

Boca Respite Volunteers

MARCH 2004-BOCA RATON



Boca Respite Volunteers

BRV (formerly Boca Raton Interfaith in Action or BRIA) is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) agency that provides free-of-cost assistance and support to homebound individuals and family caregivers, regardless of age, medical condition, religion, race, ethnicity, sex, or financial status.

Helping people throughout the greater Boca Raton area, the organization strives to enhance the quality of life for those it serves and promotes their dignity and independence.

Contact BRV at:
561.477.7962 or
bocainterfaith@att.net
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Boca Raton, FL 33434
www.bocainterfaith.org

“Boca Respite Volunteers were the answer to my prayers” says Geri Asquith

52 year-old Boca Raton resident Geri Asquith felt abandoned and alone when she lost her long time caregivers. Her mother, who was her primary caregiver, died in November 2002. Her 87 year-old stepfather found the responsibilities of caring for Geri overwhelming. Her mother’s Brazilian housekeeper, who had been helping Geri, had to return to her native land.

“I felt isolated, helpless, and alone after the three people I was closest to and completely dependent on, moved out of my life,” says Asquith who has been homebound for the last 15 years.

“Since I’d been financially dependent on my mother and was on fixed income, there was no way I could afford to pay for help,” she says. She began the process of contacting non-profits and other agencies that



rejected her based on reason or another. Asquith felt like she was running from pillar to post in vain.

“When I contacted non-profit agencies I thought could help me, they’d refer me to another agency and when I’d call them, they’d say that I was not old enough to qualify for senior benefits which required you to be over 60. Some others told me I wasn’t disabled enough, whatever that means,” she says.

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BRV’s First Annual Tennis Event: “Love Match 2004”



Boca Respite Volunteers held its First Annual Love Match on January 25th 2004 as a fun and fundraising event. The tournament had 40 participants and took place at Broken Sound Country Club. Susan Small chaired the event and describes it as a “great success”.

Continued on Page 3

Pictured at left are Aaron & June Speisman, Susan Small and Connie Siskowski.

EVENTS

Save the Date!

Boca Respite Volunteers
Third Annual Golf
Tournament is now
named **DISCOVERY!**

Once again, it will held
On Columbus day in
affiliation with the
South Palm Beach
Chapter of the
National Parkinson
Foundation. Joining
With the event is our
Good Work Radio.

When?
Oct 11, 2004

Where?
Boca Lago Country Club

Who?
You

Be a Corporate Sponsor!
A Hole Sponsor!
Be a Donor!
Be an Event Volunteer!
Be a Player!

Stu Meyer, Chair

For more information
Call: 561.477. 7962

Some can be President...others help in small ways



Tony Quesada discovered the Boca Respite Volunteers at a course on aging that he attended last year. Quesada, interested in volunteering, was given information on a variety of agencies and resources available to senior citizens. "The primary reason I decided on the BRV was because it was close to where I live. I used to work in Miami and it took me an hour and a half of commute everyday," says Quesada, who retired from the actuarial profession. Quesada is helping a family of an 83 year-old woman caregiver whose husband has dementia and whose son suffers from multiple sclerosis. "The woman is very calm and sharp and deals with it very well. She goes out to play golf and do other things while I spend time with her son," he says. Quesada also used to play cards or dominos with the woman's husband who recently experienced a medical setback and is living in a local nursing

home. "So now, I just spend time with her son," he says. Quesada is also filling in for another volunteer who is temporarily out of the area. He helps a homebound woman by taking her to the doctor, bank, or any other appointments. "We also talk regularly over the phone to keep in touch," he says. "I have a rather fortunate life and I would hate to eventually go to the grave without helping others. In this world, there are just a few people who can become presidents or great leaders. The others have to help in their own small way," says Quesada who was born in the Bronx and lived in Puerto Rico for a few years.

Quesada keeps himself actively involved with other community programs. He is part of the Coastguard auxiliary unit and volunteers at Banyan Place. He is also involved with the city police department's Elder Outreach program.

Quesada feels that the people who run BRV are "if not saints, at least bordering on saints."

