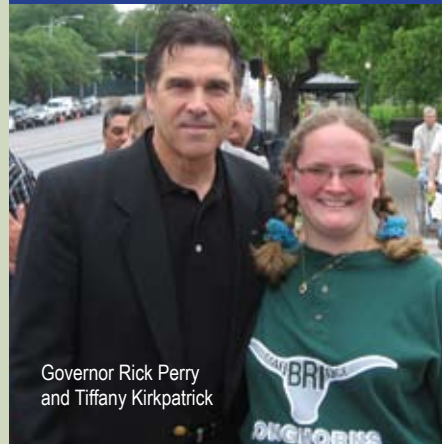




Marbridge provides a safe, loving community where adult residents with cognitive challenges can achieve their full potential through *Abilities Centered Training* with the opportunity for lifetime care. Marbridge provides a full spectrum of services designed to meet each individual's specific needs through three distinct programs—The Village, the Ranch and the Villa—each providing a different level of lifestyle support, guidance and supervision.

# Our community *within the Austin community*



Governor Rick Perry and Tiffany Kirkpatrick

**The Marbridge Messenger is a publication of Marbridge**  
P.O. Box 2250, Manchaca, Texas 78652  
Voice: (512) 282-1144 Fax: (512) 282-3723  
Web: [www.marbridge.org](http://www.marbridge.org)  
Email: [info@marbridge.org](mailto:info@marbridge.org)  
Editor: Cathy Cabrera

To subscribe via email contact: [editor@marbridge.org](mailto:editor@marbridge.org)

**Board of Trustees:**

- Tom M. O'Brien, chairman
- J. Mitchell Bell
- H. Eddie Dick
- Thomas P. Douglass
- Robert W. Fullbright
- John D. Head
- C. David Perry
- W. Barry Schneider
- Todd L. Young

**Advisory Board:**

- Aubrey L. Carter
- Jan Thompson
- Martha St. Romain

TDHS licenses 000706, 005191, 000520



Marbridge Foundation  
P.O. Box 2250  
Manchaca, Texas 78652  
Web: [www.marbridge.org](http://www.marbridge.org)  
Email: [info@marbridge.org](mailto:info@marbridge.org)

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

On the cover:

The Nascar Team prepares for a battle of tug-of-war at Marbridge's 55th Anniversary celebration. Other photos feature residents, staff, volunteers and donors.

Above: Residents and staff of the Red Team celebrate their victory in the tug-of-war contest during Marbridge's 55th Anniversary celebration.

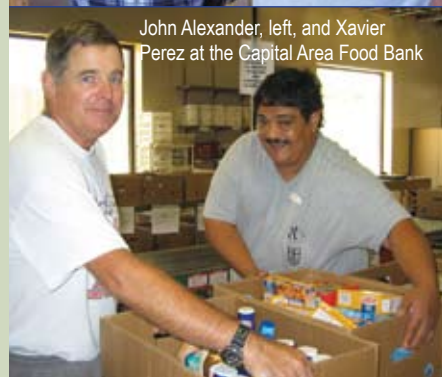
Hobnobbing with celebrities may be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many people, but the residents of Marbridge do it every year during the annual Torch Relay for Special Olympics. Governor Rick Perry shows up to cheer on special athletes as well as representatives from law enforcement agencies who team up to raise money for Special Olympics.

Marbridge residents have many opportunities to participate in a wide variety of activities in the Austin community. Many attend the church of their choice each week, and all residents enjoy regular outings to sports events, concerts, theme parks and more.

Marbridge residents even volunteer in the community by cutting grass for nearby churches and community centers, helping stock shelves at the Capital Area Food Bank, or building houses with Habitat for Humanity.



Habitat for Humanity volunteers Larry Parks, left, and Justin Dick



John Alexander, left, and Xavier Perez at the Capital Area Food Bank



Left: Landscape crew member Brian Thompson, Clarence Vogel, Fire Hall Community Center owner, and landscape crew member Michael Haehnel.



Below: Mike Rose, Pastor Peter Castles and Doug Payne.

Non-Profit Organization  
US Postage  
Paid  
Austin, Texas  
Permit  
No. 2900

# Marbridge Messenger

Fall 2008



## Together— We are Marbridge



A community of care providers



A community of donors



A community of volunteers



A community of peers

**A  
PREMIER  
COMMUNITY**



Bob Fullbright  
President

**Activities**—it's a word that often comes to mind when people describe Marbridge. Our community brims with enthusiasm. Each week, residents have more than 150 different training opportunities designed to increase skills as well as enlighten and entertain. It takes an enthusiastic staff to plan and create training activities that captivate as well as instruct. Our community of resident trainers, instructors and support staff work diligently applying our top three priorities—safety, well being and happiness. Each of our 198-member staff understands the importance of our mission, and each plays a role in maintaining a high quality, active life for each resident.

