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## Our Mission

To provide a wide range of quality senior care services in residential, outpatient and community based settings.

To create a comfortable and dignified home for seniors, serving all in our care with excellence regardless of financial resources.

To serve people of all faiths, while maintaining an environment supportive of Jewish identity and informed by Jewish values.

To act as a valuable senior services resource for the entire community.

### Front Cover Photo:

Jerrylyn Gonzales, Life Enrichment Coordinator, with Ruby Barrow, Resident, celebrating the new year.

If you have a resident story or feedback you'd like to share, please let us know. We also welcome opportunities to meet with senior groups in the community to discuss our programs & services.

Please contact Kari Bell.

kbell@rivergarden.org or 904.288.7855

## 2025-2026 Boards and Officers

### River Garden Senior Services

Janis Fleet, President  
Susan Cohen, Vice President  
Sandy Zimmerman, Vice President  
Marsha Pollock, Secretary  
Ed Grenadier, Treasurer

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Debby Kaye, Vice President, Chair of Admissions  
Bruce Horovitz, Vice President, Co-Chair of Admissions  
Michael Paul, Vice President, Co-Chair of Admissions  
Morrie Osterer, Vice President, Chair of House  
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### River Garden Auxiliary Officers

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Linda Schuster, Fundraising VP  
Shirley Bielski, Recording Secretary  
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Marilyn Garber, Parliamentarian  
Nancy Mizrahi, Treasurer  
Ellen Rubens, Chairman of the Board

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Tom Harris, Vice President  
Jennifer Plotkin, Vice President  
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Shari Shuman, Treasurer  
Sandy Zimmerman, Chairperson

### The Coves at River Garden

Malcolm Bloom, President  
Shirley Bielski, Vice President  
Susan Cohen, Vice President  
Judy Paul, Secretary  
Sophie Rothstein, Treasurer

## Meet Our 2026 Resident Council Officers

The River Garden Resident Council is a resident-led group that meets monthly to discuss quality of life, care and activities, ensuring residents have a unified voice when sharing interests or concerns. Resident Council meetings provide a forum for collective advocacy, education, and planning, with staff involvement only by invitation. Officers are elected each year.



Standing: Carol Shea, Treasurer and Bernice 'Bunny' Marks, President. Sitting: Jacqueline Graham, Secretary, and Rosalie Gross, Vice President.

## Inside Line

By Mauri Witten Mizrahi, Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends,

Welcome to 2026! For eight decades, River Garden has been built on a tradition of excellence passed from generation to generation, and we continue this milestone year with gratitude, pride, and excitement for the future.

At the heart of everything we do is a belief that aging well means living well. Our campus is built to encourage social connections and our focus on wellness includes supporting physical health, cognitive vitality, emotional well-being, and spiritual engagement. Through fitness, meaningful relationships, and experiential learning, we strive to support individuals to live fully with dignity.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> River Garden Foundation Gala, *Welcome to Wonderland*, chaired by Erin Rogozinski Weintraub and Sandy Zimmerman, was a huge success. We are proud to share that the Gala raised \$291,048 thanks to our generous sponsors and committee. The Foundation had an incredible year of philanthropic support in 2025, and we look forward to sharing the highlights in our upcoming Annual Report.

Looking ahead, the River Garden boards and senior leadership have approved and begun implementing a comprehensive strategic plan designed to ensure a strong and vibrant future. This plan includes expanding The Coves independent living apartments, adding Memory Care Assisted Living, refurbishing our existing nursing home rooms and current Coves apartments and amenity spaces, and making our 40-acre campus more pedestrian-friendly. Together,

these initiatives will strengthen our campus as a premier senior living community and a dynamic center of Jewish life for generations to come. We look forward to sharing more details in the months ahead and invite you to get involved.

We are also proud to announce that on February 19, 2026, The Coves will celebrate its 31st anniversary, continuing its long tradition of elegant and affordable senior living.

Please mark your calendars for River Garden's Annual Meeting and 80th Anniversary Day on March 22, 2026, chaired by Home Board member Marsha Pollock. Excitement is also building for the 30th Annual River Garden Classic chaired by Tom Harris and sponsored by Hardage-Giddens. I hope to see you at Deerwood Country Club on April 27, 2026.

As we honor 80 years of service, we remain focused on what comes next: continuing to build our legacy while creating innovative programs and services for those we serve today and for generations to come.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The River Garden News*. Our future is bright.



Mauri



Members of The Coves were special guests at the annual VIP Day at MJGDS, pictured here at a breakfast held in their honor with Middle School students. Mauri Mizrahi was the featured guest speaker.



