



River Garden News



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river garden
anniversary day

COMMUNITY WELCOME

MARCH 26, 2023
3-6PM

QUESTIONS? CONTACT KARI
(904) 288-7855

KBELL@RIVERGARDEN.ORG

Winter 2023

Volume 84

Our Mission

To provide...A wide range of quality, cost effective elder care services in residential, outpatient, and community based settings.

To create...A comfortable, caring, and dignified home for the frail elderly serving both rich and poor with excellence.

To serve...People of all faiths, while maintaining an environment supportive of Jewish identity and informed by Jewish values.

To act...As a valuable educational resource in elder care for the entire community.

Front Cover Photo:
Joan Becker, seated,
with daughter Lauren
and grand dog, Ali-bama.

Cover photo credit: Leslie Held

Gala photo credit:
Dan Harris PhotoArt, LLC

If you have a resident story or feedback you'd like to share, please let us know. We also welcome opportunities to meet with senior groups in the community to discuss our programs & services.

Please contact Kari Bell.
kbell@rivergarden.org or (904) 288-7855

Boards and Officers—Updated for 2022-2023

River Garden Senior Services

Janis Fleet, President
Susan Cohen, Vice President
Sandy Zimmerman, Vice President
Marsha Pollock, Secretary
Ed Grenadier, Treasurer

River Garden Hebrew Home

Larry Goldberg, President
Randy Kammer, Vice President, Chair of Admissions
Debby Kaye, Vice President, Co-Chair of Admissions
Bruce Horovitz, Vice President, Co-Chair of Admissions
Morrie Osterer, Vice President, Chair of House
Rachelle Gottlieb, Secretary
Cindy Demri, Treasurer

River Garden Auxiliary Officers

Mimi Kaufman, President
Ellen Rubens, President Elect
Shirley Bielski, Recording Secretary
Nancy Mizrahi, Treasurer
Carol D'Onofrio, Membership VP
Michelle Steinfeld, Fundraising VP

River Garden Foundation

Sandy Zimmerman, President
Susan DuBow, Vice President
Jeff Edwards, Vice President
Adam Frisch, Vice President
Debbie Parker, Vice President
Andrea Mail, Secretary
Michael Price, Treasurer

The Coves at River Garden

Michael Price, President
Malcolm Bloom, Vice President
Shirley Bielski, Vice President
Susan Cohen, Secretary
Judy Paul, Treasurer

River Garden sends our heartfelt condolences to the Frisch family on the passing of Harry Frisch, long time River Garden Foundation Board member. He will be missed dearly by the community.



Harry and Lilo Frisch at the
2013 River Garden Foundation Gala.
May their memory forever be a blessing.

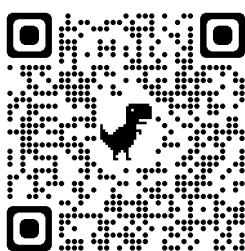
Inside Line

By Mauri Witten Mizrahi, Chief Executive Officer

As 2023 begins, I am reminded of how quickly time passes and how important it is to manage it. Rabbi Jonathan Saks once said “Time management is more than management and larger than time.” He taught that there are only twenty-four hours in a day, seven days in a week, and a span of years that, however long, is still all too short. Whoever we are, whatever we do, the single most important fact about our life, on which all else depends, is how we spend our time.

Thank you to the River Garden staff and volunteers for the selfless work they do and the time they spend enriching the lives of our residents. Thank you to the board members of River Garden Senior Services, River Garden Hebrew Home, River Garden Foundation and The Coves for the time and talent they dedicate to supporting and nurturing River Garden’s caring community. Thank you to the stakeholders and donors who give their time and treasure to support River Garden’s mission.

A great time was had by all, December 10, 2022, at the 30th River Garden Foundation Gala. The River Garden Foundation is proud to share that \$252,938 was raised, the most raised by any Gala in our history. We are deeply grateful to Sue Eaglstein, Debbie Parker, Jeanine Rogozinski, Debra Setzer and Stacie Wilf for their dedication to raising these precious funds. The Foundation had an incredible year of philanthropic support in 2022 including several new legacy and endowment gifts, grants, and meaningful gifts in-kind. We look forward to highlighting these gifts and more in our Annual Report.



Scan to watch Stephanie Sals, RN, share why she enjoys working at River Garden.