**Renovation**—is another word that increasingly describes Marbridge. We're nearing completion of the new Village, which includes 14 six-person cottages along with a community center. The Village also provides for 18 additional residents!

**Premier**—Marbridge's signature *Abilities Centered Training Program (ACT)* is rapidly becoming recognized nationwide as one of the premier programs for adults with cognitive challenges. ACT provides an individualized program for each resident, with training tailored to meet each one's needs, interests and goals. No other program offers the breadth of opportunities for improving life skills, learning job skills and gaining employment, enjoying life through leisure skills training and making friends and participating in community activities both on and off campus through social skills training.

**Engaged**—The residents of Marbridge are fully engaged in life. Training under the ACT program provides opportunities to learn or improve skills in four key areas—Life Skills, Job Skills, Leisure Skills and Social Skills. As a result, residents enjoy hobbies and sports, find jobs, volunteer in the community, attend dances and other community events and learn to apply appropriate behaviors to a wide variety of situations.

Many other words apply to Marbridge—*fun, happy, active*. I could go on and on adding descriptive terms. But in the end all these words add up to one that's probably the best—*unique*. There's simply no place like Marbridge, our unique community.

# Together

we train together

## Abilities Centered Training keeps interest high through guest speakers; new offerings

Professionals from many areas of the greater Austin community often come to Marbridge to share their experience and knowledge. They provide fresh perspectives and new insights on topics as diverse as grooming, music, art, cooking and the natural world. Representatives from the Capital Area Food Bank recently presented a lesson on healthy food choices to residents in Nutrition training.

Visitors bring dogs, drums, juggling acts and more to help train residents in four key areas—life skills, job skills, leisure skills and social skills.

Marbridge's signature *Abilities Centered Training* program provides more than 150 different training opportunities each week. The program adds training in new areas each semester to meet residents' needs. Through daily training, residents master new skills within a community of peers and supportive staff.



Amy Koch gets help filling in her food pyramid activity



From left, resident Matt Dawson, instructor James Brandon, residents Jack Joseph, Jason Miller and Doug Payne work on their reading skills.

we learn job skills together

## Campus jobs and community employment provide satisfying work opportunities

### New Pre-Vocational Training helps ready residents for employment

Currently, 52 residents hold on-campus jobs. Another 31 residents share the accomplishment of working for more than 25 different companies in the Austin work community. **Job Skills** training offers both instructional and on-the-job training, usually starting with a campus position. However, some residents need additional help to ready them for Job Skills training, and a new **Pre-Vocational** training program has been devised to answer this need. Instructor Jesse Russell meets with a group of five residents three times a week in the Horticultural



Craig Turner recently saved enough Marbridge Money to redeem it for a DVD.

Therapy Center to introduce them to the basics of getting and keeping a job.

"We focus on attendance, punctuality, grooming and hygiene, attitude and performance," says Russell. Along with instruction, each resident is assigned a table of plants to maintain. Russell rates their job performance at the end of each session and pays those who perform up to standards. For every good day, a Pre-Vocational resident earns \$1 in "Marbridge Money," which he can redeem for items at the Marbridge Job Store.

"We teach them that work is important, and they have responsibilities they must meet in order to stay employed," says Russell. Mastering the Pre-Vocational step will help these residents take another step forward to competitive employment.

# We are Marbridge

a community of donors

## From benefit golf tournaments, to cash donations, many generous people find Marbridge is an excellent investment

"We decided to donate because we believe in giving back to the community. And seeing all the happy, appreciative residents at Marbridge really made us feel good," said Gary Manley, co-owner of the popular restaurant chain The Iron Cactus. "I think Marbridge is a unique place. Residents and their families should feel fortunate to have such a facility."

Such are the feelings—and the commitments—expressed by people who share their treasure to enhance the lives of Marbridge residents. Manley's firm donated more than \$10,000 to Marbridge in June with proceeds from the Iron Cactus & Carlos 'n' Charlie's Golf Tournament. Creed Ford, of the Johnny Carino's restaurant chain, also donates annually to Marbridge through his company's golf tournament.

Marbridge family members, like Nene and James, parents of resident Amy Koch, provide important donations. The Kochs recently furnished one of the new Village cottages.

Caring individuals like Roy Keithley have made a tremendous difference in the lives of our residents. Over the past years, Keithley has repeatedly donated funds to support residents' lives.