# Welcome To Wonderland

The 33<sup>rd</sup> River Garden Foundation Gala – Welcome to Wonderland took place on November 22, 2025, at the Prime Osborn Convention Center and was an unforgettable evening. Supporters, community leaders, and friends came together to celebrate the extraordinary work of River Garden, creating an evening filled with joy, connection, and purpose.

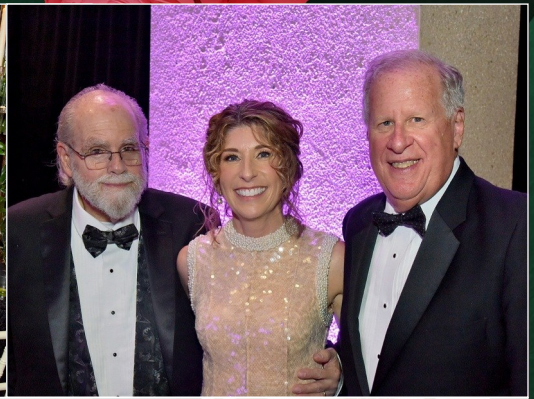
A special thank you to our incredible co-chairs, Erin Rogozinski Weintraub and Sandy Zimmerman, whose leadership and creativity set the tone for a truly magical evening. We are also deeply grateful to our dedicated Gala Committee for their tireless

efforts and thoughtful planning, which helped make the night such a success. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our sponsors and supporters, the Gala raised \$291,048, with proceeds directly supporting the exceptional care and innovative programs that benefit all seniors we serve, regardless of financial resources.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who attended and supported the Gala. Your commitment makes a meaningful difference in the lives of River Garden residents and their families.







## THANK YOU, GALA SPONSORS

### Diamond Benefactors

Selevan Family Foundation | Setzer Family | Linda & David\* Stein

### Golden Benefactors

DuBow Family Foundation | Frisch Family

### Royal Benefactors

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Lauren Sloat, Lisa Sloat & Hank Klein | Sysco Food Services – Jacksonville | Sharon & Dr. Bruce Witten

### Grand Benefactors

Judy H. Mizrahi | Mauri & Alan Mizrahi | Rachel & Dr. Craig Morgenthal  
Debbie & Jeff Parker and Stacie & Dr. Larry Wilf | Dr. Chaim & Jeanine Rogozinski

### Benefactors

Berman Family Foundation | The Block Families | Mary & Jeff Edwards  
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Silverman and Sisisky Families | Melissa & Dr. Douglas Storch | Gina & Dr. Richard Stromberg | The Yegelwel Family

### Circle of Friends

Ascension St. Vincent's | Robert B. Baker | Baptist Health | Harriet & Ernie Brodsky and Rachel & Colman Brodsky  
David C. Miller Family Fund | Janis & Bob Fleet | Emily, Martin & Paul Glickstein | Faye & Dan Hedrick and Haley & Jason Trager  
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Zimmerman Family Foundation - Elli & Charles, Chase & Morrie, Nancy & Seeman

### Platinum Patrons

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Andrea & Steven Mail | Marco Family Foundation | Randi & Sam Rogozinski | The Shorstein Family | Randee & Marty Steinberg  
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### Gold Patrons

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Ellen & Dr. Barry Setzer | Drs. Sandra & Craig Shapiro | Vanessa & Arthur Solomon | George M. Strumlauf | Truist Bank  
Dorothy Verstandig | Joan Waitz | Sara & Bruce Werner | Wolfson Family Foundation | Eunice & Barry Zisser

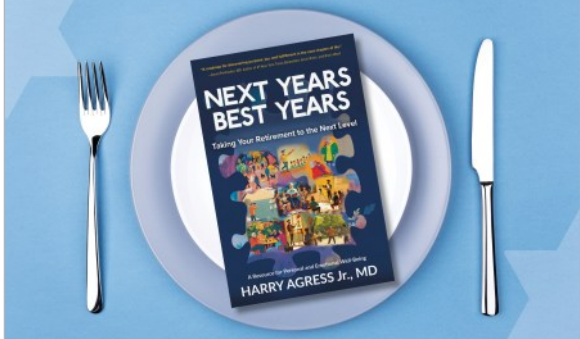
# Community Events

River Garden is a destination for the community. While you're still living at home, we welcome you to participate in our wide array of engaging and educational programs. And, if your card or mahjonn group needs a place to meet, you're welcome to use the River Garden Price Welcome Center.

