



# Meet Waterman's Amazing Neighbors!

Most people think of retirement as living life somewhat behind the scenes. But for many residents at Waterman Village, senior life is being lived right out there with everyone else.

Whether reigniting their life with a new pursuit, or continuing an old passion, these Waterman Village residents are leading vital, robust lives in the community with arts, business and philanthropy – sometimes all three – filling their days.

We think you'll find them some of the most inspiring neighbors you'll meet anywhere!

Here are just a few of the amazing folks who call Waterman Village home.



*A good neighbor is a priceless treasure.*

*Chinese Proverb*

***You can retire from a job, but don't  
ever retire from making extremely  
meaningful contributions in life.***

Stephen Covey



*Meet Patricia:*

## ***The Roadrunner of Central Florida***

**F**or Patricia, a native of Evansville, Indiana, and St. Louis, Missouri, the very idea of retirement is unfathomable.

For the past 24 years, this mover and shaker has risen from volunteer staffer to fulltime manager at Hospice Hope Chest, one of downtown Mount Dora's busiest shops.

But if you meet her, don't call it a thrift shop. "Oh no, honey," Pat pipes up, "we're resale chic!"

Moving to Waterman in 2012 gave Pat the peace of mind of someone looking after her in her off-hours. But six days a week at 9AM the Indiana native, mother of two and grandmother of five, springs into action like people a quarter of her age.

And if one-quarter sounds puzzling, that's because Pat is now 92 years young.

Managing a team of five volunteers, she orchestrates everything: greeting customers, ringing up sales, checking in

donations, and sorting and marking merchandise. Until quite recently, she even climbed ladders.

"The girls got mad," she admits, "so I started letting them do it."

All this hustle and bustle pays off big time: Every year Hospice Hope Chest is able to give away \$100,000 to Cornerstone Hospice.

The shop is also a sort of neighborhood general store, where regulars come as much for the social interaction and advice as much as the merchandise.

Pat's wardrobe reflects her dynamic personality: bold, artsy necklaces and bracelets are teamed up with colorful scarves.

But Pat's style doesn't stop there. Parked outside sits her snazzy red PT Cruiser with its own custom accessorizing: a giant pair of Roadrunner cartoon characters on each door!

Given all this, a visitor asks, "Could 90 be the new 60?"

"I got it, girl!" Pat replies.



*Meet Artha and Mike:*

## **Mastering the Art of Retirement**

Since they married 51 years ago, Artha and Mike, a Navy man, have lived and traveled all over the U.S. Arizona, California, Texas, Tennessee and Washington, DC are the places they've called home, plus three cities in Japan.

Nowadays, however, their lives revolve around art: Artha's quilting and Mike's stained glass pictures.

Artha got into sewing in the late 60s while Mike served in Viet Nam. By 1993 they had moved to Central Florida, where Artha focused her passion on quilting. When the guild she belonged to in Sanford, Florida disbanded, Artha joined the Lake County Quilt Guild and quickly amassed a large group of quilter friends. That inspired the couple to move to Lake County, where they settled in at Waterman Village.

That suited Mike just fine. After a career in the Navy and industrial engineering where he worked with NASA, Lockheed-Martin, Disney and Universal, Mike was also ready to explore his creative side.

"I love the precision work required in engineering, and I get to do that with stained glass," Mike says. "Cutting, piecing, soldering, fitting, color, texture, design and perspective – it's quite rewarding to watch it all come together," he adds.

Mike's favorite themes are landscapes, wildlife and vintage travel posters. Two of his pieces are on display in the Waterman Village Lodge and more in a local art gallery.

Custom works for special occasions are yet another of Mike's passions. "A gentleman celebrating his 60th wedding anniversary asked me to design a piece with a blue heron, his wife's favorite bird," Mike recalls. "I love creating art that means so much to another. It's as delightful for me as it is for them," he adds.



Meanwhile Artha began her own group in Waterman, the Crafty Quilters. "But it's not just quilters here," Artha shares. "We've also got knitters, crafts people and doll makers. Besides quilting, I like to sew bags, so people call Mike and I the Bag Lady and the Glass Man!"



