Janette and Barbara’s Story

Janette’s relationship with Rosie’s Place—and Barbara Summers—began in the early 2000’s, when she was hired to make jewelry and bookmarks in our Women’s Craft Cooperative (WCC). Barbara was Janette’s supervisor for more than a decade. “Her work was meticulous and she took tremendous pride in it,” Barbara remembers. “She got along so well with her eight co-workers, and that wasn’t always easy.”

Fast forward to fall 2016. Our Friendly Visitor program received a referral for a volunteer to visit a “lovely woman who had a stroke”; it was Janette. Having just retired from Rosie’s Place, Barbara had free time, and a match was made.

Barbara now visits Janette twice a month for an hour or so. Although

Janette has to use an alphabet board to compensate for stroke-related speech aphasia, Barbara says they have no trouble communicating. She will catch her up on the lives of former WCC staff and they’ll talk about the warm memories of Rosie’s Place they share. “Janette has a great sense of humor and we laugh a lot,” Barbara says.

Friendly Visitor Coordinator Ellen Braverman notes, “This is what our Friendly Visitor effort is all about—helping a guest feel less isolated in her home. We want to let her know that we are always there for her and we can easily link her to all our services.”

A door opened for Janette when she came to both Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner at Rosie’s Place. “I brought her some dressy clothes—she always likes to look nice—and she had the time of her life, seeing lots of friends from the past,” Barbara says.

Janette values her independence and works with caregivers to stay at home (and out of a facility). Her daughter, who lives nearby, used to pick up groceries from our pantry; Ellen has now arranged for a monthly delivery, also made by a Rosie’s Place volunteer.

Over the past months, the friendship between Janette and Barbara has been revived, and deepened. “Janette’s life is definitely enriched by having Barbara visit her,” says Ellen. Barbara adds, “And so is mine.”

Contact volunteer@rosiesplace.org to get involved.