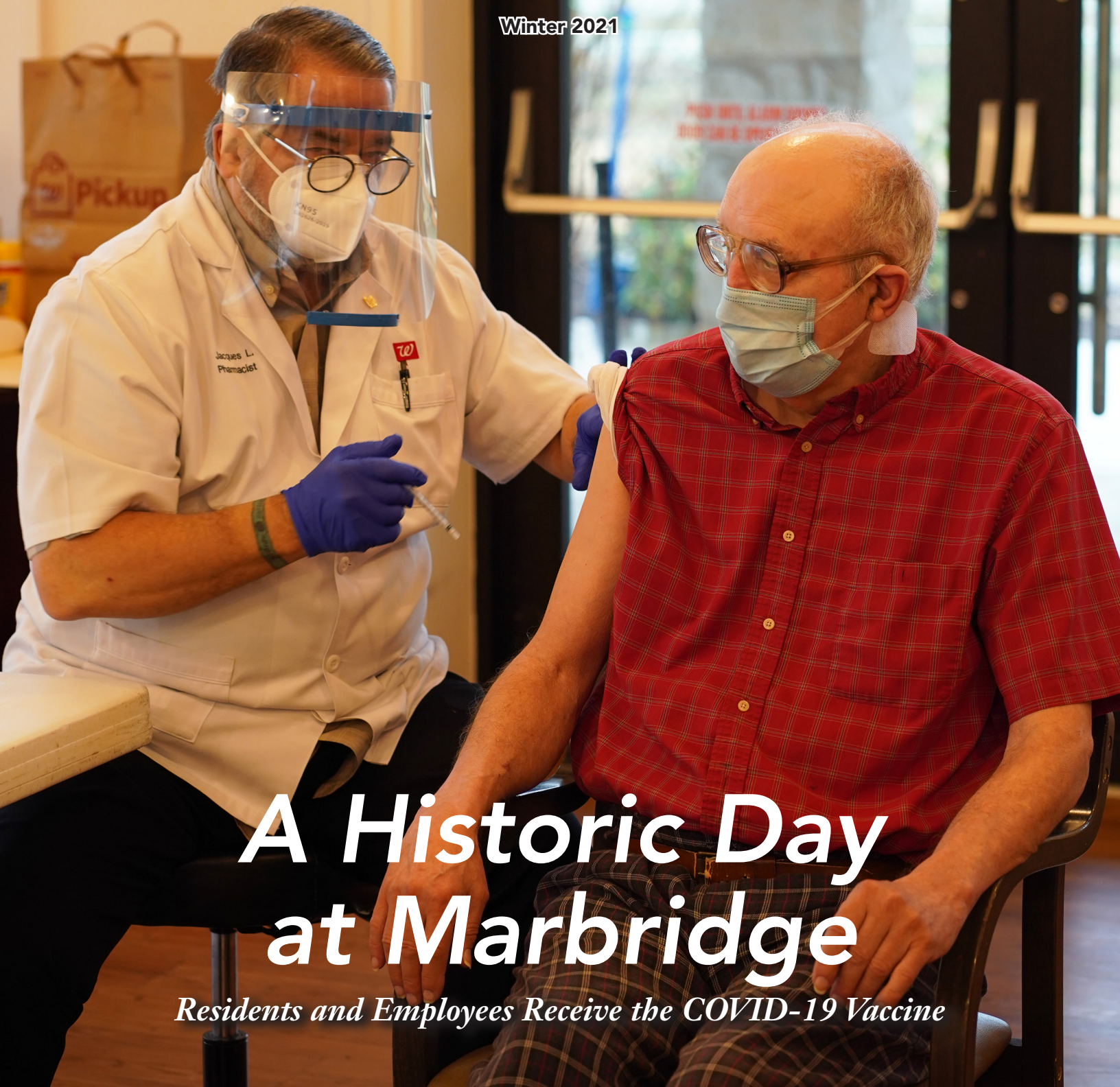


Marbridge LIFE

Winter 2021



A Historic Day at Marbridge

Residents and Employees Receive the COVID-19 Vaccine

Marbridge LIFE

Marbridge Foundation

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A Letter from the President

We all anticipate the arrival of a new year bringing about renewed hope, aspirations to be better in our own lives, a commitment to enhance other's lives in a better way, and a sense that we get to write a new future. Though ringing in this new year may have been quieter for most, it's a time that our campus is focused on renewal.