Our events are posted on our website and on our Facebook page. **Some require pre-registration.**

**Website:** [www.rivergarden.org](http://www.rivergarden.org)

**Facebook:** [rivergardenseniorservices](https://www.facebook.com/rivergardenseniorservices)



## Lunch & Lit

Wed, Feb 11 | 11:30 am






River Garden Senior Services - 11401 Old St. Augustine Road

Join author, Harry Agress, to learn about his book, *Next Years Best Years-Taking your Retirement to the Next Level-A Resource for Personal and Emotional Well-Being*. He will help you embrace retirement as unique and intriguing with extensive opportunities for reinvention and fulfillment. Lunch included.

**Free to the community**

**J-INSTITUTE**

Register today! Scan the QR code or visit [jcjax.org](http://jcjax.org) to learn more.

## AARP DRIVER SAFETY

### REGISTRATION REQUIRED

River Garden is pleased to be hosting a day-long class to help keep older drivers independent, safe, healthy and confident while on the road. **Registration is now open.**


The AARP Smart Driver course teaches valuable defensive driving strategies and provides a refresher of the rules of the road.

Since 1979, the course has helped more than 20 million drivers learn research-based tips to adapt their driving to compensate for physical and cognitive changes that may occur with aging. The course has also been recently updated with new content, so you will have the most up-to-date information for Florida.


Participants may qualify for a multi-year automobile insurance discount by completing the course. Check with your auto insurance agent for details.

- DATE**
  - April 15, 2026
- AGENDA**
  - 9:00AM-12:00PM
  - Complimentary Lunch
  - 1:00PM-4:00PM
- LOCATION**


River Garden Campus  
11401 Old St. Augustine Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32258



- Program cost is \$20 for AARP members; \$25 for non-members.
- Check or cash payable directly to AARP on the morning of the event.



SCAN QR CODE TO REGISTER



**Contact Kari Bell**  
904.288.7855  
[kbell@rivergarden.org](mailto:kbell@rivergarden.org)

[rivergarden.org](http://rivergarden.org) | 904.260.1818


COMMUNITY INVITATION

## Jewish Genealogical Society of Northeast Florida

Wednesday February 18, 2026  
6:00PM - 7:30PM

Optional: Arrive at 5:30 for an inexpensive kosher dinner and schmooze time.

River Garden - Cohen Auditorium  
11401 Old St. Augustine Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32258

PLEASE PRE-REGISTER 

All are welcome, no matter if you are an experienced researcher or just starting to ask questions about your ancestors.

Questions: Marla Westberg <[marla@westbergfl.com](mailto:marla@westbergfl.com)>  
FB: [Jewish Genealogy Society of Northeast Florida](https://www.facebook.com/JewishGenealogySocietyofNortheastFlorida)  
Onsite Contact: Nancy Davis, 904.260.1818

## Jewish Java

Thursday | March 5 | 10:00 - 11:30AM  
Cohen Auditorium at River Garden  
11401 Old St. Augustine Road | Jacksonville | FL 32258



Join us in March for bagels and cream cheese! We will be learning about the "Spread Cream Cheese Not Hate" campaign, which was founded in 2020 at the Schilit Hillel at the University of Florida to bring awareness to students about antisemitism and all forms of hate speech.



Jewish Java meets every other month and is a vibrant gathering that is more than coffee and conversation—it's your chance to connect and discover. We can't wait to see you!

Coordinator: Isabel Balatin  
Onsite Contact: Kari Bell  
[kbell@rivergarden.org](mailto:kbell@rivergarden.org) | 904.288.7855



Our Caregiver Support Group is always on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 3:30 PM in the Parker Chapel.



# Relationships that strengthen our community

Nancy Davis  
Director of Jewish Life  
ndavis@rivergarden.org



Our residents had a meaningful, fun visit with students from Congregation Ahavath Chesed (The Temple) making Thanksgiving cards for loved ones and decorative jars full of reminders of all the things for which we are grateful.



We had a ball with fifth through eighth graders from the Martin J. Gottlieb Day School, who baked fresh chocolate chip cookies for our residents and served as bingo helpers to those who need an extra pair of eyes!

Our Hanukkah season would not be complete without a visit from these cutie pies from The Laurie Preschool!

Students from USY at the Jacksonville Jewish Center brought energy and smiles to The Coves at our annual Ugly Hanukkah Sweater Party and to River Garden residents as they lit the menorah for the first night of Hanukkah.





Thanks to long-time friends of River Garden for helping make our Hanukkah special! Bruce Horovitz, Todd Morse, and Hazzan Jesse Holzer played Hanukkah favorites for a packed house, and Gail Greenfield brought her original play, “Who Is the REAL Hero of Hanukkah” to our stage as well.



