse, children often leave all of their personal belongings behind. An IL resident organized a group of IL and AL residents to make pillows, many of which are hand-embroidered, to donate to the Rape and Abuse Crisis Center. These pillows are meant to offer comfort to the children seeking refuge at the local RAC. Residents created over 135 pillows.