



# NEWS

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PUPPET THERAPY STIMULATES ALZHEIMER'S  
RESIDENTS AT BRENNER PAVILION

When a person is afflicted with Alzheimer's disease, perhaps the most crucial aspect of their care is the ongoing attempt to stimulate their senses, to do whatever is possible to heighten the individual's emotional and intellectual awareness of the world around them. With this in mind, MJG Nursing Home Co. Inc.'s The Philip and Dora Brenner Pavilion has recruited Dayle Friedman, a theatrically trained singer, to regularly visit the residents in its Alzheimer's unit and entertain them with a mix of music as well as her own unique brand of "puppet therapy."

Moving slowly throughout the large recreation room, Friedman regales the group with a continuous medley of classic American tunes. "Baby Face," "California Here I Come," "Ole Man River," "My Blue Heaven," - these and many other familiar favorites weave together seamlessly to create an atmosphere brimming with frivolity and warmth. Peppering her songs with words of encouragement, Friedman approaches each resident with a wide smile and dangles a large colorful puppet in front of them. Virtually every member of the diverse "cast of characters" elicits an animated response.

One woman takes the long thin sticks attached to "Minnie Mouse," clad in a red polka-dot dress, and causes it to dance merrily on the table. She then turns her attention to "Donald Duck," holding it lovingly and laughing as Friedman's manipulations make Donald's bright yellow feet hop to and fro. Another woman is enraptured when the musical puppet therapist presents her with two tall puppets, a "peasant" wearing blue jeans and "George Washington" in full colonial costume. "Uni," the purple unicorn adorned with a jutting horn and a "carrot top" of shaggy orange hair, captures the undivided attention of a resident who is thrilled to meet her exotic visitor. Vividly attired clowns, "Queen Esther" with hot pink hair, "Madam Professor" - as Friedman introduces

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