During Hanukkah our CEO, Mauri Mizrahi, and COO, Bobbie Jo Mentz, fried up fresh latkes across the campus. Thanks to Dining Services for grating more than 20 pounds of potatoes!



As always, our thanks to visitors from the community who brighten our holiday season by helping light the River Garden hanukkiyah each day of the holiday. In addition to those already mentioned, we thank: Board Member Vickie Kennedy and family, with Rabbi Benjamin Dyme from Beth El – The Beaches Synagogue; Rabbi Velvil Kahanov from Chabad Mandarin; Jo Ellen Unger, JCA COO, with her mother, Phyllis Littman, member of The Coves; River Garden staff; Steve Meisel, River Garden religious services leader.





Thanks to Yale University's Jewish A Capella group, Magevet, for sharing their talents with us at an entertaining show in January!



Bobbie Jo Mentz, COO, recently traveled with the Myron Flagler Israel Learning Seminar (ILS) group to Israel. Pictured here with Tel Aviv in the background, our Jewish Life and Life Enrichment departments followed Bobbie Jo's trip to Israel virtually, bringing the residents along experientially.

## Life Enriching Experiences! There's Something For Everyone!



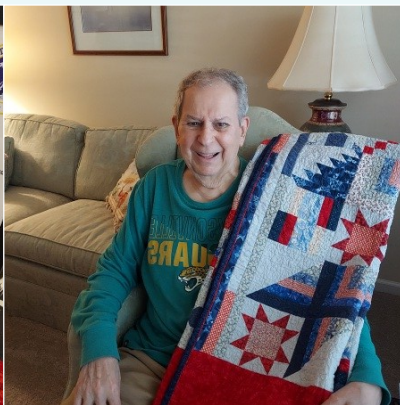
Sports fans loved Football Fridays!

## Special 'Shout Outs' from Life Enrichment



Left: Esther Michelson celebrates here 90<sup>th</sup> birthday with family. Center: On one of the coldest days of the year, benefactor Sue Price delivers comfy, crocheted blankets made by Mill End Yarn Mavens of Jax. Right: Kurt Strenger, Dining Services Director, serves delicious waffles to residents.

## Veteran's Day



Thank you to our friend and local American Legion leader, Joe Maltese, for his wonderful remarks at our annual Veteran's Day program. We also presented seven (7) veterans, like Stephen Pully (pictured far right), with a handmade 'Quilt of Valor', made possible by the coordination of volunteers Janet Brown and Kathy Minton.

## Surprise! It's A Petting Zoo!



Staff and residents all enjoyed visiting with the bunnies, chickens, sheep, horse, cow and more!



## Helping Members Live Well



River Garden Home Health has always strived to provide premium care with the goal of making every day easier for our members at The Coves. To enhance our personalized service, we are changing the structure of the program and the name to **Personal Care and Support** at River Garden.

Effective February 2, 2026, Personal Care and Support will convert to a two-option program based upon the Skilled Nurse visit frequency. Home Health Aide services will be charged as an a la carte/additional service with a 30-minute minimum. Mileage rates apply for transportation. **Presently, these options are only available for members of The Coves.**

Personal Care and Support will also be offering hourly-rate companion services. **Companions will be available campuswide** and their duties may include but are not limited to meal preparation, laundry, shopping, household chores and transportation. Companions may monitor safety, but do not provide hands-on care. For these services, a 4-hour minimum applies.

## Offering Three Options For Quality Care

River Garden's Adult Day Program is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM. We are pleased to share that currently there are three attendance options available:

- Traditional Attendance
- Drop-In Attendance
- GUIDE (Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience) Respite

**All are affordable options, generally less than hiring private help in the home.**

To schedule an introductory meeting or to learn more, contact Erica Hickey at 904.288.7858 or visit [www.rivergarden.org](http://www.rivergarden.org).

- 1 **Traditional Attendance**—This is ideal for working or ‘sandwich generation’ caregivers who need time to manage their own activities or work. We accommodate schedules with 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 days per week, up to 8 hours per day. The current 8-hour daily rate is \$105-115, depending on frequency.
- 2 **Drop-In Attendance**—This might be helpful for caregivers who just need a day here-and-there for personal appointments. Clients must be ‘pre-registered’ but do not have to schedule regular attendance. Services are \$20/hour, with a four (4) hour daily minimum. To reserve a day, families call in advance, no later than 3:00PM on the business day prior to attending and payment is made at the time of drop-off.
- 3 **GUIDE Respite**—This is a relatively new, voluntary program available to a person with traditional Medicare. The Medicare benefit offers up to \$2500 respite care annually, tracked July –June each year. Participants must be registered with a GUIDE provider, as River Garden bills the provider directly.