We are renewed to our mission in a big way. As COVID-19 cases continue surging out of control throughout the Greater Austin Community and many parts of our nation, and ICU beds have reached capacity, we are on our knees each day thankful for the grace that has been provided to this campus in more ways than we will ever know. We know that it's because of the understanding from our families for the steps that must be taken, the dedication and sacrifice from our employees, the understanding of the greater good from residents, and support of our extended Marbridge family.

Last year, our selfless staff adapted to ever-changing precautions and protocols. There have been extra steps they all take in their daily duties, but, without hesitation, they walked hand-in-hand with smiles on their faces. We also saw a plethora of support from volunteers, donors, and families to keep residents active, engaged, and happy while having to remain on campus from the donation of masks and wishlist items, to making cards and sending letters of encouragement.

As you read through this edition of LIFE Magazine, join me in making this year about healing and renewal. As this is going to print, our campus is completing the first rounds of COVID-19 vaccinations. We know that this is the first step in mitigation and, hopefully, reopening our campus. Thank you for your support and love.

James Stacey, President

Resident Success

Meet Karen

Caring, friendly, enthusiastic, reliable, and polite; these are a few of the adjectives that staff and fellow residents use to describe Karen, a Village residents who has shined bright since joining Marbridge in 2019. Karen moved to Marbridge after retiring from her job with a newspaper and desiring to continue to learn and achieve.

Karen adapted quickly to campus making friends, excelling in her classes, and participating in numerous activities both on and off campus. Since the COVID-19 outbreak forced a campus lockdown, she focused on her classes and being active through new activities.

“Her self-esteem has really grown, and as she became more comfortable in her new community, her great sense of humor and infectious laugh really stood out,” said Will Hoermann, Director of The Village. “She even has a happy dance that she likes to do when she is in an especially good mood.”

“It’s been pretty good so far. I’ve been making friends and enjoy my art, singing, and bible study classes,” said Karen. “I love all the activities and can’t wait to do more.”



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2020 Virtual Christmas Program a Hit!

“The show must go on” was the mantra Paige Brown, Marbridge’s Spiritual and Music Instructor, and residents took after the COVID-19 outbreak cancelled the traditional annual on-campus Christmas program. The program may not have been able to be seen live by loved ones, volunteers, and supporters but that wouldn’t stop Paige and residents from all three communities from putting on a virtual program.

This year’s Christmas Program turned virtual as Ranch and Village residents performed an original program, band and choir members brought some holiday cheer, and Villa residents spread joy through their “Dear Santa” skit. Creative video and technical support were brought by Bob Worden, Communications and Marketing, and David Carlson, IT. The program might look different this year, but that didn’t keep the spirit of Christmas away from campus.

“In many respects, preparation for this year was similar,” said Paige. “But, two big differences were the need to articulate their lines and sing through a face mask, and the opportunity for actors to redo their lines, if need be, due to the luxury of video editing. What a bonus for them!”

The residents looked forward to their filming days and treated this year’s program with the same excitement and professionalism as years past. When they were on camera, they shined.

“I really think everyone is going to like this year’s play,” said Joe, a Village resident and one of the adaptable stars of this year’s Christmas program. “I miss doing the show live in front of a crowd but this was fun to do.”

“And, as every year, it’s a ton of fun to work with Marbridge teammates in putting the program together,” Paige continued. “It, most certainly, could not happen without a team of good people working together, all for the sake of our residents!”



Top: Thomas, Laura, Abby, and Emily starr in a scene from the 2020 Christmas Program, ‘A COVID Christmas’.

Middle: Daneil Miranda, a Life Enrichment Specialist at The Villa, and Jan in a scene from The Villa’s , ‘Dear Santa’ skit.

Bottom: Nic and Todd performing Christmas songs with the band.

Watch the 2020 Marbridge Virtual Christmas Program when you visit:

[Marbridge.org/christmas](https://marbridge.org/christmas)

The Beauty in Numbers

Residents and staff bring a work of art to life

A blank canvas has countless possibilities. It's an outlet to express creativity, a window to let beauty shine through, and a way to connect residents and staff through teamwork. Javier Torres, a Village Driver, saw all of the possibilities when he was gifted a giant unused canvas.

