



# Caring

**Volunteers Touching Lives, Lifting Spirits**  
*Chino Valley, Prescott, Prescott Valley/Dewey Community Programs*

## Caring Connections and Conversations! Volunteers Share More than Time

If you are considering joining People Who Care, you might like to know firsthand what the experience means to our volunteers. Yes, they enjoy assisting their Neighbors by shopping or driving or visiting or helping with paperwork, but more than that, they enjoy the connections and conversations and the deeper relationships that result.

Here's what four volunteers have to say about their experiences as a People Who Care volunteer:



**Karen Newcomer** has been helping with paperwork for a Neighbor in Chino Valley for more than three years.

"When I retired and moved to this area, I began searching for an organization to volunteer my time. People Who Care quickly caught my attention because of

their caring attitude toward the volunteers and the Neighbors in need. Great care is given in matching up prospective volunteer/Neighbor relationships.

"Luckily for me, I was matched up with a lovely lady in her 90s who needed help with paperwork. She has turned out to be the perfect addition to my life. I get such pleasure visiting and catching up with her during our times together. Her positivity is contagious!

"As our friendship and trust continues to grow, I look forward to many more times together. My neighbor brings a warmth and enjoyment to my life, as I hope I do to hers."

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*Fritzi Mevis, left, and Cj Meldahl in the Prescott office.*

## Fritzi Mevis Retires January 1; Cj Meldahl Assumes Post

It will be almost 20 years of service when Fritzi Mevis retires as executive director of People Who Care in January, almost two decades of leading and guiding the organization to stay true to its mission: "Volunteers help adults physically unable to drive continue living in their homes by providing essential transportation and other non-medical assistance."

She will stay on as a consultant to help with the transition of her successor, Cj Meldahl, until the end of March 2020.

Fritzi has been the personification of People Who Care through her involvement in the communities the organization serves – Prescott, Chino Valley, Prescott Valley and Dewey – and her

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## A Personal Note From Fritzi

Looking out at our volunteers during the Appreciation Luncheon last April, I remember that instead of seeing a sea of faces, I saw a room filled with their personal stories and thought wouldn't it be wonderful to hear them! Wanting to know someone's story is more than curiosity for me. It is wanting to know who they are through their life experiences.

I wondered that day how the lives of our volunteers have been touched and enriched by

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**Leon Jones** has assisted two Neighbors with paperwork for the last two years. One Neighbor is blind and has been since he was a young boy. The other has significant vision loss.



"My blind Neighbor lives alone with his seeing-eye dog in Prescott. We hit it off right away, and he's developed a trust in me

to take him places without his dog. That's pretty special.

"Our relationship is good for me. We visit every two weeks. In fact, we've become friends, and I look forward to seeing him."

"The woman I visit in Prescott has a fascinating background. She was a nurse and taught college. I open her mail, help her pay her bills and write notes to her friends.

"I look forward to our visits as much as she does. She has interesting stories. And, she's interested in hearing about me and my wife of 52 years!"

**Pat Fox** has been shopping for her Prescott Neighbor every other week for more than five years.

"She is the sweetest lady. She is the happiest lady. We have conversations about personal things going on in our lives.

"She's so outgoing, talkative and easy to please.



We spend time catching up when I bring in the groceries and put them away for her.

"It feels so good to help someone out, but I really enjoy visiting with her. When I first started shopping for her, I lived seven or eight blocks away. I have

since moved to Prescott Valley, but I'm not willing to give her up. She's mine!"

**Carl DeKemper** started providing transportation for his Prescott Neighbor a year-and-a-half ago. He found her fascinating on those trips, and hearing snippets of her life made him want to know more.



"We hit it off personality-wise. It is so interesting to learn about her history. She's had a rich life, and she is very intelligent.

I gain as much or more than she does from our relationship.

"It's fascinating to sit and talk with people whose lives are very different from mine.

"We talk on the phone occasionally - she even calls me to see how I'm doing - and we get together for coffee every couple of weeks. Our friendship has evolved. What she gives back to me is a caring connection."