"My greatest satisfaction," Artha continues, "has been donating quilts to tsunami and tornado survivors, and to the nursing home residents and veterans living here at Waterman Village. "There is nothing like seeing them light up when we give them their very own handmade quilt."

Meet Dee:

## A Nursing Career That Spans 40 Years

The year 1966 was one of many milestones: the world saw its first artificial heart transplant, Jack Nicklaus won his third Masters victory, and the mini skirt soared in popularity. For Dee, fresh out of nursing school in Pennsylvania, it was the year she took on the world.

Fifty years later, Nicklaus is retired and the miniskirt no longer rules the fashion world. But Dee and her passion for nursing still prevail, as fully and deeply as the day she graduated school.

"Nursing has been the backbone of my life," Dee says, "and it still is!"

Dee fondly recalls how she and all the nurses dressed back in the day. "In the 60s nurses only wore white," Dee reflects. "White dresses, white shoes, white stockings, and yes, the little white hat!" she continues. "Up until 20 years ago I still wore my hat. People used to kid me and call me Nancy Nurse, but I didn't care!" she says.

"I still dress in all-white," Dee shares. "It's how I honor the profession."

A native of Pennsylvania, Dee received her nursing degree from Bucks County Technical School and worked mostly as a nurse in Lower Bucks County Hospital. By 1985, with 19 years of nursing under her belt, Dee and her husband moved to Florida to care for her parents. She eventually became Director of Nursing at Howell Place in Tavares.

For nearly 20 years, Dee has worked for Dr. Perth Blake, a well-loved general practitioner

***"Nursing has been the backbone of my life."***



in Tavares. "Although I no longer work full-time, I still look forward to each day," she says. "I get to talk to the patients, reassure them, and really connect with them. That's what I love most about my profession."

Dee remembers her childhood with an extraordinary, caring mother. Her attention to Dee's needs made such an impact on her that becoming a nurse and doing this for others was a natural.

"Nurses have always been vital to a patient's healing process," Dee shares. "Patient time is more precious now that so much is done through computers." But that makes Dee even more committed to real connecting.

"I do my best to be hands on, to bond with the patients. Even if it's just holding their hand. There's so much more information you can get from a patient when you simply listen and be with them," she says. "A computer will never take the place of touching someone's hand and showing them you care."

Meet Joan:

## Crafts, Concerts & Cruises for Cancer



*"Every day I ask, what can I give back?"*

If you're ever tired, frustrated and complaining about your day and your life, here's one simple solution: spend an hour with Joan.

You might find Joan's picture in the dictionary next to 'dynamo,' or 'unstoppable' (and if there were such an entry, 'Energizer Bunny!'). How many seniors do you know found their own charity organizations, organize year-round fundraising events (including an annual dinner), and run tours to Costa Rica twice a year?

Few people can match her stamina at any age, and for Joan, who recently celebrated her 87th birthday, it comes from her life's journey.

She is a cancer survivor of ten years, and that experience has given her a new lease on life. "My journey

with cancer taught me that every day is a gift, and an opportunity to give something to the world," Joan says. "Every day I ask, what can I give back?"

A native of Pekin, Illinois, Joan enjoyed a career as a fashion merchandiser and raised two sons with her husband before retiring to Florida, where she founded C's for Cancer.

"C stands for Crafts, Concerts and Cruises," Joan says, "all the ways we raise money for cancer research and cancer patients in Lake County." Many in her team of 30 fellow volunteers are cancer survivors too. Together they help fundraise for Relay for Life, a national organization for cancer survivors.

To boost awareness for her charity, Joan goes the extra mile,

handing out pens, refrigerator magnets and flashlights branded with her charity's name. "It's all about visibility," Joan observes. "Awareness is everything!"

Indeed it is: Joan and her team just celebrated 20 years of cancer survivor dinners.

Losing her husband's and her mother's family to the disease spurred Joan to launch her charity. But it wasn't until she herself was diagnosed that Joan had to find her purpose for living. She now she inspires others to do the same.

"I show them that there is a plan for them, beyond what they can see, beyond their feelings. I encourage them to go there and discover what that plan is. That changes their life and gives them a reason to go on living," Joan says.

"To do that for another is life's greatest satisfaction," Joan reflects, "and I plan to keep being there for others as long as I can."