After receiving the canvas, Javier used his own talents and creativity to draw out the outline for a detailed paint-by-number artwork of peacocks. The piece featured hundreds of different paint by number areas which he patiently drew out to be filled. Once the piece was ready for painting, both residents and staff happily volunteered to bring color to the canvas.

"It was a community project where anyone was encouraged to join in," said Javier. "My art group has been meeting weekly and working on this project has been a long awaited idea that was shared with these wonderful residents. They really seem to come together in a happy, creative, drama free environment where we can all share in the name of art."

In total, more than a dozen Village residents and team members brought beauty to a blank canvas.



Above: Javier poses with the finished peacock painting.

See the painting come to life
when you visit:
Marbridge.org/peacock

Longhorns Athletes Honored

Marbridge athletes receive medals during Fall Sports Luncheon



Above: Bianca Nguyen, Longhorns Coach, and Sean, a Ranch resident, celebrating his award.

Marbridge's Special Olympics athletes may not have been able to compete in 2020 in their respected sports, but that didn't mean their hard work didn't go unrewarded. In Spring, our Longhorns athletes competed in the 2020 Marbridge Games. Athletes in basketball, track & field, cycling, and equestrian competed against each other on campus.

Due to COVID-19 safety measures with rising numbers in the greater community, the Marbridge Games in the fall had to be cancelled. Longhorns coaches held a Fall Athlete Luncheon to award athletes from swimming, bocce, golf, and softball for their hard work and improvements through the year.

"They were disappointed hearing the news at first, but as soon as we explained it was for their safety that the competitions were cancelled, they were understanding of the situation," said Bianca Nguyen, a Special Olympics Coach and Activities Coordinator at Marbridge. "They still continued practicing in their sport, and look forward to when things start back up again."

More than 50 athletes from The Ranch and The Village were honored during the luncheon.

View photos from the Fall
Luncheon when you visit:
Marbridge.org/fallsports

30 Years of Excellence

Three decades of dedication from Coach Hughie Shaw

Over the last 30 years Marbridge has seen a lot of expansion and changes on campus. Before 1998, Marbridge was a ranch geared towards serving males with cognitive and intellectual disabilities and in this year the females living at the Abilene campus moved onto the main Marbridge campus. In 2002 the Training & Education program saw vast upgrades under Abilities-Centered Training. Soon after in 2006, the Marbridge equestrian program began, and in 2015 Victory Hall opened. In 1990 Marbridge a very special addition to the campus with the hiring of Coach Hughie Shaw.

Hughie joined the Marbridge team in September 1990 as the Recreation & Leisure Coordinator for Mabee Village (now The Village) after a career in the NFL. He hit the ground running as he involved residents with Special Olympics for the first time in Marbridge's history.

"When I came to Marbridge our athletes were competing against each other on campus," said Hughie. "It was my fourth year when we combined our athletes and made a softball team to compete in the Special Olympics for the first time. Starting in 1995 we went on a nine year run of being State Champions."

Over the past 30 years he led the Marbridge Longhorns through many accomplishments including countless athletes competing in over a dozen sports. Hughie also serves as the Marbridge Head of Delegation for Special Olympics, which today has over 120 athletes with 40 volunteers. Though the athletes couldn't compete in all of their sports this past year, he and the rest of the Longhorns coaching staff kept the athletes training and improving, ready to return when the time comes.

"He'll encourage you if you're struggling," said Ray, a Ranch resident and Longhorns athlete. "He'll go over things with you and show you how to do things and makes you better. He's a great person to be around."

Hughie has also been active through the years in leading off-campus activities for the residents. He takes residents to UT sporting events, out to lunch, movie outings, camping trips, concerts, and, at one



Above: Hughie gives a big hug to Kristin, a Village resident.
Below: Hughie dancing with Jill, a Ranch resident.



time, even accompanied residents on out-of-state excursions. While off-campus activities have been put on hold since March, Hughie and the entire Training & Education team continue keeping residents happy, healthy, and active on campus.

“Our trips around the country were some of our most memorable things for me,” Hughie continued. “Seeing how travel worked with a large group of residents was at times stressful, but the fun everyone had on the trips made everything worth it.”

Though he’s best known as “Coach”, Hughie wears many hats in his daily duties and his job has taken on many roles since starting at Marbridge. at Marbridge. He was the coach for The Mabee Village athletes, but when he first started he also helped as a driver and a cook. Hughie has also been a huge help with the Drama class through his work with the annual Christmas Program.