We at BRV think the same of him.

Gerri Asquith....continued from Page 1

"Fortunately, I came across an article in the Sun Sentinel that introduced me to the Boca Respite Volunteers who were then known as BRIA. I called their office and Janna was very helpful. The next day, which also happened to be my birthday, she came over to meet me. That was the best birthday gift I could have asked for," says Asquith. That was on June 28, 2003. Since then, Gerri has had two volunteers help with her chores. One of them is George, who Asquith

describes as a 65-year old, kind gentleman, shops for her groceries once a week and does other chores like bringing the mail in and taking the garbage out. The other volunteer Tim, who is younger, helps her with weekly errands. "He has taken me to the bank, for eye appointments, and essentially wherever I might need to go," she says. "Everybody is so compassionate and motivated at Boca Respite Volunteers," she says. ***

Coming Next Issue...

Mayor proclaims...

*Highlights of the
Hollywood Party!
February 29, 2004*

Caregiving Tips

*Welcome to our new
Congregations in
Action*

*Meet Bruce Lake,
Social Work
Student Intern*

*Space and Other
Needs*

Saying THANK YOU

We thank all our volunteers and donors who so generously contribute their time, talent and resources towards our cause. We'd like them to know that we appreciate their efforts and are grateful for every single contribution. In this edition of our newsletter, we'd like to say a special thanks to some of these contributors.

South Palm Beach County Chapter of the National Parkinson Foundation

**Thank you for supporting BRV
leadership of Parkinson
caregiver support groups at
Mae Volen Center.**

Mabel Harken Memorial

Rick Cocking, called one day to relate that his mom had read about our services and our needs. She asked him to direct her memorials to BRV. We give thanks for her legacy.

Love Match 2004...*from page 1*

"We had about 32 players and they all had a lot of fun," she said.

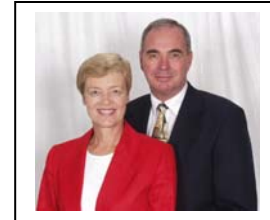
According to Susan, "Connie and I play tennis at Broken Sound and so we approached them to see if we can host it there. The club was very responsive and helpful."

Greg Wheaton, Director of Tennis and club pro donated tennis balls, a racket and bag as well as tennis lessons for the raffle prizes.

The event was the first tennis fundraiser for Boca Respite Volunteers. BRV Board members Fred Galland

Carol Todd

Coldwell Banker Community Cares
Foundation



Carol and Mark Todd

When Carol Todd delivered the Cares Foundation contribution, we learned of her real estate specialty of housing for senior citizens. "Most people aren't aware of the different options available in senior communities. They also need help with choosing a community based on their own needs," says Todd. She even helps her clients pack. "Moving can be really stressful especially if you don't have family helping you. So I am there for my clients the day they move," she says.

and Ted Grant played in the matches. Winners of the event were June and Aaron Speisman.

Following tennis, participants and guests enjoyed a social and dinner and the chance to win raffle prizes.

Susan has been helping the organization for several months, including the 2003 annual golf tournament. She enjoys volunteering her time to help with the fund-raising events for the BRV since she believes that the organization provides a much needed service.

Messages from Connie Siskowski, Founder & President & Janna Sundook, Director of Volunteer and Program Services

- *Thanks to many, our waiting list is diminishing - our goal is to have no waiting list for services!*
- *Learn if you qualify and wish to participate in Americorps volunteering rewards.*
- *Special thanks to Carol Walters and Bill Hartmann, graduates of the 9th Class of the Leadership Institute. Carol is working on our PR and Bill is now our webmaster!*
- *Harry Dubin, PhD, also a Leadership Institute graduate, has been facilitating a newly formed Development Team (DT). Interested in joining this opportunity? Please call the DT Chair, Phillip Mrozinski, 561.477.1484.*
- *Kim Jenkins of Heartland graciously hosted our February volunteer meeting. She arranged for Dr. Mitchell Goldstein to speak and answer many questions. In addition, she provided several raffle prizes and awarded them to our volunteer winners. THANK YOU KIM!!!*