

Senior Village Drivers: Headed Your Way

By Stephanie Thomas

As with many SaddleBrooke residents, Jim and Georgeann Becker took a circuitous route getting to our community. After fifty-two years in Ohio and ten more in Flagstaff, they stumbled upon SaddleBrooke when visiting a friend and bought 2 years ago.

Jim is a Senior Village volunteer driver for “Going My Way” and also a member of the “Helping Hands” team that does small projects inside and outside of members’ homes. Jim’s volunteer service for Senior Village fits in with his retirement philosophy: “The best job is the one you don’t get paid for.” He added, “I was so glad when the Village got started because this is what I’ve been looking for.”

Jim is no stranger to volunteering. Back in Ohio, he was the parent treasurer of the high school marching band, and as a sideline at his job, he wrote a newsletter for employees with their personal stories, especially those who had been involved in baseball and football. Both Jim and Georgeann have been, and continue to be, actively involved at their church.

When asked what’s it like to pick up a member for a driving assignment, Jim replied: “The first question usually asked is ‘Where are you from?’ Then the conversation takes off. I love hearing the stories people tell about their lives. Their eyes light up and they get excited when telling their stories. A driver needs to be a good listener as long as it doesn’t interfere with driving.”

One of Jim’s driving assignments took him to the grocery store with a member with diminished eyesight. Jim was able to identify products on the shelves and later carry the bags into the house. Jim urges people not to hesitate to enroll as members of Senior Village. “People have a sense that they don’t want to bother their neighbors. I just want people to know that this is what we want to do. We’re here because we want to help somebody, and it’s their turn to be helped.”

When Jim is not volunteering, he can be found at the weekly Men’s Putters group or at his computer pouring over baseball statistics from the 60s and 70s. “I can’t remember what happened two or three years ago in baseball, but my head is full of facts from decades ago or even before I was born. I’m a hysterical, historical baseball fan.”

Answering the question about why he volunteers, Jim reaffirmed his belief in helping others. “I want to ‘Pay It Forward’, like in the movie. Someday I will need these services. Now it’s my turn to help. I make time for the things I want to do, and driving for Senior Village is what I want to do. It is truly a delightful experience.”

Senior Village at SaddleBrooke offers many opportunities to serve our community. Whatever your skill or talent, we can find a niche for you. Volunteer orientation sessions will resume again in the fall. For more information, go to our website at seniorvillageatsaddlebrooke.org. To sign up as a volunteer, to make a donation, or to become a Friend of the Village on our mailing list, log on to svatsb.org. For membership, call 520-314-1042.

