

LIVING

A SPECIAL MOMENT WITH A SENIOR

We all need to have someone special in our lives. Someone we can trust. Someone we can share a secret with. Someone who listens to our silly jokes and always laughs, who has a big shoulder to cry on when times get tough.

Seniors are special people who touch our lives every day and we have a chance to pay tribute to them during Community Support Month.

Thanks to Community Home Assistance to Seniors (CHATS), many York Region seniors can live independently in their homes.

CHATS offers hot meals, provides in-home care and assistance and day programs.

To kick off Community Support Month, CHATS held its first A Walk Among Friends in malls and shopping centres across York Region.

The 10-month endeavour brought out hundreds of participants and raised \$18,000 toward CHATS programs.

As part of this effort, young people wrote essays describing their most special moment with a senior.

Winners were given prizes at the multi-site mall walk for their entries, which were judged last week by CHATS volunteers.

We're bringing you those winning entries today.



Rosanne Canto, 10, penned an essay about a precious memory of her grandfather and won a contest sponsored by Community Home Assistance to Seniors. Rosanne was honoured at the CHATS fundraising walk, held at Markville Shopping Centre last Saturday, by walk volunteer leader George Shipley, left, and Sue Higginson, CHATS' co-ordinator of community resources. For more essays, see page 24.

A musical moment with grandpa

BY ASHLEY HADER, 10

My most precious moment with a senior was in Newfoundland. I was five at the time. My grandpa was on his rocking chair watching television. I came in and sat on his lap. He started to bounce me up and down on his knees as he recited this poem.

All around the strawberry bush, the monkey chased the weasel. The monkey thought it all in fun. Pop! goes the weasel.

Then he dropped me through his legs. I laughed so hard. Then I sat back up and I fell asleep in his arms as he held me close.

That was my most precious moment.

— Entered at Upper Canada Mall, Newmarket

Loving notes help grandma think of me

BY KAYLAND MCCULLY, 12

A special thing I did for my grandma was put notes all around her house and because she lives alone, I thought it would be extra special.

The notes said things like "missing you," and I even made up a poem in one of the notes. My dad says that every note I wrote, she has left where I put them. In a letter, she wrote to me, she said that she felt like I was in the room with her. That was really special to me.

My grandma likes the one that I left on her pillow that said "good night" on it. She says she reads it each night before she goes to sleep. I think this is really neat because she lives in the city and we don't get to see her as often as she would like, so this makes her feel like I am there and she is not alone.

— Entered at Upper Canada Mall, Newmarket

Grandfather helped us move to our new house and new neighbourhood

BY ROSANNE CANTO, 10

My most precious moment with a senior was when my family moved into our new home in Markham. My grandfather came to visit us and help us move.

Later in the day, grandpa took me by the hand and walked around my new neighbourhood. It was all empty land with a big huge pond across the street.

That day, me and grandpa skipped rocks together. I was only three-and-a-half years old, but he took the time to teach me. It was so much fun.

About a year later, my grandpa died. It was the most sad day in my life.

I went to the funeral to say goodbye to him and my family always goes to the cemetery to visit.

I bet grandpa's skipping rocks in heaven now, but I'll always remember the day we skipped rocks together!

— Entered at Markville Shopping Centre, Markham

Grandmother and I make the family's tomato sauce together

BY MARY D'ALIMONTE, 9

My most precious moment with a senior is when my grandmother and I make sauce for the family. First, we spend a weekend picking tomatoes in her garden.

After that, we get a big bucket and fill it with water and clean the tomatoes in it. After the tomatoes are clean, we boil them in a big pot. We get a bowl and scoop some up and grind it and then put it in bottles.

My family loves the tomato sauce. To go with it, we make special pasta and it tastes delicious with the sauce. We love it so much we drink it!

Every time we open up a jar of sauce, it reminds me of my grandmother.

— Entered at The Promenade, Thornhill



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