## Here's How Our Volunteers Help Neighbors

People Who Care volunteers help their Neighbors in so many ways. These are some of them:

- Rides for healthcare and business appointments, support group meetings and visits to a family member in a healthcare facility.
- Rides for a grocery shopping trip and any help needed in the store and with carrying in groceries at home.
- Assistance with reading mail, writing checks to pay bills, reconciling the checkbook or writing personal notes to family and friends.
- Shopping for groceries for Neighbors who are not able or comfortable leaving their homes.
- Relief for full-time family caregivers for a few hours a week in order to give them a little time away and time on their own.
- A weekly friendly visit from a volunteer just spending time together sharing their lives past and present.
- Phone calls during the week to check in to see how everything's going.
- A Project Safe Home safety visit to help prevent falls and accidents. Safety items and devices are provided when needed.

### Volunteer Information

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Prescott office, 147 Grove Ave.

Meetings are held in the Chino Valley and Prescott Valley or Dewey communities throughout the year.

For more information, call us at 928-445-2480.

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devotion to the client Neighbors and their dedicated volunteers.

Her tenure began when she answered a job notice for People Who Care in her church bulletin. She joined People Who Care in April 2000 as a part-time assistant. The following year, she was asked to take the executive director position.

Over the years, the organization has grown, from serving two communities to serving four. "I am most proud that we have always stuck to the mission of helping people to continue to live in their own homes," Fritzi said. "We have held firm to our core values of treating our Neighbors and volunteers with respect and dignity."

She believes that People Who Care gives volunteers the opportunity to experience joy by helping others. "Joy is my favorite word ever! It expresses fulfillment, purpose and caring. That's what I see in our volunteers, the gift that we give."

Cj agrees. In addition to staying true to the mission of People Who Care, she wants to continue to attract volunteers who reap the rewards of providing assistance to one or more Neighbors in need. And that's important because "No other organization does what we do."

She acknowledges that at a time when the aging population is growing, more and more people are finding themselves needing assistance. "None of us wants to see people go without assistance, to become isolated," she said.

"As a volunteer, assisting someone else not only makes me feel better, but keeps me engaged, gives me a purpose. It not only raises the quality of life for the Neighbor, but also the volunteer."

Cj is particularly suited to take over the reins of People Who Care. She holds a bachelor's degree in communication and psychology and a master's degree in aging and gerontology. Her background includes work at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Even her work on seven startups is relevant. "I like to grow and energize organizations," she said.

What's next for Fritzi? "I'm probably going to shift focus to the other end of the age spectrum and work in schools and with special needs children," she said.

"I know we're leaving People Who Care in good hands with Cj. People Who Care has a bright future," Fritzi said.

"I am gratified to have found this place."

### - Personal Note from Page 1

the stories that have been shared with them by our Neighbors and, perhaps, by sharing their own. The essence of People Who Care has always been about caring relationships and personal connections. That is our unique story.

Over the years, I learned to value the people who come into my life and enrich it with their perspective and wisdom. A lesson I learned was to get beyond the chapter headings of someone's life and seek to know their life story and, in doing so, it enriched mine.

Being an Army wife for over 24 years created endless opportunities for me to experience wonderfully diverse and rich relationships. Many were life-changing; however, none have been more meaningful than the people who have touched my life at People Who Care and my life here in Prescott. The chapters in my story for the 20 years I worked at People Who Care are filled with a cherished compilation of wonderful experiences and treasured relationships.

*Fritzi*

## Prescott Noon Lions Recycling Effort Helps People Who Care

When you take your newspapers and magazines to one of the Noon Lions trailers throughout the Prescott area, not only are you helping the environment, you're helping People Who Care.

In recent years, the Noon Lions earned enough money from their recycling program to fulfill the grant requests from charitable organizations, including People Who Care.

People Who Care Executive Director Fritzi Mevis said, "We couldn't be more grateful for the support we receive from

the Area Lions Clubs and from the paper recycling project. It takes so little time and effort to recycle your paper and it helps so many charitable community organizations to continue helping all of our neighbors."





## People Who Care Stroke Support Group Helps Survivors and Their Families

Twice a month, Tom Foster and Carol Liaboe meet with people just like them – stroke survivors and their families who are facing the challenges of learning to adjust to a new normal.

The People Who Care Stroke Support Group gives Tom the chance to talk honestly and openly about his recovery with people who are going through similar experiences. “It’s surprising that the same things matter to each of us,” Tom said. “Because we are all coping with similar challenges, you feel accepted among members of the group.”

“It’s a lifesaver for me,” said Carol, whose husband had a hemorrhagic stroke three-and-a-half years ago. “Families of stroke survivors can relate to each other,” she said. “The group knows where you’re at.”