This video was a part of our presentation to the Gold Seal professional review team.



On February 1, 2023, The Coves celebrates its 28th anniversary. The Coves is now 100% occupied and its waiting list is building.

Please join me in congratulating Betty Sorna, Chief Financial Officer on receiving The Association of Jewish Aging Services (AJAS) Professional of the Year Award. Joined by many members of our boards and staff, she will be recognized on March 21, 2023 at the AJAS annual conference in St Petersburg, Florida.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend River Garden’s 77th Anniversary Day on March 26, 2023. Chairperson of the day is Nathan Goldman, River Garden Hebrew Home board member.

Plus, we are building excitement for the River Garden Foundation 27th Annual River Garden Classic chaired by Tom Harris and sponsored by Hardage-Giddens along with Jody and Janne Brandenburg at Deerwood Country Club on April 19, 2023. Registration is now open.

In 2023, I am looking forward to spending time with all the people I love and appreciating each day and every simcha (joyous, celebratory event). Come spend some time at River Garden, you will be glad you did.

I hope you enjoy this season’s issue of the River Garden News. Our future is bright.

Mauri



The Gold Seal Program awards and recognizes nursing home facilities that demonstrate excellence in long-term care over a sustained period, promotes the stability of the industry and facilitates the physical, social, and emotional well-being of nursing home facility residents.

River Garden applied for its tenth Gold Seal in late 2022.

— 30th —
River Garden Foundation
— Gala —



Christina Levine, CFRE
Chief Development Officer
clevine@rivergarden.org

A Time to Shine

The 30th River Garden Foundation Gala was most certainly *A Time to Shine* at the Sawgrass Marriott on December 10, 2022. Close to 600 guests were in attendance celebrating River Garden with dinner, dancing and a silent auction. The evening program was led by our engaging Master of Ceremonies, Ken Jacobs, and included a special tribute to Kathy Osterer, who was recognized for her 23 years of outstanding dedication as the former chief development officer.

Thanks to the incredible leadership of our Gala co-chairs Sue Eaglstein, Debbie Parker, Debra Setzer, Jeanine Rogozinski and Stacie Wilf, the Gala Committee and the generous support of countless sponsors, we raised \$252,938. The funds raised have a significant impact on the exceptional care and programs provided to all seniors we serve, regardless of faith or financial ability. We are deeply grateful to everyone who joined us at the Gala. *River Garden shines bright because of you!*



Top L-R: Sue Eaglstein, Debra Setzer, Debbie Parker, Mauri Mizrahi, Christina Levine, Kathy Osterer, Jeanine Rogozinski, Stacie Wilf
Bottom L-R: David Miller, Sheriff TK & Robin Waters, Cathi & Shawn Coarsey, Angie & Michael Paul



THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Diamond Benefactors

Debbie & Jeff Parker and Stacie & Dr. Larry Wilf
Linda & David Stein

Golden Benefactors

Atlantic Self Storage
DuBow Family Foundation
Frisch Family
Setzer Family

Royal Benefactors

Janne & Jody Brandenburg/Hardage-Giddens Funeral Homes & Cemeteries
HUB International Florida | Judy H. Mizrahi | PRI Productions | Selevan Family Foundation
Shari & David Shuman | Sysco Food Services - Jacksonville | Truist | Brenda & Dr. Eugene Wolchok

Grand Benefactors

Northern Trust
Natalie & Rabbi Eli Menaged, Jessica & Dr. Victor Hassid
Melissa & Dr. Douglas Storch, Ashley Osterer & Families—In Honor of Kathy Osterer





THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Benefactors

Ackerman Cancer Center
 Baptist Health
 Berman Family Foundation
 The Block Families
 Community Hospice & Palliative Care Foundation
 Sue Eaglstein
 Mary & Jeff Edwards
 Florida Blue
 Hanania Automotive
 The Korman and Shelton Families
 Matthew, Anne & Robert Lufrano
 Mauri & Alan Mizrahi
 Rachel & Dr. Craig Morgenthal
 Kathy & Morrie Osterer
 Partners Pharmacy
 Barbara Lane Resnick
 Dr. Chaim & Jeanine Rogozinski
 In honor of Mrs. Ella Rogozinski
 ruckus
 Jill & Samuel Stromberg
 WELLS FARGO The Private Bank