“Hughie has designed the props for the annual Christmas program for many years. He also serves as a stagehand each year for the program,” said Jana Kay Green, Director of Training & Education. “He’s an artist as much as he is an athlete.”

Throughout the years, Coach has painted and built numerous backdrops, stage pieces, and various props for the program. While Hughie has been a leader for the campus through sports, teaching, and his artwork, there is one area that every resident brings up when talking about him, his friendship.

“I love Coach Hughie,” said Matt, a resident at The Villa. “I played softball with him and he’s my friend.” Coach has helped shape residents from all three communities on campus and has made more than a few friends during his time at Marbridge.

“He’s a good partner. He’s a real nice guy,” said Chuck, a resident at The Village and Hughie’s golf partner on the Longhorns golf team. “I appreciate all he does for us.”

“He embodies the heart of Marbridge,” said James Stacey, President. “I wish that in my tenure here I could have half of the impact that he’s had on the residents.”

It’s been a fantastic 30-years with Coach Hughie Shaw and we can’t wait for many years to come with his continued dedication to Marbridge’s mission, the residents, and his fellow staff members. Most importantly we can’t wait for a lifetime of friendship with Coach.



Top: Hughie sharing expertise with David, a Ranch resident.
Middle: Hughie focused on the Longhorns softball team’s success.
Bottom: Hughie having fun with Matt, a Villa resident, at the 2019 Fall Festival.

Watch two videos in honor of Coach’s dedication to Marbridge when you visit:

[Marbridge.org/coach](https://marbridge.org/coach)

Decades of Greatness

Celebrating Marbridge Employees with 20 or More Years of Service

At Marbridge, our employees are simply amazing in their selflessness, dedication, caring attitudes, and are driven to see the success of the mission. When hiring new employees, it's a goal for them to make their impact on the campus and eight employees have surpassed 20-years of service at Marbridge. Coach Hughie Shaw, mentioned in the previous article, is our current longest tenured employee, but seven other employees have spent the majority of their professional careers with Marbridge.

We're putting the spotlight on these amazing team members by letting them, or the residents they serve, share some of their favorite memories.



Juana Gutierrez - 25 Years
Certified Medication Aide - The Villa

"I have so many stories that I can't tell because they'll make me laugh too much. It's great working with the residents here. They're like family and I love each of them. I have my own stories and memories for each resident and they mean a lot."

Toni Martinez - 24 Years
Driver - The Village



"She's very nice and caring. I remember during a cooking class at Mabee Village, Toni was there helping me with a chicken dish and she did it step by step with me. Going through each ingredient and making sure everything was correct and teaching me. " – Alice, Village Resident



Jan Meeks - 21 Years
Art Instructor - T&E

"There are too many stories to only choose one. What I would like to share is the gratification of seeing so many people gain self-esteem, strengthen cognitive thinking and problem solving through Art. Remember it's the process and not the finished product. There is beauty in all of it."

Sandra Miles-Hicks - 20 Years
Nurse Assistant- The Ranch



"Sandra is a great nurse and helps Sue out a lot. She's helped me with problems I've had through the years like a time I almost got the wrong pills. She's nice to me and nice to everyone. I hope she's here for a long time." – Jerry, Ranch Resident



Ron Stewart- 20 Years
Cook - The Village

"Ron is a funny, kind, and great guy. He's taught me a lot through my years of working with him and it's been great getting to still work with him now. He's a good cook, taught me how to clean pots and pans a better way, and he's a hard worker." – Kevin, Village Resident

Dan Carlson - 20 Years
Landscaping Supervisor - Facilities



"It goes without saying that the friendships I have made are the most important, especially those with our residents. I often reflect on how much I learn from our residents and of how much of an inspiration they have become to me in my life. Thanks for the memories."



Will Hoermann - 20 Years
Director - The Village

"So many good memories. One of my favorite moments continues to be seeing our residents put in work to achieve their goals and reach their potentials. I love being able to witness their successes and support them along the way."

A Historic Day at Marbridge

Marbridge Receives the COVID-19 Vaccine

Milestones are reached regularly at Marbridge but rarely do we get to make history in such a big way. Tuesday, December 29 was a historic day for Marbridge as residents and staff at The Villa received the first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Marbridge was also the first long term care facility in the Austin regional area to receive the vaccine from Walgreens.

