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## Andrew Maggiore carries on late mother's efforts to help shelter residents

"Feeling good in and out is the path to loving yourself."

Those are the words Arlington resident Andrew Maggiore's mother Evana lived by and which he has adopted as his own.

In 2001, Evana decided to use her skills as an image consultant to give back to the guests of Rosie's Place. She created "A Day to Love Yourself," an event that pampered women who don't often have the chance to do so.

Rosie's Place was founded in 1974 as the first women's shelter in the United States. Since then, Rosie's Place has evolved into much more than just a shelter for poor and homeless women. The shelter still provides overnight stays, but now offers food programs, housing and job search and education programs.

In addition to providing beauty services like hair styling and makeup, "Love Yourself" gives Rosie's Place guests a spiritual boost. Guests are taught about journaling and are offered the opportunity to take part in a tai chi session.

When Evana died in 2013, Andrew and his sister Jacquie stepped up to take over the event their mother started.

"That was my way of helping her memory live on, when I saw how much good (the events) do," Andrew said of Rosie's Place.

Having only worked sparingly in the past with Rosie's Place, Andrew threw himself into organizing "Love Yourself." He searched through his mother's computer to find the list of participating businesses and began putting calls out. A couple of Andrew's aunts even got involved by providing dental hygiene materials as well as hair care products.

His main goal was to ensure that the Rosie's Place guests still received the services his mother always provided.

"It's not just about my mother anymore. It's about us contributing to helping guests of Rosie's feel good for an afternoon, when they usually wouldn't," he said.

Leemarie Mosca is the director of development at Rosie's Place and worked with Evana and Andrew through "Love Yourself." She couldn't recall the exact timeline of events that led to Andrew taking over the event, but she said he hasn't skipped a beat.

"These women should have this day. It is nice for the community to come out and show that type of attention to them," she said.

While describing the scene, Andrew and Mosca both mentioned the significance of tablecloths at "Love Yourself."

Although the cloths are still used as table covers, they provide greater meaning to guests. They transform a traditional dining room into a safe haven where women can relax, get a self-esteem boost and indulge in some everyday luxuries they normally don't have the time, money or life situation to enjoy.

"This (event) is a such a wonderful thing that we're lucky to able to offer. It's nice for our guests, who struggle, to come through the doors and feel celebrated," Mosca said.

As the Rosie's Place guests enter "Love Yourself," they are handed a bouquet of fresh-cut flowers before they parade around the room to a series of stations. They receive hair and beauty treatment, tips and holistic health guidance from generous local businesses.

Mosca said the guests are often incredibly thankful for receiving a service many others take for granted.

"For our guests, having the opportunity to pamper themselves is a special one, not something they are afforded very often," she said.

The 2016 "A Day to Love Yourself" took place in February. Maggiore said the memory of the joy on many thankful guests' faces will stick with him.

"I will continue to make time for this, because it's incredibly rewarding," he said.

As the event moves forward, Andrew said he's always looking for more volunteers and businesses to get involved with the event. Specifically, he's in search of people interested in a holistic approach to feeling good.

In continuing the event started by his mother, Andrew is helping a population in need achieve inner and outer happiness with "A Day to Love Yourself."

"Feeling good in and out is the path to loving yourself. That is what we try to offer," he said.



Andrew Maggiore (second from left) poses with family and friends during the 2016 "A Day to Love Yourself" event at Rosie's Place. Courtesy Photo / Rosie's Place