*Meet Kathleen and David:*

## **Once, Twice, Three Times a Teacher**

**N**atives of Buffalo, New York, Kathleen and David moved to the Orlando area in 1993.

While retirement life suited David, it was a different story for Kathleen. Memories of her long and satisfying career as a math teacher still called to her.

Before you could say “trigonometry,” Kathleen was substitute teaching, a job which quickly turned into a full-time position teaching Advanced Placement (AP) calculus and economics.

Fast-forward about 18 years. Kathleen formally retires from the Orlando area school district; she and David move to Lake County and Waterman Village.

Yet school still called to Kathleen, so she returned a third time to her beloved career. Tutoring at a local private school quickly turned into a fulltime teaching position in 2012.

“I can’t imagine doing anything else with my life,” Kathleen says.

“I see how much she loves it, and I’m out in the community volunteering, so how could I say no?” David adds with a smile.

It’s a career she never anticipated. Born and raised in Buffalo, Kathleen excelled in numbers and economics, and originally dreamed of a career in the stock market. But her dreams changed at 19 when asked to substitute teach for a fourth grade class for just one day.

“I’ll never forget how rewarding it felt, being able to make a difference with the children,” she says.

Goodbye Dow Jones, hello chalk and erasers.

Decades later, Kathleen’s passion for teaching continues unabated. She has even had her granddaughter as one of her students.

“I just love being around the kids!” Kathleen says. “It’s a really nice way to spend the day.”

What is her secret for success at this stage of life?

“Don’t think of yourself as being retired. It will come at a later date,” Kathleen says. “I don’t feel that old. I don’t think of age. I keep focused on what I want to do for the day, what things I’m going to be teaching.”

“I have a hard time when people say ‘senior citizen,’” she adds. Just be who you are, do what you can do, and enjoy it.”



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Meet Don:

## Reconnecting With a Childhood Talent

Since he was a boy, painting has always been dear to Don's heart. Landscapes, portraits, abstract designs, he loves to explore them all.

Raised by a single mom in Niagara Falls, New York, Don discovered his talent at the tender age of 13.

"My mother needed me to be occupied after school since she was at work," Don reflects, "so she enrolled me in art classes. Kept me out of trouble!" he adds.

Turns out Don and painting went well together. A dramatic image of a Native American man he painted at 15 still hangs in his house.

But before he could rediscover his gift and passion, life had some pretty major plans.

Don enlisted in the Navy after high school and as fate would have it, his base commander, impressed by his entrance exam grades, helped him get into the U.S. Naval Academy.

After Annapolis, Don and his wife Nancy lived in London. Then it was back to the States, where Don got an MBA from the University of Chicago.

He and Nancy adopted two children and lived in Labrador, Canada, as well as California and Iceland before Don was offered to lead a 400-man squadron in Viet



Nam as a junior major. There he earned two Bronze Stars, including one for Valor when his base caught fire under an attack.

Following Viet Nam was an assignment to the Pentagon where he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. But fate stepped in again when Don received an unsolicited job offer that was too good to pass up. So he retired from the military and moved into the private sector in Virginia.

Doing so allowed Don to reconnect with his hobby for the first time in years. "It felt good to sit down and paint again," he recalls.

A local gallery spotted his talent and started selling his work. Its success gave Don the confidence to keep painting.

Moving to Florida, he entered a number of shows and won many ribbons. Once more Don's art caught

the attention of a gallery which continues to feature his paintings.

What is Don's favorite medium? "Watercolor on board," he replies. "It gives the look and feel of an oil painting," he continues. "People can't believe it's watercolor!"

Barns and open country are his favorite types of landscapes. Portraits are incredibly true to life. Abstract flowers and shapes offer rich details.

It makes one wonder, is there anything Don cannot do? "I'm a terrible cook," he says, "and I hate domestic chores. So I think I'll stick to painting!"

*Meet Bud and Norma:*

## **72 Years of Happily Ever After**

**B**oth natives of Baltimore, Maryland, Bud and Norma have traveled the world and today their life is as full and active as when they married 72 years ago!

