

Moments Matter

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Volunteers make a difference every day Silver Lining kicks off *National Make A Difference Day* with an annual photo contest and calendar for volunteers



In May, the DADS Silver Lining program invited its volunteers to capture on camera a special moment from a volunteer visit. These photos were entered in the first annual Silver Lining photo contest. Photos by nine volunteers were selected for publishing in the first 2010 Silver Lining calendar. Winners are: Kayle Askins, Maurie Lewis, Kyra Manning, Spencer Martin, Jamie McKinnon, Dicque Oliver and Michael Wells of Sulphur Springs; Kate McCasland, of Midlothian; and Donna Martin, of Tomball.

Download the 2010 “Moments Make a Difference” Calendar at:
www.dads.state.tx.us/silverlining//20101calendar.pdf.

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT SILVER LINING, contact us at 1-800-889-8595
Visit the Silver Lining website at: www.silverliningatdads.org

Silver Lining is a volunteer outreach program of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) providing volunteer visits to people living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and state supported living centers. For more information on DADS, visit: www.dads.state.tx.us

ACTIVITY IDEAS

Spelling Game

Whereas spelling bees are often competitive, this spelling game emphasizes teamwork.

Objectives:

Provide participants with a fun opportunity to demonstrate intergenerational cooperation.

Steps:

1. Obtain four volunteers—two younger and two older—from an intergenerational audience.
2. Ask the audience a broad question that relates to the themes of age, aging or intergenerational relations such as “Tell me a word that makes you think of birthdays” or “Tell me a word that describes activities that people of different generations do together.” Group members should shout out words. Select a word and give the word to the spelling team.
3. The team should spell the word one letter, one person at a time. Once they have spelled the word, they should then repeat the word together.
4. Next, the spellers make up a group sentence using the word—one person, one word at a time. Then, the group finishes by repeating the word as a group.
5. This is done several times; one or two additional audience members may join the spellers. The facilitator asks the full group what the exercise is really about, guiding them to realize that it is not about accurate spelling or grammar, but rather about teamwork, collaboration, and trust.

Referenced in Together (Generations United's newsletter), 1995, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 5.: <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/agrs91.pdf>



Jocelyn, a Junior Girl Scout from Troop # 2552 in Plano, submitted the winning patch design. Her patch design was submitted to the patch vendor to create the final stylized design pictured on this page.

Girl Scouts of Texas announce a new Silver Lining patch

The Texas Department of Human Services created the Adopt A Nursing Home program in the early 1990s to serve older Texans and make a state-level commitment to excellence in nursing home care. (The program became part of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services [DADS] when the agency was formed in 2004.)

For years, Texas Girl Scouts have been serving seniors across the state with friendly visits. Always resourceful, Girl Scouts have found unique and creative ways to connect with elders through local communities and planned events, including Adopt A Nursing Home. Through their efforts, both the girls and the seniors benefited.

In 2008, DADS changed the program name from Adopt A Nursing Home to Silver Lining to be more inclusive of all DADS clients. Volunteers continue to host visits to people living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and now they also serve people living in the state supported living centers. The name Silver Lining highlights the positive benefits of social connection and emphasizes the program's core message that "Moments Make A Difference!"

A new name, a new patch design

Girl Scouts continue to provide meaningful visits across Texas. While the events may vary, their mission — to make a difference in the life of another — remains unchanged. With the new program name, came the need to update the original Girl Scouts patch. Girl Scout leaders hosted a patch design contest for Girl



Scouts in 2009. Girl Scouts from five councils (Texas Oklahoma Plains, San Jacinto, Central Texas, Northeast Texas and Southwest Texas) submitted artwork for the new patch.

Early program history

In 2002, the Texas Department of Human Services and the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council partnered to create a patch through the Adopt A Nursing Home program. This patch program encouraged relationship building and created a deeper way for Girl Scouts to connect with older Texans living in long-term care settings.