“We are extremely honored to be partnered with Walgreens, PharMerica, and CVS,” said Wendy Worden, Director of Nursing at The Villa. “And for us to be the first facility in Austin to receive the COVID-19 vaccine from Walgreens is truly exceptional.”

Marbridge residents and staff at The Villa who received the first dosage got their final shot the week of January 18. The Villa, like other long-term care facilities, are part of the first phase of citizens to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

“Long Term Care communities really need this vaccine so they can return back to the normal stages of life,” said Chyna Bond, a Walgreens Store Manager. “It’s a good first step to go to our high risk populations and make sure we take care of them.”

Marbridge is working hard for all residents and staff to get the vaccine. The vaccine will roll out in phases with at-risk populations being provided the vaccine in the first two phases. Residents at The Village and The Ranch, along with all other employees who don’t work within The Villa, received their first vaccine the week of January 18.

“It’s an honor. I’m so thrilled to be a part of what we can consider ‘the beginning of the end’ of this terrible pandemic,” said Jacques Leche, Walgreens Pharmacist. “We are so thankful that we finally have a vaccine and it’s time to bring this to an end.”

Marbridge is honored to be the first group to get the vaccine from Walgreens and excited to see as many people on campus receive the vaccine. That day was a day full of hope and a shining beacon to show that we’re closer now than ever before to being back to the daily lives we know before this outbreak.



Above: Dunia, a Villa resident, receives the COVID-19 vaccine.

“We’ve worked diligently to keep our residents and each other safe. We’ve done an exceptional job of that, not only at The Villa but across campus,” Wendy reflected. “It’s heartbreaking not to have our families, volunteers, and even some of our normal staff on campus due to restrictions. Having the vaccine so early on truly will make an overall happier and better place.”



Above: Wendy Worden, Director of Nursing at The Villa, receives the COVID-19 vaccine.

Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and watch a video from the historic day when you visit

[Marbridge.org/coronavirus](https://marbridge.org/coronavirus)

Flair for Testing

Marbridge's health and safety protocols currently dictate most aspects of campus and comes from Texas Health and Human Services (THHS). For nearly seven months the Marbridge employees have had to do weekly testing on campus for COVID-19. The testing ensures that both the staff and residents remain as healthy as possible, and as employees and families have expressed, provides some peace of mind as well.

"We started testing before it was mandated. When we started it was just a recommendation and not a requirement," said Wendy Worden, Director of Nursing at The Villa. "It's been vital and everyone has been willing to jump in and help during the testing process and reevaluate how we keep people engaged during this."

Some weeks, those helping with testing, have designated themes to make routine testing a little more fun for the rest of the staff. Themes have included a neon/90's party, out of this world, and WWE wrestling. Seeing the testing team have fun has helped ease some of the anxieties of being tested.

"As a whole, the teams across campus are not just concerned about their own health but keeping their fellow team members and our residents safe," said Lesley Grant, Clinical Manager at The Villa. "Their preparedness and dedication to keeping everyone safe is amazing so having some fun while testing continues to keep their spirits high and engaged."

The fun with testing even spread through our Senior Management Team as Becca McPherson, VP of Development, dressed up and worked numerous themed testing days.

"All Marbridge employees are essential and each part of campus has stepped up in amazing ways," said Becca. "There are many moving parts to the weekly COVID testing crew and the entire campus from senior leadership, finance, trainers, nurses, directors, assistant directors, and administrative assistants have all volunteered to help. It's never felt like an obligation but an honor to serve those who work the closest with our residents daily."

Testing has absolutely been vital in keeping the Marbridge campus as healthy as possible. Team



Top: The testing team is out of this world with their space themed day.
Bottom: Testers crushing it during the WWE wrestling themed day.

members from across campus have tested weekly since early June. Though testing can be uncomfortable, seeing staff members dressed up in various themed outfits brought a sense of comfort and made the testing a little easier.

"They're still able to keep good spirits through all of this and it helps us be ok with testing," said Sarah Hotard, a dietary team member at The Villa. "My favorite was their wrestling costumes, but we never know what to expect when we come for testing."

Weekly testing continues for Marbridge staff, which means more fun themes are sure to follow.