## Caregiver Support

Family caregiving is one of the most demanding roles anyone can take on. Asking for help isn't giving up—it's being smart.

The reality? **You cannot pour from an empty cup.** Taking care of yourself isn't selfish—it's essential.

Monthly support groups, caregiver socials and adult day programs provide the support that allows caregivers to recharge.

River Garden is here to help. We have books, information and access to resources that may help. Plus, our **Caregiver Support Group is always on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 3:30PM in the Parker Chapel.**



We hosted a Caregiver Social on January 11. Current resident families, joined Adult Day Program families and new families from the community. All enjoyed cookies, cocoa and the Jaguars game. Pictured: (Top) Volunteer Shevah Wiselzier and (Bottom) Sid & Rona Siegel.

## River Garden Families Share Their Stories

Two of our clients from the Adult Day Program were recently featured in the Ponte Vedra Recorder and Mandarin Newline. Their stories offer hope and guidance to families navigating the challenges of caregiving for loved ones with progressive dementia. They remind us that support, community and compassion can make all the difference on this journey.

To every caregiver out there: you are not alone. Testimonials like these show us the power of connection and the importance of finding resources that work for your family.

Let us know if we can ever be of help.



Elsa Rivera-Lopez cares for her husband.



Rich Demico cares for his wife

## *Life is Long—and Better Together*

With smiles, teamwork and a whole lot of heart, members of The Coves came together to plan, prepare and deliver cookies and homemade baked treats to the firefighters at Station 51 as a ‘sweet thank you’ for all they do for our campus. From mixing and baking to carefully packing, everyone played a part, making the experience just as meaningful as the treats themselves. Hand-delivering their gratitude, Members were proud to show appreciation to the firefighters who work so hard every day. It was a fun, thoughtful moment, filled with kindness, connection and warm smiles all around.



Left Photo: (L-R) June Meinstein, Phyllis Littman, Rene Montaigne, Pat Levin, Margaret Moody and Ellen Lieman. Right Photo: Rande Richman and Pat Rosenthal, with firefighters at the station.



Helen, Rhoda and Janet strolled through the Jacksonville Arboretum & Botanical Gardens, delighting in every colorful bloom. Surrounded by lush greenery and warm sunshine, their walk felt calm and cheerful. June Meinstein pauses to admire the beautiful plants.



## *Happy New Year*

Members of The Coves and staff had an unforgettable New Year's Eve celebration filled with fun, friendship and fantastic energy as they welcomed 2026 together. Sondra Miller even enjoyed a dance with Dining Manager Norberto Irizarry.

Ruthie & Bernie Nachman rang in 2026 with laughter, music, and plenty of time on the dance floor. Live entertainment by Steve Chapman and Trio set the tone, so everyone could enjoy every song, every step, and every joyful moment.

Between the live music and a dance floor that stayed busy all night, there was truly no shortage of smiles or memorable moments.

Michael & Chary Greenberg dressed up in style, making the night one they'll happily remember forever.



## *Enjoying Jacksonville*



Members of The Coves are always ready for adventure! This cold but sunny day, they journeyed downtown for a St. Johns River Boat Tour. They spotted dolphins and snapped photos of historic landmarks. Conversations flowed as easily as the river itself, with plenty of jokes, shared stories and 'did you see that?' moments along the way. By the time the boat docked, everyone was smiling, refreshed, and already talking about which sights were their favorites.

## Outpatient Therapy That's All About Living Your Best Life

At River Garden, our outpatient therapy services for adults 18+ are designed around your goals, your schedule and helping you live your best life.

Here's what sets us apart:

Every session is one-on-one with licensed therapists who actually get to know you. No rotating faces, no rushed appointments—just consistent, focused care that builds momentum.

We create personalized treatment plans based on thorough evaluations of your movement patterns, joint health and medical history. Your plan evolves as you progress.

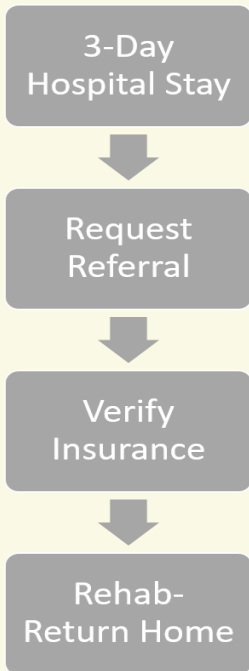
Ready to move forward? Contact River Garden to schedule your outpatient therapy consultation.