Circle of Friends

Anonymous
 The Brodsky Family
 Sharon & Richard Browdy
 LeAnna & Husein Cumber
 Beth & Harvey Dikter
 Janis & Bob Fleet
 Paul, Martin and Emily Glickstein
 Vicki-lynn Gloger
 Goetz Family
 Allison & Ken Jacobs/GrayRobinson PA
 The Hartley Press
 Irene & James Jaffa
 The Jaffe Group at Morgan Stanley
 Jordan & Shirley Ansbacher Family Foundation
 Monique & David Miller
 MMI Dining Systems
 The Millstone Family
 Michelle & Mark Penson
 Miriam Finegold Price
 Select Rehabilitation
 Dr. Abe & Marjie Rogozinski
 Kimberly & Richard Sisisky
 Taverna Restaurant / Kiley & Sam Efron
 Alison & Brent Trager
 Troy Spurlin Interiors
 Dr. Skip Wilson & Judy Wilson
 Zimmerman Family Foundation – Elli & Charles,
 Chase & Morrie, Nancy & Seeman





THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS

Platinum Patrons

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Merle Cherry
Kim Glasgal & Pete Levy
Phyllis & Dr. Lawrence Goldberg
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MSL, P.A.
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Ellen & Alan Rosner
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Betty & Dr. Michael Sorna
Randee & Marty Steinberg

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Karen Backilman
Michelle Grippi Baker – Northwestern
Mutual
Debbie Banks & Dr. Garry Kitay
Donna & Greg Berger
Shirley & Abe Bielski
LaVerne & Andy Cantor
Susan & Norm Cohen
Cecilia & David Cristol
Michael De Santo
Carol D'Onofrio
Gloria Einstein
Susan & Dr. Ron Elinoff
Beverly & Mel Fruit
Diane & Nathan Goldman
Jackie & Stephen Goldman
Nancy & Mark Green
Margie & Aaron Holzer
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Rosely & Dr. Robert Kanner
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Dr. & Mrs. Dennis J. Lafer
Christina & Mark Levine
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Robin & Jeffery Morris
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Dr. Deena & Jim Richman
Meryl & Dr. Harris Rittenberg
Dr. Emily & Mr. Erik Rostholder
Nina & Dr. Neal Roth
Diane & Dr. Mitchell Rothstein
Barbara & Eliot Safer
Barbara & Michael Schneider
Sandy & Dr. Robert Selwitz
Ellen & Dr. Barry Setzer
George Strumlauf
Robin & Kingsley Tharpe
Dorothy Verstandig

SAVE THE DATE

River Garden Foundation Gala
November 18, 2023
Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa

Co-chairs:

**Danielle Leder and Lauren
Setzer**





Strong Like Esther for 100 Years | Celebrating the Leaders

Auxiliary Donor Luncheon Scheduled for March 8, 2023

Since its inception in 1922, the River Garden Auxiliary, then known as the Ladies Hebrew Aid Sheltering Society, has been an integral part of the River Garden and Jacksonville community.

Come celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the River Garden Auxiliary at the Donor Luncheon. The theme is “Strong Like Esther” and the event is scheduled for March 8th at River Garden. It will be so good to come together again and show appreciation for all of the leaders of this organization. Musical entertainment will be provided by the talented Cantor Carrie Barry.

Lunch is served at noon but plan to come early so you can check out the raffle items and socialize beforehand. **Tickets are \$40** and there are also various levels of sponsorship that support the Auxiliary’s mission to help the residents of the River Garden Hebrew Home with special, quality initiatives. Please remember this is one of the Auxiliary’s biggest fundraisers of the year so we hope to have everyone fully support this event.

Make your reservations now. The last event sold out early, so please make sure your reservation is received by March 1st. If you have a question, feel free to contact Ellen Rubens or Barbara Safer, event co-chairpersons, at (904) 651-6607.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

SUPPORT GROUP

alzheimer’s 
association®

Do you care for someone diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease or dementia? Are you looking for information and support? Please join us.

2ND WEDNESDAYS

FEB 8 | MAR 8 | APR 12 | MAY 10 | JUN 14

3:30 PM

AT RIVER GARDEN PARKER CHAPEL

Questions? CALL (904) 288-7851
EMAIL jglassman@rivergarden.org

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT



River Garden’s Volunteer Appreciation event returns! Join fellow River Garden volunteers for a festive brunch in recognition of your dedicated service.