See photos from our themed days
when you visit:

[Marbridge.org/testing](https://marbridge.org/testing)

Thanking Amazing Volunteers

2020 Appreciation Event Goes Virtual

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Each Spring Marbridge honors our amazing volunteers with an annual Volunteer Appreciation Event. It's a night of stories, joy, and showing appreciation to some amazing volunteers. It's a night to celebrate the extended Marbridge family who love the residents, invest their time, talents, and gifts to make the mission stronger and make every resident feel valued. In addition to showing gratitude for the volunteers, awards are handed out to those who went above and beyond in their work for the residents and staff that year.

COVID may have canceled the annual Volunteer Appreciation event last April, but not the massive amounts of appreciation! Staff have worked hard to try and let every volunteer know how valued they are and thank all those who give their time and talent to Marbridge's mission.

This past fall, the 2020 volunteer appreciation winners were contacted under the guise of assisting with a marketing piece about volunteering. Sneaky, sneaky! When we spoke to each of the volunteer winners they were shown a "sample video" to understand the vision and marketing goals. That "sample video" was actually a message from staff and residents letting them know they won an award.

"We may be separated by distance, but that does not mean we are any less grateful and awe-stricken by the generosity and love you've shown during this global pandemic," said Haley Koop, Volunteer Coordinator. "Your love, support, creativity, and drive to stay engaged with the Marbridge mission has been astounding. Thank you from the very bottom of my heart."

Watch the videos our Bridges, Commitment, Mentorship, Group of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year award winners were shown and see their reactions to winning their big awards. Their reactions were so gratifying and their joy will brighten your day as well. Marbridge's mission can only be stronger because of the joy and gifts each volunteer brings to campus.



Top: Alyssa and Mark Love surprised with Volunteers of the Year award.
Middle: Denise Taylor tearfully receives her Bridges Award.
Bottom: Shannon Flowers surprised during a Zoom meeting with her Exceptional Mentor award.

Watch our 2020 Virtual Volunteer Appreciation Award Ceremony at:

[Marbridge.org/awards](https://marbridge.org/awards)

The New Look of Volunteering

Virtual Volunteering Keeps The Campus Connected

Due to COVID-19, campus has been closed to visitors since March to ensure the safety and well-being of residents from the spread of the virus. That means residents can't go to activities in the community, Special Olympics events were cancelled, and visitors coming to campus were on pause. Though campus was closed, volunteers found new ways to keep in touch with residents and their activities.

Early in the pandemic, letters, cards, and wishlist items were sent to campus to keep residents active and encouraged to keep their spirits high. More classes and activities were held outdoors to keep residents socially distanced, continue their learning, and to encourage a healthier lifestyle. Some volunteers found a fun way to keep in touch with residents while keeping their social distance.

Volunteering took a shift to virtual activities. Those activities ranged from virtual bingo, Pilates and yoga classes, to live concerts just for the residents. While they couldn't be there in person to volunteer their skills and time, they could be there to stay in touch with residents through virtual avenues.

"Having a dedicated weekly time to log in and play Bingo with the residents has really been uplifting for our volunteers



Above: Residents from The Village participating in a virtual yoga session.

and the residents we play with," said Beth Patterson, a long-time volunteer and ELM Member with Marbridge. "Keeping a schedule, sticking to a routine, being consistent – all of these factor into our mental health and give us a break from quarantine fatigue. It's been really great to "show up" and see their familiar faces, hear how their week has been, and let them know we are still here and supporting them."

Activities range from small evening group settings like Bingo with Beth to physically active virtual calls in Victory Hall and an exercise class. Several volunteers host workout classes with residents that include yoga, Pilates, dance, and others. Seeing residents stay active and healthy is a huge driving factor to continued virtual workouts with volunteer instructors.

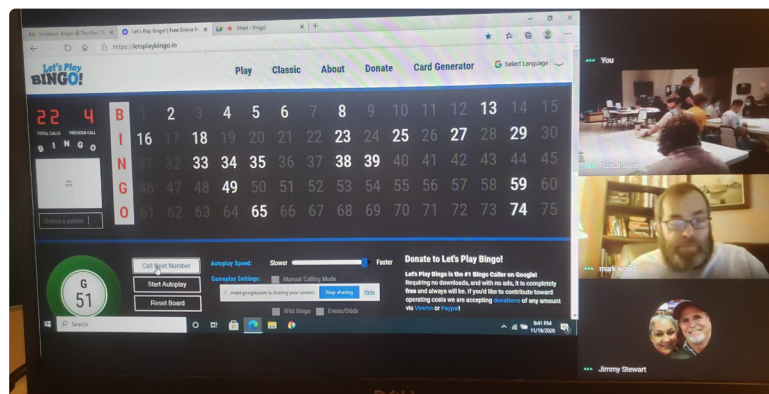
"It is so fulfilling to have people around you that appreciate what you are doing and who always have a good attitude," said Jordan Miller, a Marbridge volunteer. "Even though it is virtual, which isn't normal, it feels like a little return to normalcy which I think everyone needs right now, and I hope they felt the same way too!"