904.886.8454 | [rehab@rivergarden.org](mailto:rehab@rivergarden.org)

RIVER GARDEN SENIOR SERVICES Therapy Center		PRESCRIPTION & PLAN OF CARE	
<input type="checkbox"/> PT	<input type="checkbox"/> OT	<input type="checkbox"/> ST	<b>EVALUATE &amp; TREAT</b>
Patient Name		Date of Onset	
Patient Phone		NPI #	
Physician's Name:		Diagnosis	
Physician's Phone:			
Physician's Fax:			
<b>GENERAL</b>	<b>ORTHOPEDIC</b>	<b>MODALITIES</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Balance/Falls	<input type="checkbox"/> Neck/Back	<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical Stim.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cardiac Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Osteoporosis	<input type="checkbox"/> Iontophoresis	
<input type="checkbox"/> Geriatric Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Pre/Post Surgery	<input type="checkbox"/> Hot/Cool Pack	
<input type="checkbox"/> RSD/Pain Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Arthritis	<input type="checkbox"/> TENS	
<input type="checkbox"/> Vestibular		<input type="checkbox"/> Ultrasound	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pain Limiting Mobility		<input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutic Exercise	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Kinesio Tape	
<b>SPEECH</b>	<b>NEUROLOGICAL</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Speech Therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> Parkinson's		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dysphagia	<input type="checkbox"/> Cognition		
<input type="checkbox"/> Dysarthria	<input type="checkbox"/> Stroke		
<b>OTHER</b>			
<b>COMMENTS:</b>			
I certify that I have examined the patient and therapy is necessary and that service will be furnished under my care, and that the plan is established and will be reviewed every 60 days, or more if the patient requires.			
Physician's Signature		Date:	
Phone: 904.886.8454   Fax: 904.880.4234   Email: <a href="mailto:rehab@rivergarden.org">rehab@rivergarden.org</a>			



## Why Short-Term Rehab Matters After Surgery



Just had surgery or a serious health event? You're not quite ready for home, but don't need long-term hospitalization. That's where Martha (pictured top right) found herself, and that's where short-term rehabilitation helped.

At River Garden in Jacksonville, we've spent 80 years helping patients bridge this critical gap with personalized therapy and professional medical care.

Why does this matter? Professional oversight prevents complications and intensive therapy accelerates recovery, both allowing your family to focus on emotional support rather than complex medical care.

Our program treats everything from joint replacements and stroke recovery to post-surgical healing and chronic conditions. With one-on-one therapy sessions, 24/7 medical monitoring, and comfortable private rooms on our beautiful 40-acre campus, we create the ideal environment for healing.

Most stays last 10-21 days, and Medicare typically covers medically necessary rehabilitation.

If you have a planned procedure or an emergent need, please contact our Admissions Office to arrange care.



## Long-Term Care With Heart

When your loved one needs long-term nursing or memory care, finding a place that provides the right level of care and feels like home is important. River Garden is proud to be recognized as a top care facility, and you can trust our interdisciplinary team focuses on quality of life alongside medical needs.

What makes our nurses and aides special?

Our caregivers learn each resident's life story, favorite foods, daily routines and what brings them comfort. They celebrate birthdays, share laughs and treat every resident like family.

You'll see the small gestures, the compassionate approach—and when combined with clinical excellence it becomes perfectly clear why River Garden has earned recognition as a top care facility.



For all inquiries about short- or long-term admissions, contact  
[admissions@rivergarden.org](mailto:admissions@rivergarden.org) or 904.886.8420





Esther Yegelwel  
 Volunteer Coordinator  
 eyegelwel@rivergarden.org



## A Warm and Bright Volunteer Night!

Our volunteers were celebrated in true Hanukkah spirit with an appreciation party - Latkes, Lattes and Lights. Traditional fare was served alongside sweet potato fries, cider, lattes and more. Volunteers took home prizes for holiday-themed bingo, along with gelt raffles and dreidel games! The celebration continued with a 'volunteer night' at the Home's Menorah lighting.

To all volunteers, thank you for your time. Your dedication truly makes the home warmer and brighter every day.



## Mitzvah Day | Volunteers Support Staff on December 25

Mitzvah Day, a long-standing tradition of Jewish communities nationwide, connects Jewish volunteers with opportunities to fulfill the role of essential workers on Christmas. Thank you, Mitzvah Day volunteers, for partnering with River Garden to provide residents and their families a fun 'snow-day' themed afternoon including s'mores, hot chocolate, games, crafts and more!



## Volunteer Hours — And More!

River Garden 'Teens' (RGT) summer session is now accepting applications. A structured, full-time volunteer experience for students ages 13–17. Scan the QR code to learn more.