Additionally, the visits the girls were hosting were incorporated into specific patch criteria, where their coordinated involvement with facility residents created a means for scouts to obtain a special patch for their level of involvement with the program. Girl Scouts signed up for a one year commitment to host regular visits and created new ways to engage with residents. The program continued to expand and accommodated all age groups. It also allowed for flexibility and creativity as long as at least four visits were completed in one year's time.

Additionally, the new patch program allowed for multiple year participation by adding in rocking chair pins to

SUBMIT YOUR SILVER LINING STORIES

Tell us your story!

We encourage everyone to share. Stories can focus on a Silver Lining event or project that your group has hosted.

If you would like to include photos, please contact DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement office in Austin at 1-800-889-8595, as there are guidelines for any photos submitted.

All photographs used must have releases signed for each person pictured. Please remember to omit any personal identification information.

For example, do NOT include last names, the name of the center you visited or the exact address of a volunteer location.

Submit stories online at:
www.dads.state.tx.us/volunteer/yourstory.cfm



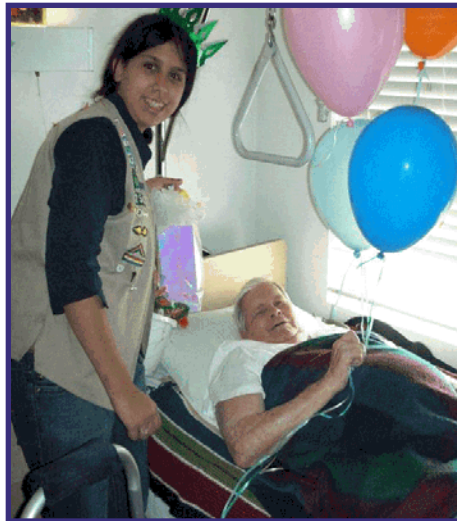
attach to the patch for each year a group renewed their commitment to visit through the program.

A new design

In May 2009, a panel from five Girl Scout Councils and DADS Silver Lining evaluated the design entries and chose a winner. Jocelyn, a Junior Girl Scout from Troop # 2552 in Plano, submitted the winning design. Jocelyn's winning design was submitted to the patch vendor to create a final stylized design. Girl Scouts who participate in Silver Lining will follow the guidelines adopted by their council to obtain a patch for their participation.

Our thanks to our Girl Scout volunteers for the meaningful social opportunities they bring to people living in Texas nursing homes, assisted living facilities and state supported living centers. The gifts of time and talent continue to make a difference every day in the lives of others.

For more information on how to get involved, contact DADS Silver Lining program at 1-800-889-8595 or send an e-mail to: volunteerdads@dads.state.tx.us



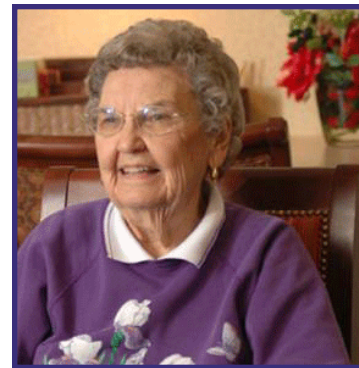
For years, Texas Girl Scouts have been serving seniors across the state with friendly visits. Always resourceful, Girl Scouts have found unique and creative ways to connect with elders through local communities and planned events.



Silver Lining is a program of the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). For more information, visit: www.dads.state.tx.us

Encore! One More!

A Special Campaign for Making Connections



One of the main recommendations for maintaining a healthy mind and preventing isolation is to stay connected to people through the local community.

Studies show that people who are socially engaged take longer to show the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease than those who remain isolated.

Geriatric Mental Health Foundation, "HealthyAging Fact Sheet"; www.gmhfonline.org/gmhf/consumer/healthyaging.html

Join Silver Lining volunteers all over Texas to promote "Encore! One More!" — an awareness campaign promoting companionship and connection during the month of January

Visiting with friends and family is a part of the holiday season that we all look forward to, and this is especially true for individuals living in long-term care facilities. When the season for frequent volunteer visits and events begins to taper off, it is not uncommon for residents living in long-term care settings to feel more isolated.

