



**Winston-Salem**

*Caring for families caring for children*

# Heart to Heart

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419 South Hawthorne Road, Winston-Salem, NC 27103 (336) 723-0228 [www.rmhwinstonsalem.org](http://www.rmhwinstonsalem.org)

## **Forsyth Family Room Volunteers of the Year: Dinah and John Reece**



Dinah and John Reece are a delightful couple. When I asked them to what they attributed the longevity of their forty-three year marriage, John promptly replied, "To my good nature." Dinah added, with a smile, that her good cooking helped a lot, too.

Dinah and John both grew up on dairy farms in Yadkin County. However, they did not meet until their teen years when they spotted each other while "cruising" in Elkin. They dated until it was time to leave for college. Dinah went to Wake Forest University, where she majored in Education, and John attended first Wingate College and then NC State University where he majored in Engineering. At the end of their sophomore year, John

and Dinah resumed dating, became engaged during their senior year and were married shortly after graduation. With their agricultural family backgrounds, John and Dinah were still very surprised when they received a "very pretty cow" named "Daisy" as a wedding gift.

After the wedding, Dinah taught at Wiley Junior High School, and John worked in the Food Division at Reynolds Tobacco Company. When their child, Michael, was born, Dinah left teaching to stay home with him and daughter, Melanie, who was born three years later. In 1979, John became a Project Manager which enabled him to spend more time with his family. John was later promoted to Senior Principal Engineer and became Manager of the Central Machine Shop and Central Supply.

After the children were both in elementary school Dinah returned to teaching at Atkins and then Northwest Middle School, where she taught for twenty-three years. During that time, Dinah worked with her classes to raise funds for the Ronald McDonald House.

Several years ago, both Dinah and John retired and have enjoyed spending time with their four grandchildren. In addition, both Dinah and John volunteer in many capacities at their church - especially cooking! They also cook for Reagan High School Sports Banquets and the school staff. Dinah also mentors young teachers and is on the Speaker's Bureau for Hospice. When the Forsyth Family Room opened in 2008, Dinah and John joined our volunteer family. Together they cover the Forsyth Family Room every Wednesday morning. The Reece's credit their wonderful parents for instilling in them the value of service to others. Thank you, Dinah and John, for the kindness and care you bring to the Family Room each time you volunteer.

## **Brenner Family Room Volunteer of the Year: Martha Kinney**

Brenner Family Room Volunteer of the Year, Martha Kinney, has certainly lived a busy and interesting life. Martha was born and raised in south Georgia. Martha graduated from Georgia Southern University with a degree in Home Economics and followed that with graduate work in Nutrition at Florida State University. After completing her studies, Martha taught Home Economics and World History in Ocala, Florida and Savannah, Georgia.

Martha then moved to Winston-Salem to accept a job as a hospital dietician and a nutrition instructor in the nursing school at Baptist Hospital. It was during that time that Martha met her husband, Ned, at a party, and they were married three years later. Daughter Carol was born a year later and, two years after that son Richard completed the family. Martha left her job and stayed home to raise her children. However, she remained active in her community serving as the superintendent of the Vacation Bible School at Christ Moravian Church and also as a counselor at the Laurel Ridge Moravian Camp. After being home for twelve years raising her family, Martha returned to the work force. Initially she did substitute teaching in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County schools. She then was hired to teach Home Economics, Reading, Health and American History at the Salem Baptist Day School and Nutrition at Forsyth Tech.

Though Martha retired in 1989, she has continued to "give back" to her community. Since 1994 Martha has served as a tour guide at the Winston-Salem Journal Production plant. When the Brenner Family Room opened on June 3, 2002, Martha was among the first volunteers and, in those days, she covered shifts several times a week. In June 2004 she started volunteering in the Cancer Center where she visits patients receiving chemotherapy. Martha's other volunteer jobs include judging cakes at the Dixie Classic Fair, being a diener at the Christmas Lovefeast at Davis Chapel, and actively participating in the North Carolina Extension and Community Association.

Martha's greatest joy is her family which now includes her children's wonderful spouses and three delightful teenage grandchildren. Martha has been living in her adopted home of Winston-Salem for fifty-one years and, during that time, she has continued to enrich her community with her considerable talents. Martha, we feel blessed to have you as member of our volunteer family.



## House Volunteer of the Year:

### Julia Shively



In May 2004, Julia Shively visited our RMH during the Ardmore Parade of Homes. While on tour Julia remembers thinking to herself, "When I retire, this is what I want to do." Upon her retirement in 2005, she did just that! Over the last four years, Julia has been serving families at the House and in both Family Rooms. In addition to her service throughout the year, you may also find her helping with special projects, such as newsletter mailings at Arbor Acres and Luminary Distribution.

Julia graduated from Queens College in Charlotte and spent some time working in the school system. She then began a 27-year career with Wake Forest University where she met her wonderful husband Bob (pictured with her above at the November Volunteer Event). At WFU, Julia's favorite position was with the Evening and Weekend graduate program where she interacted with students through coordinating everything from financial aid to social events. Julia is an avid reader, enjoys walking and bird watching, and is a Wake Forest sports fan. She is the mother of two sons and a grandmother to five (Grant, Caroline, Rachel, Emma Grace and Julia). She says, "Being a mother and grandmother myself, I can understand the fear, stress and heartache of having a seriously ill child. I feel volunteering for RMH is a very worthwhile cause."

Julia's many talents are a perfect match for the needs of RMH families. Her friends explain, "When Julia's your friend, she's your friend for life." Her friend Joan said, "When I had my surgery, she spent the night at my house, cleaned, cooked and wouldn't take, 'no', for an answer. She's a take charge, take care of things kind of person." We love those types of volunteers! Each Thursday morning (and some Mondays), you can find Julia "taking charge" at the House or Family Rooms. She comes prepared to clean the kitchen, sort donations, organize the storage room and more. She completes all tasks to perfection as if it were her own House.

Julia, thank you for creating an environment where families can relax, be themselves and be comforted by their surroundings at the Ronald McDonald House and Family Rooms!

## Family Support Program

### Volunteer of the Year:

### Mary Martha Douglas



The 2009 Family Support Program Volunteer of the Year, Mary Martha Douglas, has served the families of the Ronald McDonald House for over two decades. She began volunteering with the Friends of RMH in 1989 as Mailing Chairwoman and has served in almost every position, including Bingo caller, Meals Coordinator, Luminary Assembly Chair, Vice President, and President. We also are delighted that two of her children, Walker and Catherine, have served as devoted and enthusiastic volunteers as well (Mary Martha and Catherine are pictured above at the November Volunteer Event).

In 2007, Mary Martha branched out once again to become a Family Support Program volunteer. She serves warmly and compassionately as she visits our families bedside in the hospital, mostly in the pediatric intensive care units. She not only offers magazines and gifts, but also delivers her own special brand of love and unconditional support. Our families and hospital staff often remark how comforting she is and how much her support means to our guests.

While she has performed countless acts of service for our families, a few examples of her quiet and humble service stand out: 1) Whenever we have a Catholic family who expresses a desire to meet with a priest, Mary Martha either arranges for a priest to visit them at the hospital or helps the family attend Mass at her own church; 2) Over the last year, she spent many hours visiting three of our teenage cancer patients at the hospital to give their exhausted mothers much needed respite; and 3) This amazing volunteer and her family performed an anonymous act of kindness for one of our teen oncology patients and his family that resulted in great emotional and spiritual healing for them all.

For all of these reasons and many more, we express our profound appreciation to Mary Martha Douglas for her 20 years of service to the families of the Ronald McDonald House!



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