Plus, help us build the team by bringing a potential volunteer as your guest!

APRIL 27, 2023 | 10:30 AM

AT RIVER GARDEN EDELMAN PATIO

Please RSVP
EMAIL eraffol@rivergarden.org



THREE FUN WAYS TO SUPPORT RIVER GARDEN THIS SPRING

1



river garden classic APRIL 19, 2023

REGISTER TODAY!

[HTTPS://WWW.RIVERGARDEN.ORG/RIVER-GARDEN-FOUNDATION/GOLF-CLASSIC/](https://www.rivergarden.org/river-garden-foundation/golf-classic/)



Q? CONTACT MICHELLE (904) 886-8431

MBRANLY@RIVERGARDEN.ORG

2

BIRDIES FOR CHARITY



Birdies for Charity is a fundraising program offered by THE PLAYERS Championship. Before March 8, enter your donation and guess the number of birdies you think will be made at THE PLAYERS 2023. The closest guess will receive a chance to win \$10,000, and River Garden will also receive a gift from the program.

<http://birdiesforcharity.playerschampionship.com/donation>

Questions? CALL (904) 886-7763

EMAIL gmargol@rivergarden.org

3

ANNUAL AUXILIARY DRAWING

TOMBOLA

This is your chance to win \$2,000! In connection with the upcoming 77th Anniversary Day, the River Garden Auxiliary will conduct its well-loved TOMBOLA drawing. Tickets are \$50/each or \$100/three.



TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE

<https://rivergardenauxiliary.square.site/home>

Questions? CALL Betty Abisch (904) 683-2222
or EMAIL Rachel Brodsky | chelbrod@gmail.com

Festival of Lights



Leslie Held
Director of Jewish Life
lheld@rivergarden.org

Holiday observances are an especially meaningful way we sustain Jewish life on our campus while strengthening relationships throughout our community.

Hanukkah brought together our River Garden Board members, clergy, supporters, and friends to join our residents and Coves members for daily candle lighting. It was a week filled with feelings of warmth, camaraderie and friendship as we gathered outdoors for a bit of learning, blessings, songs and treats. As a result of this community support for Jewish life, we enrich the lives of those living on our campus and continue our mission of maintaining an environment supportive of Jewish identity and informed by Jewish values.

It is gratifying beyond words to express our appreciation to all of you who partnered with us during the successful weeklong Hanukkah holiday. You brought joy and lifted our spirits due to your generous participation.

We are ever grateful for the triumph of Torah's light over darkness.

Please enjoy these highlights.



Mauri and Nan Rothstein pause at the menorah while at the Governor's mansion for the Hanukkah party.



Mauri's face is pure joy as she prepares sizzling latkes for the Coves members.



Michelle Penson arrived with teens from the Jacksonville Jewish Center for the annual Ugly Hanukkah Sweater party at the Coves. A lovely afternoon of latkes, donuts and conversation secured the developing friendships between the generations.



Rabbi Horowitz brought the boys choir from the Torah Academy for the first day of Hanukkah. Providing song sheets to those in attendance, the students were awesome as they belted out Hanukkah songs with such happiness.

Hazzan Holzer and Rabbi Rosenblum made quite an entrance as they were decked out in their Hanukkah finery. Hazzan played the keyboard and we raised our voices in song.



Community friends joined Home Board president Larry Goldberg for candle #2.



Rabbi Glasser, accompanied by Jo-Ellen on her guitar, joined with the Horowitz family for candle #3. The atmosphere was one of energy and excitement as music filled the air.



The Federation's Young Families division hosted Friday afternoon. Faye Hedrick came armed with dreidels and beautifully crocheted trivets handmade by a volunteer to pass out to the residents.

Check out the QR code to watch Chabad's Rabbi Velvel Kahanov and his nephews as they dance to the music.





After a long hiatus, Leslie Held and Isabel Balotin welcomed back community friends for a Ha-Ha Hanukkah Party. Our guests were treated to a delicious breakfast followed by hilarious videos. There were some 'standup' comedians who took the stage and shared their favorite jokes with the appreciative audience. Those in attendance were thrilled to be back together for a casual, fun morning to reconnect. Our River Garden residents benefitted from their generosity as they brought boxes of Hanukkah gifts including nonskid socks and large print activity books.



