



Jackie loves to make crafts and is pictured here creating a snowman rug with a latch hook tool and yarn.

Jackie Stone: Making Her Mark as Villa's Helper Extraordinaire!

Written by Katherine Evans, Villa Volunteer and Special Events Coordinator

When fifty-seven-year-old Jackie Stone arrives at Villa's monthly Social and Service (SAS) Club, she greets the assembled group with a warm smile. "What are we doing today?" she asks, pulling up a chair at the craft table. SAS Club, a monthly gathering for Villa's adults that is organized with help from the National Charity League of San Marino, is one of Jackie's favorite events. During SAS Club, Villa's adults come together to socialize and create a craft that will be donated to the local community. Today's project is to create 4th of July flags for a neighborhood senior center. Jackie leads the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and singing a patriotic song, which she also signs with hand gestures. "I like the songs and the Pledge of Allegiance and signing for everybody," she says, her voice full of pride.

Jackie learned to sign when she was a student at Villa's School. You see, Jackie has been part of the Villa family since she was ten years old. Over the years she has blossomed into a model member of our community, making her mark every day as an enthusiastic participant in both Villa's Residential and Employment Programs. "She is extremely involved," says Marites Beltran, Administrator of Villa's Allen and Wynn residential homes, "and she cares a lot about her housemates." Jackie also serves as a valued community member on Villa's Board of Directors, one of her proudest accomplishments. "I like talking about my work and activities," she says, smiling.

Jackie also updates the Board on the many activities she and her fellow Wynn House residents enjoy each week. Together they visit the fitness facility Curves and dine at local restaurants or go shopping. When Jackie isn't out on the town, she has a rich home life. In the company of her housemates she likes to complete puzzles and create latch hook rugs in various eye-catching designs. "She is working on a snowman rug," says Wynn staff member Susie Sumadsad. "She is very talented and is teaching me, too!" Villa's Residential program enables Jackie to learn valuable life skills. Each week she and her housemates are responsible for a schedule of rotating responsibilities such as watering the backyard plants or



Jackie (right) and her roommate Kathryn assemble July 4th flags for donation to a neighborhood senior center as part of SAS Club.

assisting with dinner prep. These tasks help Jackie increase her independence.

Villa's Employment Program has also helped Jackie become more independent and confident. She is part of a Group Supported Employment crew on Villa's main campus and also has a job at Pacific Theatres in Glendale where she is a greeter, ticket taker, theater cleaner and usher. Job Coach David Nickoloff shares, "Instead of referring customers to the manager for all questions, she now has some answers of her own. Her customer service skills have increased."

This care and concern for others is evident to Jackie's brother Jim Stone, too. Whether Jackie is writing notes to her many pen pals or helping her housemates with their tasks, Jackie's empathy is inspiring. "I give Villa credit for fostering an environment where compassion is encouraged," says Jim. "Villa impacts the whole person. They want to help people grow and feel valued in their lives. That's something Villa has done for as long as I can remember."

When asked what she enjoys most about Villa, Jackie doesn't hesitate to answer: "I like to work. I like helping people and making sure that they're okay." Participating in Villa's programs has given Jackie the tools to live a fulfilling life and her Villa family and the surrounding community are all in agreement: Jackie helps people each and every day—you might even say she's a helper extraordinaire!

Villa's Residential Program

Villa Esperanza Services is committed to providing individualized, accessible, affordable housing for adults, 18 years and older, with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Villa's residential program includes seven group homes and six independent living apartments. Villa also offers Independent Living Skills (ILS) and Supported Living Skills Programs for individuals living independently who need ongoing support.

In all of Villa's homes a person-centered approach is practiced, providing residents with enriching social and community activities and educational opportunities, which nurture and promote individual choice. Each home setting has qualified trained staff assisting residents in all areas of living, such as:

- Independent living resources and transitional support
- Home and community safety training
- Budgeting and money management
- Food, nutrition and meal preparation training
- Public transportation resources and travel training
- Socialization and communication skill-building
- Housekeeping and personal hygiene support

Funding for Villa's residential program is available through regional centers or private pay. If you are interested in touring or receiving more information, please contact **Damion Lee**, Director of Residential Services, (626) 449-2919, ext. 113 or **DLee@VillaEsperanzaServices.org**.