If you would like to learn how you can help the residents of Marbridge, come to a *Just About Marbridge* (JAM) session. These short, informative sessions are held every second Thursday of the month. Contact Michelle Levy at [mlevy@marbridge.org](mailto:mlevy@marbridge.org), or call 512-282-1144, for more information.



Join us every second Thursday for JAM Sessions to learn how you can help the residents of Marbridge!  
Top right: Resident Doug Payne, left, and Creed Ford, of Johnny Carino's Restaurants. Middle photo: Gary Manley, co-owner of Iron Cactus Restaurants.  
Below, from left: Suzanne Johnson, Marbridge executive assistant, resident Ann Schneider, Michelle Levy, manager of annual giving, and resident Sarah Watkins. All were enjoying the recent Iron Cactus & Carlos 'n' Charlie's Golf Tournament.



For information on how you can help support the mission of Marbridge, visit [www.marbridge.org](http://www.marbridge.org).

# Together We are Marbridge

*a community of caring professionals*

*Respect*

*Compassion*

*Giving*

*Receiving*

*Love*

*Commitment*

*Communication*

*Encouragement*

*Acceptance*

*Patience*

*Support*

*Teamwork*

*Trust*

## It takes a dedicated team to provide high quality care

Ask any Marbridge staff person to name three words that sum up the job they do, and you're likely to get a list that looks a lot like the one running down the left side of this page. Marbridge employs more than 190 people, and all have some touch with the residents.

"We work together and support each other to meet the needs of the residents," says Jana Kay, director of Training & Education.

That means people at all levels and in all departments play a role in providing guidance and care. Some provide on-the-job training through supervising resident employees. Others provide a listening ear while driving residents to and from appointments or outings. Even office and maintenance staff play an important role

in pitching in when needed for special events or stepping in during contingencies.

Teamwork is a common refrain heard among staff members. They depend on each other in ways that most other work forces would never need to do. It's the direct care staff that merits a closer look. To the person, they are individuals who genuinely care about adults with special needs who fill each day interacting with the residents.

"I don't have to wait until I retire to have time to give back. I get the opportunity here every day to give back," says Mary Jane Newman, Ranch assistant director.

"It's the love of what we do," said Villa Director of Nursing Donna Davis. "And it's the teamwork that makes the job so rewarding."

"We're an eclectic team that complement each other," says Brian Haddock, Ranch director. "That's good, because different types of staff members match up with different residents."

Haddock speaks to a core value present among all staff—to treat the residents as *people* first.

"People with disabilities are *people*—unique people," says Louise Trombold, Fundamentals Training instructor. "What we do here is work with the person, and we work with each other, but our approach is *people first* at all levels."

Staff members are keenly aware of each resident's individual quirks, needs, interests and family situation. For some residents, the family may no longer exist.

"We are the family in some cases," said Julie Lyerla, Villa nurse manager.

It's a hefty responsibility, and one the staff takes seriously.

Like parents, they strive to look out for the safety, well being and happiness of the residents. That means staying on top of their medical conditions, health and dietary needs, as well as exercise, physical therapy and leisure activities.

"We don't just play bingo everyday," said Steve Larson, Villa director. "We try to spice things up. At the Villa, there's a Men's Group outing each week, Fantasy Baseball games and other novel activities. We read the news to the residents everyday to keep them engaged with the world at large."

Ah, yes. The *outside community*. At Marbridge, it's a place where many residents are involved every day. The border between the Marbridge community and the Austin community

is a porous one. People from Austin come in on a daily basis; people from Marbridge go into the community every day.

"We are always looking for ways to involve the residents in the Austin community," says Hughie Shaw, coach/activities coordinator. "The residents have opportunities to do things that many people in Austin don't have."

"Generally, everyone tries to proactively engage the residents," says Scott McAvoy, Village director. "It's not enough to say 'he can do that.' We work on the philosophy that 'he can do that better.'"

With a philosophy of people first and a focus on safety, well being and happiness, the members of the Marbridge staff demonstrate daily that they are indeed a community of caring people.



**The Village**  
 Scott McAvoy, director  
 Judy Mayberry, registered nurse  
 Sally Fletcher, assistant director  
 Toni Hernandez, resident trainer/driver

**The Villa**  
 Mary Willie, LVN, clinical nurse manager  
 Donna Davis, RN, director of nursing  
 Steve Larson, director  
 Julie Lyerla, LVN, nurse manager

**Training & Education**  
 Jana Kay, director  
 Hughie Shaw, coach  
 Mark Knox, instructor  
 Shonda McGarity, equine coordinator

**The Ranch**  
 Mary Jane Newman, assistant director  
 Louise Trombold, Fundamental Training instructor  
 Melissa Hernandez, resident trainer  
 Brian Haddock, director

# Together

*a community of volunteers*

# We are Marbridge

*a community of peers*



## Volunteers feel the love!

**Fun, fellowship and festivities keep them coming back**

Over the past year, more than 130 volunteers donated in excess of 11,000 hours to help the residents of Marbridge. What isn't included in those numbers is the amount of pure enjoyment each derived from their volunteer experience.

