

The spirit of giving, sharing is all around our community

It seems like we went from fall to our so-called Florida winter in the blink of an eye. It was just three months ago we were writing about fall, now it is "Season's Greetings" and "Happy New Year" and a continuous flow of lifestyle events since then. I, like many of us, have a tendency in this active community to go, go, go! And, before I knew it, the holiday season has come and gone.

There is still time to savor, relax, enjoy, cherish, capture, and reflect on the lyrics when Andy Williams sings "It's the most wonderful time of the year." There are holiday celebrations and entertainment all centered on the traditions that bring us together for a time to embrace and enjoy the spirit of the season with others.

In reality, our community actually carries this song year-round as we live, work and play in our hometown. This time of year makes it even more special to be enjoying our friends, neighbors, family members, and those we don't even know and who are in need. Our resident "elves" and community reaches out to make the spirit of the season come alive to so many that may otherwise no longer "Believe."

We've always been a giving and caring community. It just seems during the months of November and December we escalate our generosity and support to an even higher level. The numerous resident clubs and entities come together to make a positive difference to others.

The Angels of The Villages Secret Santa program



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provided more than 500 gifts for Guardian Ad Litem. Santa's sleigh, a large U-Haul trailer, was packed full. The Silver Trefoil Girls Scout Club collected more than 3,500 pajamas and books. The Sumter County Sheriff's Office received hundreds of bicycles during their drive, and the Marine Toys for Tots had a warehouse full of toys for the youth in the area.

These are just a few examples of the generosity of our community. The food pantries, soup kitchens and other benefiting charities also received outreach from our residents.

And while it is more focused and prevalent during the holiday months, the spirit of giving, sharing, and helping is part of our culture year-round. Look at the over 2,300 resident lifestyle volunteer leaders who use their talents and share them every day at the recreation centers.

The various support groups come together to share, learn, and manage how to cope with their situations with one another. One example is the Daybreak Club, which gives an hour or two respites to the caregivers whose loved ones are suffering from a memory loss condition.

In addition to the gifts our residents provide to others, the District has and continues to share our gifts of new

and improved facilities, and services to help assist in the overall quality of life for our residents.

Your District team is a partner in helping provide the opportunities in our community to facilitate and manage our areas so residents can use their time, talents, and energy to get the most out of their lives. The Christmas Parade, the opening of El Santiago Recreation Center, and new outdoor exercise equipment installed at Rohan Recreation Center all add to this spirited time of year. There will be more great gifts coming in January, with more facilities and improvements to our recreation centers and golf courses. Stay tuned to www.districtgov.org.

We have first-class facilities, amenities, recreation, golf, squares, activities, volunteers, and dedicated Board Members, staff and residents.

Every day there are endless opportunities to share, support, encourage, participate, and help ourselves and others in the community.

On behalf of the District team, we hope everyone gets some time to enjoy each other, the music, and the festive atmosphere this season brings.

Thanks for making our hometown the most wonderful place every day of the year!

I hope you have a happy and healthy New Year! See you in 2016, here, at Our Place!

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