## Honoring Bailey

A special 'thank you' to our pet volunteer, Cathy, and pup, Bailey, for bringing whimsy, laughter and comfort to residents and staff each visit. From the holiday and seasonal themed outfits to pop-culture inspired fun, Bailey was a big hit! Sadly, Bailey passed away in late December, and his sweet and gentle nature will be missed.



# RIVERGARDEN AUXILIARY

Supporting River Garden Hebrew Home / Wolfson Health & Aging Center



*invites you to a delightful lunch with special guest 'Julia Child' (well almost) and an afternoon of laughter*

**Annual Donor Lunch**  
**Tuesday, February 24, 2026**  
 11:30am in the Cohen Auditorium

**GIVING REFLECTS WHO WE ARE  
 LET US CONTINUE OUR MISSION**

*Donations benefit  
 River Garden Hebrew Home*

**Faye Hyken** 904.534.8001  
**Carol D'Onofrio** 904.705.1849

River Garden Auxiliary  
 Jewelry • Toys • Accessories

**Annual Vintage Sale**

Early Bird: Friday, March 20 at 10:00AM - 3:30PM

Anniversary Day  
 March 22, 2026 at 12:00PM - 6:00PM




RIVER GARDEN AUXILIARY PRESENTS

## TOMBOLA

Our annual Tombola is almost here, and we are ready!  
 This special tradition helps bring joyful moments, comfort, and extra-special care to our beloved residents of River Garden Hebrew Home.

When purchasing Tombola tickets, you're not just supporting a fundraiser...  
 You're helping to brighten days with smiles, warmth, and love for those who call River Garden their home.

Participating is easy and deeply appreciated.  
 Simply scan the QR code, send in a check made out to River Garden Auxiliary, or visit:  
<https://rivergardenauxiliary.square.site/s/shop>



tickets  
 \$100 = 3 ENTRIES  
 \$50 = 1 ENTRY

**THE TOMBOLA DRAWING WILL BE HELD ON  
 MARCH 22, 2026  
 AT RIVER GARDEN ANNIVERSARY DAY**

QUESTIONS? CALL IRAN LEIBOWITZ - (904) 707-5004 OR EMAIL RACHEL BRODSKY - CHELBROD@GMAIL.COM

IRS does not regard the cost of the ticket as a Tax-Deductible contribution. A copy of the official registration may be obtained from the Division of the Consumer Services by calling 1-800-435-7332.

## Message from Carol D'Onofrio, River Garden Auxiliary President

On behalf of the Auxiliary, we wish everyone a happy and healthy 2026. We are heading into an especially active season.

- We are excited to host the **Donor Lunch** on February 24, 2026 with a Special Guest reenactment of Julia Child. The event is selling out fast, so make sure to connect with us for your ticket.
- The **River Garden Anniversary Day** brings out the best in us all! Look for the amazing **Vintage Sale** and the famous **dessert table** on March 22. The Gift Shop will also be open on Anniversary Day.
- **Tombola** tickets are also available now. This much-anticipated annual tradition offers prizes totaling \$4000, and funds raised from ticket sales also support the Home.

Win-win! The drawing will be held at 5:30PM on March 22.

Those events—and of course the Gift Shop—keep us busy. A day does not go by without being extremely **THANKFUL FOR ALL THE VOLUNTEERS** that staff the Gift Shop, as well as Ellen Rubens and Elaine Hodz for their steadfastness in maintaining the schedule and retail income. If you'd like to join our team of Gift Shop volunteers, please reach out! We would love to have more helping hands!

If you need more information, or would like to connect with the Auxiliary, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Carol D'Onofrio | 904.519.0924

## Important Notes

1. Everyone is welcome to join the Auxiliary. Information is online. <https://www.rivergarden.org/river-garden-auxiliary/> or scan the QR code here.
2. Storage of merchandise has become a challenge for the Auxiliary, so we are looking for a small space in a nearby storage facility. If you know anyone connected with a storage facility business that could possibly assist with our need, we would be very grateful. Please contact Carol D'Onofrio.
3. 'Save the Date' for Game Day, which will be hosted at River Garden on May 12.



# Mission-Minded Staff

In early December, we celebrated our annual Staff Holiday Week. Fittingly, the theme was *‘Through the Years’*.

Our culture is deeply rooted in excellence, and we know it’s all about the people. Our long-tenured staff—colleagues with 20+ years of experience—are key to keeping our standards of service at a top level. We share special gratitude for these 36 individuals who have been with us *through the years*.

