

Old Friends Club

#GIVINGTUESDAY™

What's your giving story?

One of our volunteers posted a story on Facebook about how his experience with Old Friends Club has led to his ongoing contribution to the club. If you are on Facebook, you can see his story here: [Larry's Giving Story](#)

For your convenience, we've also included it in the email below along with the picture of person he mentions in his story.

We'd love to hear your giving stories. You can even share your story on this official website (<http://mygivingstory.givingtuesday.org>) for a chance at possibly winning a monetary donation for your charity. The deadline to submit the stories for a possible prize is Friday, Nov 30th.

Even if you decide not to submit your story there, we'd still like to hear from you and perhaps we can publish your story in our upcoming newsletter.

Have a wonderful day and thank you for your continued support!

<https://www.olderfriendsclub.org/givingtuesday>

Larry's Giving Story

Give A Gift on Us



"Today is a day to reflect on how we can contribute to a better tomorrow."

That's how his poetry started, what followed would profoundly affect me.

The man pictured in my fundraiser (same as above) is dealing with dementia. He also happens to be a published poet. On the first day I performed at the Old Friends Club that he belongs to, he did not sit in the semi-circle with the other members during the sing-along. Instead, he chose to sit by himself at a table in the back of the room. While he was not seated with the group, I could see he was listening and could occasionally see his lips move. He would applaud after each song was over and sat quietly for the most part.

At some point during my hour long sing-along, he stood up and walked over to a large double sided whiteboard. While I sang, he stood, obscured by the board

and was obviously writing something. After some time, he emerged from behind the white-board and sat back down at his table, away from the sing-along activity, but continued to participate in his own way, with his acknowledging applause.

After the sing-along session was over, the club's program director came up to me to tell me that the gentlemen in the back of the room wrote a message for me and wanted me to read it before I left. I gathered my equipment and walked to the board where the program director rotated the large whiteboard around so I could see the other side. Here is what I read:

**"Today is a day to reflect on how we can
contribute to a better tomorrow.
Help a neighbor, help a neighborhood, become a leader in
your community and share your expertise in an effort
to strengthen the future for others, and the entire
community!! Thursday the 27th....**

There is still time!! "

The date was actually Thursday June, 28th, 2018 but I wasn't going to correct it. While he had not joined the sing-along circle that day, the activity itself and the potential positive impact it can have, was not lost on this man. He chose to write down an expression of what he characterized as someone, me, sharing ones expertise (singing, playing music) to strengthen others and the community, as a leader, helping a neighbor or neighborhood. I was touched and honored by words.

I told him that what he wrote was beautiful and I thanked him for taking the time to write it. He asked me if I liked it, and I told him that I did, that I liked it a lot. He thanked me for sharing my thoughts on his words and said that it was kind of me to read it and share my feedback. Then he told me that he enjoyed my music and hoped to see me play again sometime. In my mind, I thought, how could I possibly refuse this kind and gentle man. Of course, I would return.

The sing-along itself was fun for me and the members. It gave me the opportunity to play my banjo and sing bluegrass songs with them, but there was more going on than just singing songs. Connections are being made, people were interacting with the music, engaging in memories, stories, and even dancing.

My desire to volunteer and donate when I can is knowing there is limited time in providing this kind of social engagement with folks in their predicament which

also provides families much needed and deserved respite. There is no cure for Alzheimer's/dementia and the symptoms only get worse over time. Someday, the people I sing with, will need higher levels of care beyond daytime activities and will likely need long-term care. The time to engage is finite.

He wrote, "Today is a day to reflect on how we can contribute to a better tomorrow." and "There is still time!!". When I host a sing-along with the Old Friend Club members, I sing with them for "today" because soon, their "tomorrow" may be lost forever.

Help Our Charity Directly



Help Old Friends Club Directly

[Donate to Old Friends Club](#)

[Sign-up to Volunteer at Old Friends Club](#)

What's #GivingTuesday?



Tell Us Your Giving Story

Submit your story on MyGivingStory.GivingTuesday.org by Friday Nov. 30th for a chance to win donations to your favorite nonprofit.

[Submit a #MyGivingStory](#)

You can also send us your giving story directly to us.

[Email My Giving Story to Old Friends Club](#)

Every Branch and Leaf

An original song written and performed by our volunteer, Larry Benitez.

Larry dedicates this song to Old Friends Club, its members, and especially to the family caregivers. He extended the dedication of this song to all family caregivers in honor of National Family Caregiver month.

[Every Branch and Leaf](#)



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Old Friends Club
POBox 2472
Kirkland, WA 98083