The Torah Academy high school girls came for their monthly visit during Hanukkah and after splitting in teams, played a very competitive game of Family Feud.



The annual Mitzvah Day on December 25th brought volunteers and family members for visits. The Cohen Auditorium was the gathering spot for a relaxed afternoon of games and conversation. The menorah's 8th candle was burning bright as we concluded our week-long Hanukkah celebration.



We are committed to working together with our partners and friends to build a community guided by values of mutual respect and understanding.



River Garden staff and family attend the community vigil against antisemitism at the James Weldon Park downtown Jacksonville.



Holocaust survivor, Hedy Bohm (L) travels with the **Hate Ends Now** tour speaking to guests. This powerful multi-media program encourages visitors to be more educated and empowered to speak against intolerance.



Wow!
Bob Long celebrated his 101st birthday in January.

Honoring Our Elders Do You Know Someone Turning 100?

Turning 100 is quite an achievement! As of March, we will have seven centenarians in our Home. **If you know someone who achieves this milestone, get them some recognition!**

From the President of the United States

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-greeting/>

From the TODAY Show

<https://www.today.com/series/today-celebrates/celebrate-today-ask-al-roker-wish-your-loved-ones-happy-t69606>

Please note that a minimum of six weeks notice (prior to the event date) is required for processing this type of request. Requests for events that are more than 150 days away cannot be accepted.



Moti and Cindy Demri's granddaughter, Maya, visits her aunt Donna during Hanukkah.

Thank You For Helping Us Stay Healthy From Cold, Flu and COVID-19

River Garden's current visitation policy requires masks to be worn while in the Home. Masks are not required while visiting at The Coves.

If you have any symptoms of cold, flu or COVID-19, or if you have been exposed to others who are sick, we appreciate your delaying your visit. Our social workers can help with video chats, if needed.

Resident Council Officers Installed

Congratulations to our 2023 Resident Council Officers:

Phyllis Bernard, President

Roma Heaven, Vice President

Harriett Osborne, Secretary

Frances Young, Treasurer



Phyllis Bernard celebrates her 88th birthday surrounded by family.

Become Acquainted With Two Residents



Sheldon Gendzier

Sheldon Gendzier was born in 1928, finished high school in 1946 and graduated UF in 1949.

His connection with River Garden began long ago as his father was Harry Gendzier, the second president of the Hebrew Home. As Sheldon matured, he served on the board for River Garden, eventually being named president of the Home in 1969.

Professionally, Sheldon's first job was with Florida Rag, a recycling company that his father started in 1937. He ran the company until 1984, which by then was a waste paper company.

From his memories he recalls his favorite family recipe being his mother's meatloaf and macaroni with gravy. He recalls his mother would add bread in the hamburger to make more to go around for the family. To this day, akin to the story of his mother's meatloaf solution, Sheldon, enjoys problem-solving puzzles like Sudoku.



Donna Hethington

Donna Hethington moved to River Garden in 2011. Born and raised Jacksonville, she is the oldest three children. She says that her sister Cindy knows her best.

Donna describes herself as an overachiever, always optimistic. Her favorite pastime is reading and she still listens to books daily in the alcove by the Edelman Patio.

She attended Jacksonville University, was married for 18 years and enjoyed a professional career with the IRS for 30 years. Talking with other people was a favorite part of her job.

When asked what style she would like to see back in fashion, she shares, "I wish the hula hoopskirt would come back."

Meet Don Young, Member of The Coves



Don Young has resided at The Coves since spring of 2021, after having previously owned and operated his own architectural firm in Jacksonville for over 30 years. He is well known for his kind, creative, easy going demeanor. Don's passion for building and creating remained steadfast throughout his life. Mr. Young was born in the town of Allendale, South

Carolina, which he called home up until the age of 6 years old. Don recalls his early childhood as being fun, alongside his younger brother Lewis. Leaving Allendale, the Young family moved to Beaufort, South Carolina, where Don's father got involved in the lumber mill business.

Throughout Don's adolescence, he loved to build. He built airplane models and forts in the woods. Don has always excelled in math, and as he accomplished new milestones in schooling, he would be rewarded with trips to the lumber mill with his father. Later on, Don's first job was with the family business in the lumber yard, where he became familiar with a multitude of equipment and materials.