Joy Agger	Patricia Digregorio*	Kelli Keeley*	Bernabe Rayo
Robert Boss	Lori Donley*	Maxine Legg	Sheri Samuels
Khadijah Burns*	Gracia Ermitano	Tatyana Margaryan*	Betty Sorna
Kathleen Burns	Martin Goetz	Rose McFadden	Aimee Stallings
Marjorie Celestin	Edwine Hemedey	Steven Meisel	Sandra Stephenson-Causey*
Narin Chea*	Ernesto Hernandez	Maria Natovich	Jorge Tinana
Angela Clarke	Michael Hoffman	Yvette Neal*	Shiela Trinidad
Yvonne Cooper-Williams	Fikret Huskic	Rhodora Norman*	Linda Woitas
Mary DaCorta	Fadil Huskic	Martha Quintero	Isabel Zapata

(Listed alphabetically, by last name)  
\* Pictured, facing page

## Congratulations to Nurse Angela Clarke on being selected as the 2026 recipient of the Minnie Schreiber Staff Leadership Award!

Angela was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. She attended Sandalwood High School. She is now married and the proud mother of three sons, Taurus, Jesse and Aiden.

Angela has been a River Garden staff member for 27 years. While her career started in Dining Services, Angela transitioned to Nursing Services and has continued working in clinical care for most of her time with the Home.

In her free time, Angela likes to travel, go to the movies and enjoy a good meal. When asked what motivates her to continue working for the Home, she says, “I love the elderly people with all my heart. They are my passion.”



## Thank You, Mike Hoffman: Enjoy Your Retirement!

After 28 years of dedicated service, we announced the retirement of Michael Hoffman, our Health Information Management Director, effective December 31, 2025.

Throughout his tenure, Mike has been a constant source of knowledge and support for both staff and administration. Known for his kindness, approachability and willingness to help, he served as a trusted resource and mentor to many throughout the Home.

Mike’s contributions have left a lasting impact on the Health Information Management department and River Garden as a whole. We are deeply grateful for his years of service, and we wish him many relaxing days ahead!



# *With Decades of Service*



# We Hope To See You



# Join Our Community Celebration

## ANNIVERSARY DAY SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026 3:00 – 6:00PM

MARSHA POLLOCK, CHAIR OF THE DAY

### BBQ, FAMILY FUN & ANNUAL MEETING

COMPLIMENTARY FOOD | MUSIC | PONY RIDES | FACE PAINTING | AUXILIARY VINTAGE SALE & TOMBOLA  
ANNUAL MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 4:00 PM



JOINT COMMISSION'S  
GOLD SEAL OF APPROVAL



MULTI-YEAR RECIPIENT  
GOVERNOR'S GOLD  
SEAL AWARD  
FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN LONG-TERM CARE



### Honor 80 Years of Excellence with \$80

River Garden is proud to celebrate 80 years of exceptional care and community. As we look to the future, your gift of \$80 ensures that our tradition of excellence continues to grow and thrive for the next generation.

Give \$80 today and support our legacy!




### ANNUAL AUXILIARY DRAWING

## TOMBOLA

This is your chance to win \$2,000! In connection with the upcoming 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day, the River Garden Auxiliary will conduct its well-loved TOMBOLA drawing. Tickets are \$50/each or \$100/three.

TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE

 <https://rivergardenauxiliary.square.site/home>  
Questions? EMAIL Rachel Brodsky  
chelbrod@gmail.com





River Garden Senior Services  
 11401 Old St. Augustine Road  
 Jacksonville, Florida 32258  
 904.260.1818  
 www.rivergarden.org



TEN-TIME RECIPIENT  
**GOVERNOR'S GOLD SEAL AWARD**  
 FOR EXCELLENCE IN LONG-TERM CARE



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**REGISTER TODAY!**  
**30<sup>TH</sup> RIVER GARDEN CLASSIC**  
**MONDAY - APRIL 27, 2026**

**TITLE SPONSOR**

**HARDAGE-GIDDENS**

FUNERAL HOMES, CEMETERIES & CREMATIONS



Dignity<sup>®</sup>

LIFE WELL CELEBRATED<sup>®</sup>

**Deerwood Country Club**

**12:00 p.m. Shotgun Start**

Contact Michelle Branly for more information:  
 904.886.8431 or mbranlyrivergarden.org



*Tournament proceeds benefit River Garden*

[www.rivergarden.org/foundation/golf-classic](http://www.rivergarden.org/foundation/golf-classic)



**Anniversary Day**

**March 22, 2026**

**3:00-6:00PM**

**Annual Meeting at 4:00PM**

*Please remember River Garden and the Jacksonville Jewish Community in your Estate and Legacy Giving*