Help create a happy new year by making a commitment to come back **one more time** to visit residents at your partnering facility through the Silver Lining program. You can help someone else stay connected to his or her community and accomplish your New Year's resolutions at the same time.

An easy way to incorporate both fun and fitness is through the Texercise program. The program is a statewide health promotions program of the Texas Department of Aging & Disability Services (DADS) that encourages individuals and communities to adopt healthy lifestyle habits such as regular physical activities and healthy nutrition. Design a visit theme to start the new year off in a healthy way by hosting a *Fit for the Health of It!* 12-week Texercise program, or work with residents on their New Year's resolutions. Then, schedule a visit with residents at least **one more time**.

Make a difference in the life of another and start the New Year with a friendly volunteer visit!

Nominate a Silver Lining Volunteer for a DADS Vision Award: Wellness, Dignity or Choice?

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) Vision Awards provide state-level recognition for exemplary volunteers who support DADS vision in the three areas of wellness, dignity and choice. Two individual awards and one group award are given in each of the three categories.

Instructions on how to nominate a Silver Lining volunteer for a Vision Award will be posted on the DADS website in mid-December.

Nominations are accepted through February 1, 2010 and are easy to submit online. To nominate a Silver Lining volunteer, nominators must work with a DADS Silver Lining staff member, as well as the partnering facility staff (usually the administrator or activity director).

General descriptions of each category of the DADS Vision Awards are as follows:

Wellness — An annual recognition award honoring volunteers who demonstrate exceptional community service through their understanding of healthy living issues specific to their community.

Dignity — An annual recognition award honoring volunteers who promote awareness and respect for DADS consumers through innovation, serving as an educator and advocate for positive change, and continually demonstrating a respectful, collaborative style through service.

Choice — An annual recognition award honoring volunteers who provide exemplary community



Donna Martin (center), Houston area Activity Director and long-time volunteer for DADS Silver Lining, is pictured at the June 2009 ceremony with former Commissioner Adelaide Horn (left) and Council Chair Sharon Butterworth (right). Donna was presented with one of the DADS Vision Awards in the Wellness category for her significant role in promoting social connection for people living in long-term care environments. In addition to her duties as an activity professional, Donna began a volunteer ministry program through her faith community called "Caring in Action."

service and leadership that promotes advocacy of an individual's choice and self-determination.

Award eligibility

All volunteers (individual and group) actively participating in DADS volunteer programs for a minimum of one year of continuous service are eligible for these awards. Active participation is defined as documented volunteer services or activities that take place regularly in accordance with the program's parameters.

State employees who volunteer with a DADS program are eligible to receive a DADS Vision Award if the nomination relates exclusively to volunteer work outside the scope of their position as a state employee.

Contact DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement office for more information on the DADS Vision Awards at 1-800-889-8595.

2009 SILVER LINING CALENDAR OBSERVANCES FOR NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

November 2009:

National Family

Caregivers Month:

www.thefamilycaregiver.org

World Kindness Day:

November 13, 2009

www.actsofkindness.org

National Family Week:

November 22-28, 2009

www.thevolunteerfamily.org

www.familycares.org

December 2009:

Encourage diversity in planning holiday themed visits with residents

Hanukkah (Dec. 11-19)

Christmas (Dec. 25)

Kwanzaa (Dec. 26-Jan. 1)

January 2010:

Don't forget to honor Silver

Lining's new campaign

"Encore! One More!"

for making connections.

Visit residents at your

local facility at least

ONE MORE TIME after the

holiday season.

Start the New Year with

a friendly visit!

To link to the Silver Lining

online calendar, visit:

www.silverliningatdads.org/calendar/html

Holiday Activity Ideas:

Hang Your Best Memory Ornaments

Overview:

This activity is both a group sharing activity and a way to decorate or otherwise add fun to a holiday celebration.

Participant Requirements:

Any size intergenerational group with at least one person in each group who can hold a pencil or marker and write one to three sentences.

Objectives:

- The activity will promote family communication and unity.
- Participants will have greater holiday fun.