How could they not enjoy it? Residents routinely treat volunteers as celebrities. Birthday parties, outings and training events are all gala events to be savored. Most volunteers will tell you they leave Marbridge feeling on top of the world.

"It's the sense of doing something meaningful that keeps you coming back," said Karen Little, president of the Oak Leaves, a long-term volunteer group at Marbridge.

"I picked Marbridge because I like the residents," said Matt Cabrera, who chose to renovate Marbridge's 40-year-old miniature golf course for his Eagle Scout project.

Some volunteers, like Debbie Legg, Scott and Merry Cary and Mike Nyert put in many hours a week coaching various Special Olympics sports teams.

Still others, like 9-year old Neely Kirkland, volunteer their treasure as well as time. She raised \$300 for the equine therapy program by asking friends to bring cash in lieu of gifts to her birthday party this year. Neely's mom, Jena, also volunteers with the equine program.

Volunteering may be a labor of love, but it's the fun stuff that keeps volunteers coming back to Marbridge.



Top left: Oak Leaves members Linda Guckian and Karen Little share laughs and good times with Bob Reed and James Walvoord at one of the volunteer group's monthly birthday parties for residents.

Top right, from left: Long-time coach volunteers Scott and Merry Cary and Mike Nyert.

Circle inset: Volunteer of the Year for 2008 Debbie Legg with resident Joe Head.

Large photo: Boy Scout Matt Cabrera in front of his Eagle project, the renovated miniature golf course.

Below, Neely Kirkland, a treasure volunteer, and her horse, Chelsea.



Drew Gray, Ann Schneider and Sarah Watkins at the San Marcos Summer Dance



Peter Henry lands a giant shark and Max Clampitt takes on the mechanical bull.

## we travel & play together

**Deep sea fishing, dances, Disney World and camping trips give new meaning to "lazy days of summer"**

Summertime at Marbridge ushers in a world of choices for fun-filled activities, outings and trips. There's an activity for virtually every interest. Fishing trips to Rockport are always popular. The annual Summer Dance in San Marcos is a big hit. And the Exceptional Rodeo recently gave a group of residents an opportunity to ride horses, learn ropin' and ride the mechanical bull. How cool is that for a hot summer day!

In June, a group of 14 residents headed up to Inks Lake State Park for an overnight camping trip, and at the end of August another group left for a fabulous week at Disney World Orlando. The summer season also brings day trips to Sea World and Fiesta Texas in San Antonio and outings to Express baseball and Wrangler football games. Bowling every Friday and Monday outings to lunch, movies, museums and the library complete the schedule.

On campus, summertime is also action packed. Practice begins for summer Special Olympic competitions in baseball and bocce. Summer campers make their appearance to liven up nighttime bingo games, and new summer training options keep everyone fully engaged.



Gary Booth helps with the grilling during the Inks Lake camp out.

## Life-long friendships bloom at Marbridge

Roommates Gema Langford and Randy Cole have become good friends. Both work in on-campus jobs, and they share many interests, including storytelling. Gema and Randy are now writing a book together, a romance novel entitled "Scandal." It's the story of Candy, a fashion model, and her caddish agent, William Edwards.

"We're fleshing out the plot now," says Gema. "It's going to take a while, but we're working on it," adds Randy. "We like to read," she said. "Gema reads out loud all the time, and that led to our interest in writing a book."

While Gema and Randy share a love of reading, Warren Todd and Daniel Hale simply like to share each other's company. Their friendship spans the generation gap between them. Daniel took to Warren quickly after moving to Marbridge in March 2006.

"He's my friend," says Daniel. Warren agrees. "I don't give up on him. We sit together. I like being around him."

Some friendships at Marbridge have lasted a lifetime. James Walvoord met Mary Lou Zissa when he was 13 and she was 17 while they were both at Austin State School. They didn't cross paths again until 1992 when Mary Lou moved to the Villa at Marbridge.

"We never thought we'd see each other again," said Mary Lou. Now James visits Mary Lou several times a week.

"My father asked me one time what I wanted to do with my life," said James. "I said, 'I want to spend it around Mary Lou.'"

## Mary Lou & James



## we make friends



Randy & Gema



Warren & Daniel