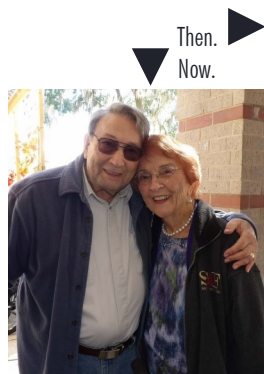
In early adulthood, Don Young went on to study Architecture at Georgia Institute of Technology. When asked how architecture specifically became a calling for him, Don replied "I found myself walking down the street in Charleston, South Carolina, or Savannah, Georgia, marveling at all the old colonial buildings. Every time, I'd stop and just look at them. The beauty, complexity, and technique has always enthralled me."

During college, Don met Ann Moscow, and they were married a year before his graduation. Don and Ann welcomed their first son Neil that same year. After graduating, Don worked for an Architecture Firm in Atlanta, Georgia and during this time, Greg, Don and Ann's second child was born. After five years in Atlanta, Don and his family relocated to Hampton, Virginia to assist Don's father with running a construction firm.

After about a year, Don and his family moved to Jacksonville, Florida where Ann began working as a pre-school educator at the Jacksonville Jewish Center, and Don opened his own architectural firm. Ann, as Don says, "was a wonderful teacher, wife, and mother." They had their third child, Todd, shortly after moving to Jacksonville.

Fifty seven years later, sadly, Ann had gotten sick and passed away. While Don settled into a new normal while residing at The Coves, he reconnected with his 'high school sweetheart', Jane McManus, by sending his condolences for the loss of her husband that took place shortly after Don's wife's passing. Don and Jane met seventy three years ago at Beaufort High School when they were fifteen years old, they enjoyed a four year relationship together. After graduation, they parted, went to college and met the loved ones they would go on to marry. They saw each other a few times at reunions over the many, many years apart. Getting back in touch through phone calls and messages, rekindled their interest and now they are back together after all of these years. Their love is beautiful to witness, and we welcome Jane as our newest Coves Member.

All in all, Don Young's story is unique and passionate. Don believes the classic saying "you never work a day in your life when you love your job." His appreciation and dedication to his work has created ripples of positivity and encouragement to those around him. When asked what wisdom and biggest life lessons he would like to share, Don expressed "most things are not worth fighting about. Choose your fights carefully," and "trust in yourself. When you have the experience and are sure of what you're doing, trust your own judgment."





New volunteer, Tracy, has settled in doing what bakers love to do! Once she divulged her passion for the kitchen, we have all been rewarded with her yummy recipes created in the Frisch Pavilion.



Cantor Barry from The Temple arranged for members of its choir to bring an amazing concert on a Sunday morning. The music ranged from familiar Jewish songs and healing melodies to Frank Sinatra and American folk music. The appreciative audience tapped their feet and clapped their hands as the songs raised their spirits.



Thanks to the generosity of the Berman family, the 2023 JCA Concert Artist Series is back!

Here, pianist Maxim Lando shares his impressive talent with the crowd in the Frisch Pavilion at River Garden. The passion with which he plays is remarkable, as his fingers move flawlessly over the ivories.

It is no wonder that he's the recipient of the 2021-2022 Vendome Grand Prize and the prestigious 2020 Gilmore Young Artist awards.



On quiet afternoons, you can often find residents spending time working on puzzles. Resident Emma and Laura Platzer, our Jewish Life Assistant, both enjoy puzzling. This impromptu visit demonstrates the wonderful way our residents and staff engage regularly, stimulating our brains while enjoying each other's company.



It's no secret that maintaining a focus on gratitude can help everyone maintain a more positive outlook on life.

This journal hopes to encourage us to give thanks for the little (as well as the big) things in our lives. We appreciate the help from the Torah Academy girls and Isabel Balotin for bringing this project to life.



The Gardening Club from The Coves has been doing wonderful work cultivating plants and flowers in the raised beds at River Garden.

Ashley and a few members of The Coves have taken trips to Ace Garden Center to select the plants that would grow best in the gardens, and then they work together with our Adult Day Program clients to keep the plants looking healthy. All those with a green thumb and gift for gab are always welcomed to The Coves Garden Club!



Elaine Bricault, one of our newer members at The Coves, is all smiles on New Year's Eve. We celebrated 2023 with a fun-filled happy hour, complete with a live countdown, dancing and all the bells and whistles. This year is going to be the best yet!



