

Friendly Visitor Goals & Objectives

Since 1974, **Friendly Visitor** has opened up the world to thousands of Montgomery County residents who are isolated and homebound. The program:

- relieves loneliness and isolation of elderly clients living in Montgomery County through one-on-one friendship with volunteers
- helps clients remain in the community by providing access to necessary resources
- promotes and advocates for a safe and healthy environment for the client

“The elderly have a wealth of things to share... be there to listen.”

— A Friendly Visitor Volunteer

Funding

Friendly Visitor receives funding from the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Aging & Disability Services.

The Mental Health Association (MHA) promotes mental health and wellness, and supports those with mental illness, by sponsoring and implementing advocacy, education and community service programs. A private, nonprofit, United Way (#8151) agency, the MHA has served Montgomery County residents for over 45 years.

The MHA currently manages 13 major direct service programs for children, teens, families, senior adults and individuals with long-term mental illness. Over 1000 volunteers implement programs under the direction of the MHA professional staff.



Mental Health Association
Serving Montgomery County Residents

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“Great Place to Work”
Washingtonian Magazine

United Way/CFC #8151



look into the eyes
of friendship

friendly visitor



Mental
Health
Association

www.mhamc.org

Many homebound people feel invisible — that no one cares that they exist — yet so many of them have lived rich and interesting lives and have contributed so much to the fabric of society.

Life changes a great deal when one becomes ill or frail. Suddenly, one's world and the chance to be social decreases in direct relation to the ability to get out the front door.

The effects of isolation can be devastating on one's mental health.

Pets on Wheels — Another Kind of Visiting

Pets on Wheels volunteers and their pets bring love and acceptance to the elderly

by visiting in nursing homes, hospices, hospitals, group homes, and adult day care centers. Currently we have over 175 volunteers visiting 68 facilities in Montgomery County.



Our dogs and cats range in age from 6 months to 14 years, and we have all types, from purebreds to mixes. A majority of our visiting animals are either from shelters or rescue groups — proving that someone's throw-away pet is another person's treasure, with a lot of love to give!

Pets on Wheels has been in existence in Montgomery County since 1983. This program relies solely on individual contributions and our annual "PAWS for a Cause" Fundraising Campaign. All contributions are gratefully accepted.

THE Client

We receive referrals from the elderly, families, social workers, medical professionals, and others. Most of our clients are over the age of 70 with 62% being over the age of 80.

To be eligible for a Friendly Visitor, a client:

- Is a Montgomery County resident
- Is isolated or homebound due to physical illness or frailty
- Desires a new friendship

THE Volunteer

- Enjoys the company of seniors
- Is able to share time and have compassion for others
- Agrees to attend volunteer orientation and on-going training
- Visits an hour a week and commits to one year of service

A beautiful friendship: John, a retired civil rights lawyer, was very active. He played golf, was involved in community endeavors and enjoyed life to its fullest. All that changed the day John had a stroke. Now he needs assistance with the smallest things and is confined to a wheelchair. Although John had many friends, as time passed they visited less and less frequently.

Friendly Visitor matched Ted, a trained volunteer and also a lawyer, with John. Their weekly visits contain animated conversations about the civil rights movement, philosophical issues and how to get a hole in one. Both John and Ted look forward to their visits together and value their special friendship.

For more information call:

301.424.0656 x107
or visit www.mhamc.org