Virtual volunteering continues throughout Marbridge and we can't say thank you enough to our amazing friends that donate their time and skill to bring some joy to campus.



Above: Beth Patterson, top left panel, leads virtual bingo with residents from The Ranch.

Below: A behind the scenes look at virtual bingo.



Learn more about virtual volunteering when you contact Haley Koop, Volunteer Coordinator, at: **hkoop@marbridge.org** or at **512.282.1144**

THHS Survey Season

All Three Communities Excel in Surveys

Protocols, precautions, and ever-changing routines thanks to COVID-19 was common as the pandemic continued throughout last year. Each day brought updates, changes, and heightened measures to ensure the safety and health of residents and staff. Though it wasn't a typical year because of the outbreak, it was still business as usual for the Marbridge staff as all three communities saw exemplary scores in their annual surveys.

Each community had their annual Texas Health and Human Services (THHS) surveys conducted, but this survey season saw additional areas of focus along with additional reviews due to safety measures because of COVID-19

"This year we have had multiple surveys that have been related to COVID-19 as well as our annual survey," said Duncan Murray, Villa Administrator. "We have had multiple 'infection control' surveys and we have done very well on all of them. One of them was called a Special Infection Control Assessment that the survey team took ideas developed by Wendy [Director of Nursing] and our medical team to use to train other buildings across the state. Our annual survey wasn't much different than it usually is, they look at the same things every year. But there was clearly a bit more focus on resident care, infection control, and safety."

The additional surveying, including the Infection Control Assessments, came after several staff members from different areas of campus tested positive for COVID-19.

"After much anticipation, THHS finally arrived at The Ranch on August 4th in follow-up to self-reporting



Above: Teresa Brown, a Villa Nurse Manager, shares a smile with Mitzi, a Villa resident.

of positive COVID-19 within our team," said Marcus Mercer, Director of The Ranch. "This visit also had a specialized focus on Infection Control and a review of the policy and procedures that we have in place for COVID-19. We were found to have zero deficiencies and received high praise with our efforts in maintaining the safety and well-being of all on our campus."

Having new protocols, precautions, and heightened measures of safety was new to staff but nothing that proved troublesome. Team members quickly learned and adapted to the elevated levels of safety and worked as one unit to ensure the continued health of the residents.

"Having to learn new approaches and adapt to new realities has really shown me just how resilient we can be when we all work together," said Will Hoermann, Director of The Village.

"I have been thoroughly impressed by how well we have taken everything in stride and have come to believe that challenges aren't problems as much as they are opportunities to brainstorm new strategies for success."

All three communities saw nearly perfect scores from their various surveys, a true testament to the level of dedication and care provided at Marbridge. The surveys focus on various areas of community life, such as safety, one area held highly in terms of true success.

"By the measures that really count, resident care and happiness, this year's survey was the best we've had so far in my tenure here," Duncan continued. "That success means that we are not resting on our laurels but are doing the work to continually strive to be better."

Help Marbridge's mission and residents continue to learn, experience, and achieve a Whole New Life when you visit:

[Marbridge.org/donate](https://marbridge.org/donate)

Today's Theme Is..

The Villa Delivers Weekly Fun with Themed Days



Above: Kerri clowning around on Clown day.



Above: Pat celebrating Independence Day.



Above: Frankie making her monster mask.

Happiness looks different to so many people. It could be a simple smile to brighten your day, a virtual call with your loved one, or a good laugh from stories with your friends. At The Villa, happiness includes all of those things along with the joy the activity day brings, like dressing up!

Early last year The Villa started doing fun activity themed days to bring extra joy to the residents and staff. The idea was quickly developed when larger group activities were no longer able to happen due to COVID-19 precautions.

“Dr. Erin Scarth, Marbridge’s Phycologist, brought up the suggestion and we went with it as a way to bring together staff and residents in a fun way,” remembered Michelle Caddel, a Life Enrichment Specialist at The Villa.

