

The Power of Music – Touches Us All

By Silvana LaFerlita Gullo

September's events that included music inspired us to launch a campaign to bring more musical programming to the Center. A visit to Day Break, a monthly evening celebration, and the screening of a Sundance Film Festival winner all demonstrated how truly powerful music can be.

Music's positive effect on our emotions is well-known fact; its therapeutic value is being scientifically proven with programs like "Brain Fitness" and "Music and Memory". Even a simple music program has a profound effect. In September, a visit to Day Break demonstrated the significant value of music programs. Day Break Members, normally sedentary and quiet, were "*moved*" into motion by the music. "See the lady in the green? She typically has her eyes closed 90% of the time". She's on her feet moving to the rhythm of songs from the 40's being sung by guests. Another Member is touching us all by doing a lovely dance in her wheelchair.

Monthly evening celebrations such as the "British Invasion" get many Members on their feet; even those that need support to walk can grab a chair to enjoy a dance. Experts say that keeping time to music by tapping feet or clapping hands is enough to be a great exercise for a person's body and brain!

The film, "Alive Inside," a documentary that follows the Music and Memory founder on his trip to a nursing home, demonstrates the effects music has on advanced Alzheimer's patients. The movie shows miraculous awakenings of patients who hadn't moved or spoken in years.

Plans are underway to engage local musicians to help the Center add music programming of some type to our weekly calendars. At the very least Members can expect weekly music programs on the big screen in the main hall!

The Power of Music Campaign means more therapeutic programs, iPods for memory-impaired seniors throughout the community and more weekly musical activities for us ALL!

Silvana LaFerlita Gullo, Executive Director