We had a great turn out and lots of laughs at another 'Not So Newlywed' game night at The Coves! This friendly competition reveals which couple from The Coves knows each other best based on their ability to match answers to questions about their relationship. Contestants included June and Steve Meinstein, Lois and Alan Chepenik, and Beverly and Mel Fruit.

Bev and Mel won, but it was a really close game between everyone. Pictured here are Mel and Bev at our last Oktoberfest party.



Welcoming New Leaders To The Ranks



"River Garden has been my dream employer for years as its mission and values align perfectly with my own. I look forward to serving the community and its residents to the best of my ability as the Associate Director of Nursing."

Kristen Latscha currently has joined River Garden as the Associate Director of Nursing. Following an extensive, comprehensive orientation, she will transition into the Director of Nursing, responsible for overseeing all aspects of skilled nursing in our long-term, memory care and short-term programs.

Prior to her position at River Garden, Kristen spent seven years in Trauma/Surgical Step-Down ICU at UF Health Jacksonville as a Charge Nurse. Additionally she spent 1 year as an Evening Supervisor at Isle Health and Rehab. She has earned a BSN from The University of Toledo and a Juris Master in Healthcare Law and Regulation from Florida State University.

In her spare time, Kristen enjoys spending time with her 3 fur babies, Luka, Lyla, and Annie. She also enjoys participating in flag football and attending local sporting events including football and hockey.



"River Garden is one of the nicest facilities I have ever had the absolute privilege to be associated with, and am so very pleased that I am here."

Brad Cheek is the Director of Facilities Management, bringing decades of experience to our campus. He is responsible for overseeing all aspects of maintenance, grounds, transportation and safety.

Prior to his position at River Garden, Brad managed Plant Operations in several hotels in Las Vegas, NV., on ships and shore stations while in the U.S. Coast Guard, and accumulated 41 years in the healthcare field. In fact, he has also served as a nursing home administrator and Chief Executive Officer, so he is keenly aware of the strict guidelines we follow at River Garden.

In his spare time, he is involved with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and American Legion. He also loves spending time with his wife.

family

LIKE BRANCHES ON A TREE, WE
ALL GROW IN DIFFERENT
DIRECTIONS, YET
OUR ROOTS REMAIN AS ONE



SCAN THE QR CODE & WATCH

Staff come together with one
word top-of-mind: **FAMILY**



The 25+ Years of Service 'Club' Reaches 18 Members!

At River Garden we believe staff stability is the number one reason for our success. We strive to maintain our work relationships with energy and enthusiasm, and we are incredibly proud of these eighteen staff members who remain devoted to our agency.

Name	Years of Service as of 3/30/2023	Department Name
Lori Donley	38 Years	Dining Services
Khadijah Burns	36 Years	Dining Services
Robert 'Bobby' Boss	34 Years	Plant Operations
Ben Rayo	33 Years	Plant Operations
Sandra Causey	32 Years	Environmental Services
Carol Thomas	31 Years	Administration Nursing
Lisa Poremba	29 Years	Life Enrichment
Cheryl Weidner	29 Years	Admissions
Edwine Hemedry	28 Years	Nursing - Traditional Care II
Steve Meisel	28 Years	Religious Services
Maria Natovich	28 Years	Nursing - Traditional Care I
Jorge Tinana	27 Years	Nursing - Traditional Care I
Patti DiGregorio	27 Years	Business Office
Diane Mixson	27 Years	Dental Hygienist
Betty Sorna	27 Years	Chief Financial Officer
Sheri Samuels	26 Years	Executive Assistant—Administration
Dori Norman	26 Years	Life Enrichment
Kelli Keeley	25 Years	Human Resources
Lisa Feldner	25 Years	The Therapy Center



Bobby Boss generally shies away from public recognition but we certainly do appreciate him, and are grateful that he stays engaged part-time to help us when needed.

Here is a special shout-out to Home and Community-Based Services

The Home Health team provides care management and personal visits to private clients who live at The Coves. With this support offered in their apartments, members are able to live independently as long as possible, a goal for most older adults.



The Adult Day Program team lovingly supports clients who still live at home in the community. The daily program is available from 7:30AM—5PM and is a much-needed support for family caregivers.





We appreciate the Staff who volunteered at the River Garden Foundation Gala: John, Michelle, Gabrielle, Jess, Sammie, Sara, Belline, Jerrilyn and Ronnie.