The activity themed days have ranged from dressing in specific colors, pajama day, mismatched sock day, hat day, and many more. Not only do both residents and employees dress accordingly to the theme or activity, they also get to act out themes.

“I think one of my favorites was near the beginning. It was Hippie Day,” Michelle continued. “A few of the staff were able to really get into it and there were a lot of laughs.”

It’s not just the residents and Life Enrichment Specialists that have gotten in on the fun. Staff members

from all over The Villa have been known to dress up and join in the fun.

“My favorite theme day was clown day,” said Miranda Brugger, The Villa’s Social Worker. “It brought me so much joy to see the residents laughing and smiling throughout the day.”

Residents have looked forward to each Tuesday and Thursday when the theme days are held. Residents even get in on the fun by suggesting activities and themes that everyone can dress up and act out.

“I’ve liked dressing up for these themed days,” said Kerri, a resident at The Villa. “My favorite was dressing up as a clown. I also enjoyed dressing up as a witch for our Halloween week.”

Those two days each week have brought so much joy and happiness to residents and staff. Though these days started to bring some light to everyone’s day during the COVID-19 outbreak, the themes could continue even when we return to some “normalcy”.

“I believe it has helped with morale. It gives staff and residents something other than the day-to-day actions that is fun to do together.” Michelle concluded.

View photos of The Villa’s themed days and activities when you visit:

[Marbridge.org/photos](https://marbridge.org/photos)

Hitting Goals ... One Pound at a Time



Above: Thomas showing off his weigh loss success with Jennifer Diaz, Victory Hall Manager.

The “Quarantine 19” is now a thing! While some are battling remaining active while they stay home and stay safe, Thomas, a resident at The Village, is providing us all with some quarantine motivation.

Thomas moved to Marbridge nearly three years ago. Upon arrival, he met with members of The Village and Training & Education to create some goals that he wanted to reach while living at Marbridge. One of those goals was to live a healthier life.

Thomas recently passed a huge milestone on his road to living healthier. He has now lost 100 pounds since moving onto campus three years ago. For those keeping up, that’s over 30 pounds a year. That drive to be healthier and lose the weight is a testament to his commitment and the staff’s dedication to helping Thomas towards his goals.

“In my daily routine, I had to watch what I was eating by including more vegetables and limiting my carbs and meat,” said Thomas. “I just kept pushing myself more in cardio classes and walking more in my free time. I also focused on drinking more water.”

It’s that mindset, better eating habits, and help from the team at The Village and in Training & Education that has changed his daily life.

“The instructors and coaches would motivate me to be my best in cardio but would not push me too hard,”

Thomas continued. “My resident trainers also helped me to shop for healthier snacks and make healthier choices when I eat on campus.”

“We are proud of Thomas and his accomplishments,” said Will Hoermann, Director of The Village. “This really goes to show the level of achievement that is possible when a resident is motivated to reach their goals and has unconditional support from their family and our staff. Way to go, Thomas!”

It’s not just staff and fellow residents that have seen a change in Thomas. His mother has also noticed his change since moving to Marbridge.

“Since moving to Marbridge, Thomas has received support to continue to build on his strengths and to develop his talents and passions,” said Julee, Thomas’ mother. “His willingness to learn new ways of doing things from his Marbridge family has intensified his love and relationships with all of his friends and family.”

“I feel better about myself and am more positive,” said Thomas.

Learn more about our how residents can reach their goals through our Training & Education program by visiting:

Marbridge.org/training



Marbridge Foundation

P.O. Box 2250 • Manchaca, TX 78652
512.282.1144 • info@marbridge.org
Marbridge.org

Marbridge is a non-profit residential community that offers transitional and lifetime care to adults with a wide range of cognitive abilities and — through compassion and faith — provides them opportunities to learn, experience, and achieve a whole new life.



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Did you know charitable gifts may be directly distributed to Marbridge from a traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) without incurring federal income taxes? Make your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) or other distribution today to help our residents achieve *a whole new life*.

For more information about IRA Charitable Distributions and other planned giving options, please contact Becca McPherson at 512.735.2716 or bmcpherson@marbridge.org.

Always consult your financial advisor.

Upcoming Dates

Amplify Austin Day 2021	Mar 4-5
Easter Break	Apr 2-5
Last Day of Spring Session	May 7
Resident Break	May 10-31
First Day of Summer Session	June 1
Founder's Day	TBD