Academic Connections/Life Skills:

- social studies
- language arts
- traditions, art

Materials/Resources:

- ribbon
- wrapping paper
- glue
- tape
- pens
- pencils
- markers

Steps:

1. Each person writes out their best memory of each family member or friend from the past year.
2. Brightly decorate the outside of the notes (or write the notes on wrapping paper), roll them up (secure with a small bit of tape), and use gold thread through the center to hang them.
3. On the holiday, open and read the notes aloud. Collect each year's notes in a "scrapbook."

Considerations: For those who do not celebrate Christmas, modify the activity; e.g., put the memory notes on an item with holiday significance, or in a bowl. This activity could be done at an annual reunion.

Developed by Susan V. Bosak as part of the "Something to Remember Me By" Legacy Project's "Across Generations" series of intergenerational activity kits. For more information, visit www.somethingtoremembermeby.org.



Holiday Volunteer Guide

Volunteer with family this holiday season

Giving back to the community can become meaningful at an early age. A sense of responsibility for family, friends, and neighbors can help develop new skills, educate family members on social issues, support intergenerational learning projects for school and help strengthen community ties overall.

As a family volunteer group who participates in the Silver Lining program, your family can instill motivation and enhance the quality of life for another through your friendly volunteer visits.

Create a fun new way to spend time together. For more information and ideas, visit www.silverliningatdads.org/family.html

Inspire others and give the gift of time this holiday season

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) provides many opportunities to get involved throughout the holiday season. For holiday volunteering opportunities, contact DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement office at 1-800-889-8595 or contact your local Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-252-9240. *Happy Holidays!*

DADS Volunteer Opportunities

State Supported Living Centers: Special holiday events, as well as year round opportunities are available in the following cities: Abilene, Austin, Brenham, Corpus Christi, Denton, El Paso, Lubbock, Lufkin, Mexia, Richmond, San Angelo and San Antonio. Contact the Community Relations department at each location for details.

Visit www.dads.state.tx.us/volunteer/stateschools for more information.

Long-term Care Ombudsman program: Volunteer ombudsmen work with residents, families and staff to improve quality of life and care for people living in nursing and assisted living homes. Visit www.toughenoughtocare.org for more information.

Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) field offices: Program services and supports available through the field offices include home delivered meals, emergency response, attendant and nursing care, therapies, home modifications and medical supplies.

Visit the website at www.volunteeratdads.org for more information.

More stories from our volunteers . . .

From Basketball to Bingo

Editor's Note: The following article was written by a Silver Lining volunteer about his volunteer experience at a Houston area assisted living facility.

"Andrew, I'm going to play the violin for the residents of a nursing home. Do you want to join me?" my mom asked one afternoon. With the basketball season looming near, I was reluctant to spend monotonous afternoons trailing my mom. I already had plenty of volunteer experience, so what was the point in adding another one to my list? I was positive my basketball game would also suffer.

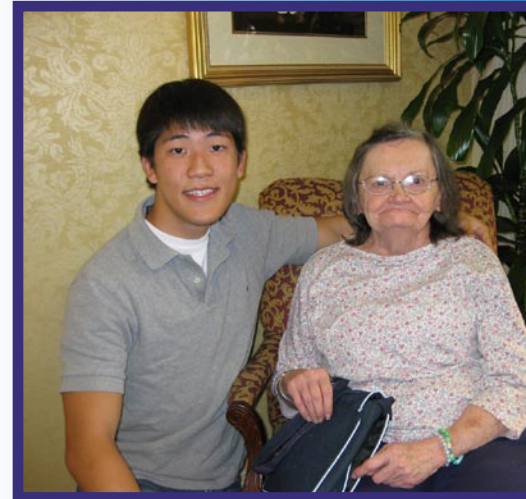
Of course, my mom ended up convincing me to go with the promise of ice cream afterwards.