Founded by People Who Care three years ago, the Stroke Support Group, provides a safe place for stroke survivors and their family members to share thoughts and feelings about what they are going through. Participants share resources and ways to solve problems. The group’s motto is, “There is life after stroke.” Attendance is free and open to community members.

The meetings are facilitated by Marianne Simpson, a retired speech pathologist; Gayla Allen, a retired medical social worker;



*Tom Foster, a retired attorney who had a stroke in 2017, has been attending the People Who Care Stroke Support Group for the last two years. Mara Protas, a retired cardiac nurse, is one of the group’s facilitators. The meetings are free and open to community members.*

Mara Protas, a retired cardiac RN, and Carolyn Haynes, a retired RN.

The group meets together for the first half-hour, then splits into separate groups for the last 45 minutes. “This enables people in each group to share their thoughts more privately, without being self-conscious,” said Tom.

“I can’t say enough good things about the facilitators,” said Tom. “They bring people together. There is no sadness; everyone is supportive.”

Carol agreed. “So many times, I’d go into the meeting a little depressed, but I’d always leave uplifted.”

After her husband’s stroke, Carol said their relationships with other couples changed because communication with him was so difficult. The Stroke Support Group meetings have helped them develop new friendships, both individually and as a couple.

She was so impressed by People Who Care’s sponsorship of the group that she volunteers for the organization. People Who Care volunteers help adults physically unable to drive continue living in their homes by providing essential transportation and other non-medical assistance. Carol takes people shopping and reads to blind Neighbors. “I feel like I’m giving back,” she said.

Call People Who Care at 928-445-2480 for more information.

**People Who Care Stroke Support Groups**  
**10:15 – 11:30 a.m.**  
**First and Third Friday, every month except December**  
**Deborah Room**  
**Prescott United Methodist Church Campus**  
**505 W. Gurley St., Prescott**

## Course Offers Strategies for Living With Low Vision

Donna Williams didn't know when she started volunteering for People Who Care's free "Confident Living with Low Vision" course that she would personally benefit from what she learned. She had good vision then and assisted the course coordinator by providing snacks for the participants.

But since she was diagnosed with macular degeneration five years ago, she finds herself remembering and applying those course skills and techniques. "I learned a lot about what's available to help people," she said. "And I use what I learned every day."

If you are struggling with low vision, this five-week class will teach you how to deal with and live more confidently with this life-changing challenge. Spring class dates will be announced in early 2020. Classes meet in the Douglas Meeting Room on the Prescott United Methodist Church campus, 505 W. Gurley St.

Because class size is limited to 30 participants, registration is required. Call 928-445-2480 right away to reserve your spot. A close family member or friend is welcome to participate with you.

People Who Care is able to offer the Confident Living with Low Vision course free of charge to Quad-City area residents because of a grant from the Prescott Evening Lions Club.

Among the topics that will be presented by vision professionals are:

- Understanding medical conditions of the eye, research and treatment.
- Orientation and mobility, guide dogs.
- Getting organized, safety steps, reading, writing and lighting tips, "Your home is your castle."
- Community resources.
- Dealing with life's changes.
- Audio and other useful technologies.

"We are also presenting more assistive technology, which includes phones, gadgets and tablets, because more folks are willing to explore these great options (spoken information) for those with limited sight," said Susie Hout, program coordinator.

Since 2007, more than 350 people have participated in the course. "That's quite a few people who have learned how to maximize their independence and quality of life," Hout said.



*Donna Williams, left, and Susie Hout, program coordinator.*

That focus on independence and quality of life fits well with the mission of People Who Care, whose volunteers help adults physically unable to drive continue living in their homes by providing essential transportation and other non-medical assistance.

Even though Williams can't volunteer with People Who Care anymore, she heartily recommends the course to those with low vision. "I enjoyed

every aspect of the course, especially the scientific parts," Williams said. "But mostly, I enjoyed learning how to face the challenge of low vision."

For more information about People Who Care, call 928-445-2480, send an email to [ppwc@peoplewhocareaz.com](mailto:ppwc@peoplewhocareaz.com) or visit [www.peoplewhocareaz.com](http://www.peoplewhocareaz.com).

## Yavapai College Radiology Students Partner with People Who Care

People Who Care's partnership with the Yavapai College Radiologic Technology Program is a win-win.