Villa Esperanza Guild Marks its Golden Anniversary!

Celebrating 50 Years of Supporting Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

A trumpet sounds and over the loudspeaker a voice intones, "Riders up!" Horses shimmy at the starting gate. The San Gabriel Mountains are visible in the distance. This is Villa Esperanza Guild's electrifying fundraising event Day of Thoroughbred Racing benefiting Villa's Hjelte-Phillips Speech and Language Center and the Adult Residential Program.

Race Day is one of the many creative fundraising events the Guild has spearheaded over the years. Founded in 1968 with a mission to increase public awareness surrounding the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities, the Guild has raised over 1.5 million dollars for Villa's programs since its inception. The Guild's support has been critical to the success of Villa's children and adults alike. Gwendolyn Eberhard, Director of Speech and Language shares, "The tremendous fundraising efforts of the Guild allow the Speech and Language Center to continue to offer highly skilled services to our school students and to the public." That means helping children with communicative challenges find a voice, build friendships and develop life skills. Whether greeting a classmate through the use of an iPad or saying the word 'mom' for the first time, Villa's children are making strides each day thanks to the Guild's generous support.

2018 will mark the group's 50th anniversary. When reflecting on this momentous occasion, inaugural member Georgene Neely recalls that she was initially drawn to the Guild because of Villa's warm and inviting atmosphere. "Villa had a picnic at their ranch in Agoura Canyon," Georgene shares, "and I couldn't get over the patience of Villa's counselors and their loving care for clients." This is a sentiment Cinnie Lewis, another founding member, echoes. Cinnie started as a classroom volunteer at Villa's School and went on to serve as both Guild President and Treasurer. "I certainly enjoyed the time I spent in the classroom. I found an organization where I felt needed and could do good work and stuck with it," says Cinnie. "It's been my life."

This commitment to philanthropy is a value all Guild members share. Longtime member Sally Irving fondly recalls Marie Jones, the three-time Guild president in whose memory the Marie Jones Service Award is named. "She was a real lady who was very generous with her hospitality," Sally explains. In addition to volunteering on behalf of the Guild, Marie even taught for a time at Villa School, making a lasting impression on Villa students and families.

Marie Jones Service Award recipient and current Guild President Diana Gamble embodies Marie's get-up-and-go spirit. "I was very proud to receive that award in her name," says Diana. "She was the kind of person who was always willing to move forward." As Diana looks toward the 50th Anniversary, she is confident that the Guild will continue to impact the lives of others. Cinnie is in agreement—when asked to summarize her feelings on the 50th, she doesn't hesitate to exclaim, "Viva la Villa Esperanza!" Villa looks forward to the upcoming Day of Thoroughbred Racing on February 24th, 2018, and to the Guild's next 50 years of inspiring leadership and service. We thank our Guild members for enabling the children and adults Villa serves to blossom!



In recognition of the Guild's 50th anniversary longtime members Georgene, Cinnie and Sally gather to reminisce and share their hopes for the next 50 years — Viva la Villa Esperanza!

VILLA ESPERANZA SERVICES DIRECTORY

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Speech & Language Center**
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Occupational Therapy Clinic
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**Community Integration
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626-398-4435, ext. 1

Employment Services
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Adult Residential Program
626-449-2919, ext. 113

Independent Living Skills (ILS)
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Dimensions Adult Day Program
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Michael feeds a carrot to Zero, a visiting pony from Critters to Go Petting Zoo and Pony Rides! Villa students are enjoying animal visits as part of Camp Esperanza this year - you may remember reading about this special summer camp experience and founder Julia Nail in last year's summer Chirp! Camp Esperanza generously supported by the Woman's Civic League of Pasadena. Animal experiences generously supported by the Thornton S. Glide, Jr. and Katherine D. Glide Foundation.