Their travels began when Bud joined the Marines and was shipped off to the Pacific during World War II. Norma, a young newlywed, waited for him in California; once the war ended they returned to the Washington, D.C., area where they started a family.

One of the first to move to Florida in the great 1950s migration, the couple settled in Fort Lauderdale where Bud worked for the phone company and Norma taught shorthand and clerical skills, helping to train young women returning to the workforce.

Bud and Norma decided to stay active upon their move to Central Florida; Bud trained electricians for licensing, while Norma continued her clerical teaching.

During summers the Taylors drove cross-country in their motorhome, helping to build churches across Canada, from Prince Edward Island west to British Columbia.

For the past 13 years Bud and Norma have focused their community service at Waterman Hospital, where at 91 and 90, they are among the oldest volunteers, earning their own video testimonial on Waterman's Youtube Channel. For the past three and a half years they have worked the Cardiac ICU reception area, supporting families of those receiving open heart surgery.

"We find it some of the most rewarding work we've ever done," Norma says. "People see our names and ask us if we're married. When we tell them we've been married 72 years, it changes everything for them. It gives



***"Keep on keepin' on,  
no matter what!"***

them hope that their loved one will go on to live a long life too," she adds.

Bud's philosophy on life underscores their work: "Keep on keepin' on, no matter what!" he quips, true to his Marine training.

Norma agrees: "We both love people, so why not go and give of ourselves?" she feels. "We're blessed to have such lovely people to live and socialize with at Waterman," says Norma, "and our church and hospital volunteering is icing on the cake."

Meet Gloria and Joel:

## Building Riches Though Volunteering

With decades of experience in medical services, health care management, and for Joel, the legal profession, Joel and Gloria knew exactly what they wanted to do after retirement: continue their volunteer work with the SHINE program.

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) is a free program offered by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and Medicare.

Volunteers like the Joel and Gloria provide free, unbiased, confidential counseling on the myriad of health insurance options available to seniors.

"Medicare, Medicaid, PPO's HMO's, disability, prescription plans, you name it, we have it covered," Gloria says. "It can become very challenging trying to keep up with all the programs and their constant changes," she adds, "and that's where we come in."

"It feels so rewarding to match a person's needs to the many programs that are available," Joel says. "Often we can direct them to several alternative plans to assure the best outcomes," he continues. "We explain the various options, their costs, and in some cases, suggest choices that will provide



*"There's such tremendous satisfaction knowing we've made someone's life easier."*

extra help with prescription costs and deductibles," he adds.

Originally from New Jersey and New York, the couple lived in Allentown, Pennsylvania, then Plantation and Boynton Beach, Florida, before moving to Waterman Village.

When they're not volunteering with the SHINE program, Joel and Gloria both frequent Waterman's Wellness Center. They work out with Michelle, the in-house personal trainer, and also enjoy aquatics classes. Gloria serves on the Culinary committee, making menu recommendations and communicating feedback from the residents.

"We've made careers our service. There's such tremendous satisfaction knowing we've made someone's life

easier," Gloria observes. "Our lives are so much richer for it."

When they are not volunteering, Gloria can be found in the kitchen making her favorite recipe (gazpacho currently tops the list), while Joel enjoys telling stories of their adventures cruising the Caribbean. From ocean liners to windjammer sailboats, the two have explored the British Virgin Islands (Tortola is Joel's favorite), Grenada, Martinique, St. Lucia and Gloria's favorite, St. Kitts.

What's their secret for staying happy?

"In 60 years of marriage, we've learned to take the good with the bad and to deal together with life's constant and unpredictable changes," Joel says with a smile.



*It's a beautiful day in this neighborhood,  
A beautiful day for a neighbor.  
Would you be mine?  
Could you be mine?*



*It's a neighborly day in this beauty wood,  
A neighborly day for a beauty.  
Would you be mine?  
Could you be mine?*



*I've always wanted to have a neighbor just like you.  
I've always wanted to live in a neighborhood with you.*



*So, let's make the most of this beautiful day.  
Since we're together we might as well say:  
Would you be mine?  
Could you be mine?  
Won't you be my neighbor?*

Fred M. Rogers



*Good neighbors make a huge  
difference in the quality of life.*

*Robert Fulghum*



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