Minnie Schreiber Award Recipient Announced

At the Staff Holiday Party in December, Jennifer Lang was announced as the 2023 Minnie Schreiber Award recipient.

Jennifer is a 5-year member of the River Garden staff, currently working in the Home's Admissions department as an Administrative Assistant. Jennifer was born in Tijuana, Mexico. As the child of a U.S. service member, she moved a lot before settling in Florida where she graduated from Orange Park High School. Jennifer enjoys working at River Garden because of the environment and the bright and positive outlook displayed by staff. She feels everyone is helpful which makes the flow of each day more enjoyable. When asked what advice Jennifer would offer to new staff she replied, "Don't be embarrassed to ask questions. I'm an introvert and tend to be shy in new surroundings. But, I always ask questions when in doubt. Learning from my mistakes made me better in my position and gave me the confidence to perform better." When Jennifer is not working she loves traveling and adventure. She also enjoys spending time with family, playing spades with her grandma, yoga and spoiling her dog, Lola. Jennifer tries to maintain a positive outlook on life. Her favorite quote is "Don't cry over spilled milk."



Nathan, Mike, Lori & Liz are just a few of the spirited Staff who support DUUUVAL! We are proud of our Jaguars.





Groovy. Peace. Love.

FUN FOR THE HOLIDAYS



ADULT DAY PROGRAM

Available Monday – Friday, 7:30AM—5:00PM

If your loved one lives with you, but you need help that will allow you to go to work and/or engage in other activities, then the Adult Day Program might be the solution for you.

The Adult Day Program is designed for adults 62+ with cognitive impairment who may benefit from a purposeful daily routine. In the program, participants are able to socialize with others while receiving meals, assistance and supervision. It's especially beneficial for those who desire social interaction but can no longer structure their own daily activities or be safely left alone at home.

The program gives caregivers a break from 'round-the-clock care, also.

It is important to know that the River Garden Adult Day Program is a **social program**, offering engaging activities that stimulate each individual's interests, skills and unique abilities. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are included in our day with attention to special diets when needed.

For more information about the program, please contact Erica Hickey at (904) 288-7858 or ehickey@rivergarden.org.



A nationally recognized leader in senior care, River Garden's Adult Day Program offers stimulating activities and encourages group interaction.

Do You Need Caregiver Support?

If you are a person providing care for someone with Alzheimer's or related dementias, please know that you are always welcome at the Alzheimer's Association support group at River Garden. Led by Dr. Sue Krall, the group meets at 3:30PM on the second Wednesdays of each month. This is a confidential and complimentary group; no reservations are required.



Registration Now Open

RGT

RIVER GARDEN TEENS

Registration is now open for River Garden Teens, our Summer 2023 teen volunteer program. This unique opportunity allows teens to participate in supportive roles throughout the Home and on the campus, increasing their leadership skills and experiencing the benefits of connecting with older adults. To secure an application and discuss potential summer placement, interested students ages 13—17 are encouraged to schedule an appointment with Esther Yegelwel Raffol, Volunteer Coordinator, as soon as possible. Positions fill quickly.



Volunteers, Please Contact Esther

Rebuilding and Strengthening the River Garden Legacy of Volunteerism

Our residents are at the center of our mission and volunteers play a vital role as partners in our success.

Our volunteers are a dynamic group of men and women who clearly understand that they enrich their own lives even as they enrich others.

Do you have an hour to talk with a resident one-on-one, or a free morning to escort a resident to an activity? Would you like to bring a tail-wagging companion for visiting? We need volunteers for filing, computer work and to assist with special events, as well.

Please contact Esther.



Esther Yegelwel Raffol
eraffol@rivergarden.org



River Garden Senior Services
11401 Old St. Augustine Road
Jacksonville, Florida 32258
(904) 260-1818
www.rivergarden.org



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RIVER GARDEN

anniversary day

BBQ, FAMILY FUN & ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday | 3-6 PM
MARCH 26, 2023

PLEASE BE OUR GUEST FOR A BEAUTIFUL AFTERNOON WITH MUSIC, INFLATABLE SLIDE, POPCORN, SNO-CONES, DESSERTS, PONY RIDES, PETTING ZOO, TRAIN RIDES, VINTAGE SALE, PHOTOS AND MORE!