

## Remo C. Bertugli Memorial Award

### What I Have Done for Another Person that Has Impacted my Life

This past year my dog, Rusty, and I went to the Rolling Meadows Nursing Home where I did many hours of community service. Every Wednesday we went to visit with the residents and I also assisted them with their evening activities. Wednesday nights were "Card Night". We would play card games for quarters and did the ladies love the excitement! The friends I made there, both the residents and their visitors, made a huge impact on my life.

One friend that I made was a wonderful woman, named Elizabeth. She is 101 years old and very sweet and kind. She would make me think that I would like to be just like her when I am 101. I hope that when I'm that age I will be so kind and patient to people. She always made me laugh!

When I went to visit I took my dog, Rusty, along with me. Many of the residents would tell me stories about their own dogs. Harold would tell me about how he raised bird dogs and the funny things they would do. Connie was Rusty's best friend. She would give Rusty ice chips! Some of the residents were a bit hesitant to pet Rusty because he is so big. But Rusty seemed to sense this and would just politely and quietly sit beside them until they were comfortable enough to pet him.

I learned that if you just take some time and are patient that older adults really enjoy having someone to talk with, share their stories with and remember their pets. I also enjoyed helping them get back and forth to their rooms and talk a bit more one on one with them.

The entire experience taught me to be more understanding of people and how to relate to what they are going through. You can't be so selfish as to not help out a person when they need a hand. Most of all just to take a couple of minutes of your day to talk to someone will make both of you feel that you have done something wonderful.

*Christa Ziefel*

*Contestant #1*