

The Elkins Rehabilitation & Care Center and The Old Brick Playhouse Company partnership brings arts to residents



Hattie Arbogast, resident at Elkins Rehabilitation & Care Center, poses with one of the Old Brick Playhouse puppets. Courtesy: ERCC

Posted: Tue 11:52 AM, Mar 13, 2018

ELKINS, W.Va. (WDTV) -- The Elkins Rehabilitation & Care Center has partnered with The Old Brick Playhouse Company to bring various art forms to residents of the rehabilitation and long-term care facility.

ERCC and The Old Brick Playhouse Company have launched the “Merrily We Go Along” program. Officials say the partnership is meant to continue the type of work brought to the facility by Art Therapist Linda Zimmer, who has retired.

“Through this partnership, individuals at our facility have the opportunity to be exposed to a wide range of arts appreciation, arts participation, and self-expressive experiences,” stated ERCC's Interim Administrator Tara Shaver.

The Old Brick Playhouse Company provides bi-weekly programming to residents, as well as a "Care Crew." Led by youth, the Care Crew is a volunteer group that visits the facility weekly to provide a variety of entertainment to residents, including singing, puppet presentations, monologues, and stand-up comedy.

“The goal of the program is to first provide residents with opportunities to participate and appreciate the Arts, but secondly to connect area youth to a multigenerational audience,” stated Old Brick Playhouse Executive Director Missy Armentrout McCollam. “Both demographics can grow from this exchange.”

Officials say ERCC residents have participated in a variety show, a Hymn Hop, puppetry, rock painting, poetry readings, oral histories and more.

“It is very moving to experience the residents and our youth volunteers singing and dancing to the same songs,” McCollam says. “I am extremely emotional about the dual benefits of this effort. We all look forward to our weekly visits and hopefully, the residents share our excitement.”