First-year students get a preview of working with people outside the classroom before they take care of people as their patients. And, People Who Care exposes a group of young people to the satisfaction and gratification of helping others.

People Who Care first teamed up with the YC Radiologic Technology program in 2014. The program includes a service-learning component that is part of the introductory radiology course, RAD 100: Foundations of Radiologic Science.

This year's students are: Alyssa Bates, Jeremiah Blumstein, Cami Denney, Evan Gasparich, Nathan Hartman, Abdulkader Homs, Megan King, Taylor Kuntze, Jeanna Norbury, Connor Stackhouse, David Sullivan, and Bethany Turner.

Drop off your used ink cartridges at the Prescott office and People Who Care will earn store credit at Staples.



## Legacy Gift Helps People Who Care Continue into Future

If you've been thinking about how to contribute to People Who Care financially other than or in addition to cash, you may want to consider a legacy gift. It's a way to make a lasting contribution to ensure that People Who Care will always be able to help Neighbors in our communities.

When considering a legacy gift, you'll be able to select from a number of strategies. These are common ways to provide a gift that keeps on giving:

- You can name People Who Care as a beneficiary in your will.
- You can make People Who Care the beneficiary of a retirement plan.
- If you have nonretirement assets, as well as retirement accounts, naming People Who Care as the beneficiary of a retirement account is a tax-wise strategy. A charitable organization does not pay tax on the distribution, and your beneficiaries inherit other assets that are not taxable.
- Other ideas include a variety of charitable trusts, some of which provide income to you, the donor.

- You also could consider a charitable gift annuity, which pays you income for life with the remaining value going to People Who Care.

During your lifetime, you can give appreciated property held for more than one year, such as real estate or securities. You get a tax deduction for the fair market value, and PWC pays no tax on the gain.

If you are 70½ or older and have an IRA account, a special tax strategy is available to you. You are permitted to use all or part of your annual required minimum distribution up to \$100,000 and donate the amount directly to one or more charitable organizations.

The donation is called a qualified charitable distribution and must go directly to the nonprofit organization, such as People Who Care. The donation is then not included in your income. Your IRA trustee organization can assist you with the required paperwork.

It is important to consult a tax adviser or an attorney about gift strategies. The People Who Care office in Prescott has a list of area professionals. Call our office at 928-445-2480, for information.

## Support People Who Care When You Shop at Amazon and Fry's

When you shop at amazon.com, you can support People Who Care every time you make a purchase – at no cost to you. Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price of eligible items to People Who Care.

It's easy. On your first online visit, go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). Log in and select People Who Care, Prescott, AZ, before you start shopping.

Fry's Community Rewards Program helps People Who Care, too. Shop using your Fry's V.I.P Card and People Who Care receives a reward check each cycle.

People Who Care raises funds with every eligible purchase our enrolled participants make.

Thank you!



*Looking for a last-minute gift for that special someone? Stop by the People Who Care Booth at the annual Last-Minute Non-Profit Stocking-Stuffer Bazaar, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. The bazaar is in the Prescott Activity Center, 824 E. Gurley St. The People Who Care booth will feature homemade craft items made by volunteers.*

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by Marjorie Hultberg

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by Vivian Swanson  
by Judith Nelson  
by Susan Crutcher  
by Dick & Pat Unkenholz  
by Jill & Philip Pannier  
by Carole Zeller  
by Christine Mack  
by Dick & Pat Unkenholz  
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*Thank you!*



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*"Too often we underestimate the power of touch,  
A smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest  
Compliment or the smallest act of caring,  
All of which have the potential to turn a life around."  
- Leo Buscaglia*

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

**People Who Care**

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 12079  
Prescott, AZ 86304

### PRESCOTT PROGRAM & MAIN OFFICE

147 Grove Ave.

Phone: 928.445.2480 Fax: 928.445.9370

E-mail: [ppwc@cableone.net](mailto:ppwc@cableone.net)

### CHINO VALLEY PROGRAM

Chino Valley United Methodist Church Campus

735 East Road 1 South

Phone: 928.636.3295 Fax: 928.636.3296

E-mail: [cvpwc1@gmail.com](mailto:cvpwc1@gmail.com)

### PRESCOTT VALLEY/DEWEY PROGRAM

8098 E. Valley Road #C

Phone: 928.925.3066

E-mail: [prescottvalleypwc@gmail.com](mailto:prescottvalleypwc@gmail.com)