



Robert Lee Care Center residents benefitting from new Music/Memory program

By Diane Rainbolt
Janis sits on her bed and hums along with Elvis Presley, munching her favorite potato chips. In the hallway, Vivian giggles, singing the tune played by a handsome fiddler, "...I'm too young to marry." Virginia listens with her eyes closed, remembering the song her daddy sings to her. Is this a sleepover from the 1950s? No, it's the residents of Robert Lee Care Center reconnecting with who they are and remembering a life well-lived.

Music & Memory is a nationally recognized program that reconnects elders with their identity and their past through music. The Robert Lee Care Center is a certified Music & Memory facility. Residents are provided with their own personal iPod loaded with their favorite music and available to them at all times. It is essential that the music be individualized and personal to each resident. While it takes a significant amount of time to identify the resident's favorite songs, teen volunteers have been assisting staff with finding the right music for each of the residents. This intergenerational activity is a means of joy and delight to the residents who enjoy the time they spend with the teenagers listening to their favorite songs.

Such individualized music can be especially powerful for those with dementia. Music acts as a kind of backdoor to the brain and reconnects parts of the brain that may have seemed lost to the person. There is extensive research showing how music can activate areas in the brain that medications and other treatments cannot. In many aspects, it seems to bring the elder "back to life" by reconnecting them with memories, relationships, and their own identity. Music assists with those who are in therapies, reduces or even eliminates the need for medication for depression, calms residents who

are upset, reduces boredom and feelings of loneliness, facilitates speech even for those who may be mostly nonverbal, enhances swallowing ability, triggers memories and thereby increases cognition. It offers to residents and families the hope of renewed connection in relationships and increased cognitive and physical capabilities for their loved ones. The staff at the Robert Lee Care Center has personally witnessed this in their residents while listening to their iPods. The residents become more engaged, express joy and delight, share cherished memories that may have been forgotten, and have a renewed sense of the gift of life.

So when you stop by Robert Lee Care Center, don't be

surprised to find Janis humming "Blue Suede Shoes", Vivian smiling with her headphones on and telling a story about her dancing days, and Virginia reminiscing about her daddy and growing up in New Mexico. If you would like more information about their Music and Memory program or would like to donate or volunteer, please contact Robert Lee Care Center at 325-453-2511.

... Comfort Stop

(Continued from page 2)

Making my heart in joy to leap;
Waiting for heaven and God's final reap

Humility stood out from among the rest.

Scholars had tried it; it had passed the test.

More wonderful than all of God's great gifts;

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"If you think you can, you can! If you think you can't, you can't! Either way, you are right."

Norman Vincent Peale

Paul's Prayer (for us)
Ephesians 1:16-19

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in

my prayers;

17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power;

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