My first experiences at Heartland were both interesting and gratifying. While my mom played the violin, I helped Mr. T maintain the facility by dumping trash barrels and replacing them with fresh trash bags, vacuuming, mopping, sweeping, clearing and setting tables after meals, helping residents move, and more. The tasks were endless, but I quickly came to love volunteering at Heartland. The appreciation of the employees lifted my spirits, especially when I wasn't having the best day. Similarly, the equally thankful and familiar faces I saw day-in and day-out among the residents put a smile on my face.

These charms were soon overwhelmed by the rigors of the basketball season. As I had foreseen, my commitment to my school team took more time out of my schedule, and before I knew it, much time had passed since I had seen my associates and the residents at Heartland. Though I was distracted, the value of the volunteer work I had done with my mom has planted a seed and claimed a place in my heart because when the season ended, I sought my post within Heartland's ranks once again.

Luckily, the community inside Heartland remembered me and welcomed me, as always, with open arms. With my growing commitment and love for Heartland, I have also been able to expand my responsibilities and the invested stake I have in the well-being of everyone here. The games, which I had begun by helping the residents play, were soon games that I was leading. Over the months, I have become a Bingo, Penny Ante, and Dominoes expert! I also started helping fill out daily activity/recreation participation documentation, as well as helping out newer volunteers.

Seeing the smiles on the faces of residents and hearing their gracious remarks of gratitude each time I visit stirs up one of the best feelings one could ever have. In fact, these people are no longer residents to me but friends. One of my good friends, Mrs. A, once told me, "It's a real good thing you're doing here." She was right: my volunteer experience has been good for giving back to the community. However, it seems like the experiences that I have had at Heartland have benefited me more than the people I've been serving; I have learned more from my involvement and the wisdom of my friends than I ever learned on the basketball court.



Andrew, a volunteer at Heartland, poses with one of his new friends during a volunteer visit.

Helping residents: More success stories from the Texas Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program



Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Sometimes a nursing home or assisted living facility resident needs help. The resident may need an ombudsman's help to ensure resident rights are protected. This includes choosing when to wake up, go to bed, and what a resident wishes to do in between.

A long-term care ombudsman helps all residents and promotes resident rights and choices. He or she will

- Listen
- Protect resident rights
- Offer ideas and options
- Help resolve concerns
- Support resident and family



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Call a local ombudsman:

1-800-252-2412

Locate an ombudsman online:

www.ToughEnoughToCare.org

A resident prepared for a drive into town in the facility's van. As staff lifted the resident in her power wheelchair onto the van, the resident accidentally pushed the "forward" button. Her chair lurched. The resident fell and was injured.

Investigators cited the facility for failure to prevent an accident. After reviewing the power wheelchair manufacturer's operating manual, the facility stopped transporting residents in power wheelchairs. The manual recommended not lifting a wheelchair with someone seated in it.

From that point on, the options for residents were limited. They had to have a staff member transfer them first from their power wheelchair to a manual wheelchair. Next, they needed transfer from the manual wheelchair to one of the van seats for transport.

At the destination, residents could only use the manual wheelchairs unless

staff members were also willing to transport residents' power wheelchairs. For the return trip, residents would experience the same process.

To find more options and solutions, the residents called their local ombudsman for assistance. The ombudsman talked with residents, the facility staff and other DADS staff. She researched the issue, communicated the information to residents, facilitated a discussion and then stepped back.

The residents created and signed their own petition, contacted the president of the power wheelchair company and contacted the manufacturer. Their efforts paid off. The power wheelchair corporation changed the wording in their operating manual to allow loading individuals while seated in their wheelchairs.

Residents are on the go again after exercising their "resident power!"

Volunteer and staff ombudsmen advocated for residents in many ways during 2008 and 2009. They accomplished the following:

- Referred 364 residents to relocation services
- Coordinated legal services in 264 cases
- Attended 1,118 nursing home care plan meetings
- Attended 58 assisted living facility service plan meetings
- Represented resident interests in 89 fair hearings
- Received 37,511 nursing home complaints and resolved or partially resolved 33,032 (88%)
- Received 2,489 assisted living facility complaints and resolved or partially resolved 2,134 (86%)

If you would like to become an advocate for residents who live in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, contact the long-term care ombudsman in your area at 1-800-252-2412.