

PEOPLE

A GLANCE AROUND TOWN AND COUNTY

Local man finds joy in retirement by running clock repair business

By Susan Wenner
Herald Staff

Ron Rodgers has over 30 years of experience in clock repair ranging from grandfather clocks, mantel and cuckoo clocks. His best claim to fame is the fact that "this clock doc makes house calls."

His interest of the inner workings of clocks began soon after moving to Florida many years ago.

"My wife purchased an antique German wall clock as a Christmas present. Upon getting acquainted with the man who reconditioned it, I learned about one of the few clock maker's classes in the county, at Winter Park Adult Vocational School, taught by one of the most prestigious clockmakers in the country. I earned a clock repair certification from that class as a hobby but became aware that there were not very many clock repairmen in Florida and I began repairing clocks for acquaintances. This soon escalated into doing some work for local jewelers. This spawned the idea of getting experiences that would qualify me to have a retirement business."

Essentially, Rodgers retired 3 times before diving into the clock industry, at age 62, 69 and finally at age 79. His M.A. in secondary School Administration, graduating Magna Cum Laude, landed him a position as a school administrator but he was previously employed as a classroom teacher. He was a director of state-wide youth activities and a director of a program to assist people in the fight to stop smoking. This state program eventually spread internationally.

Arriving in Florida in 1977 Rodgers served on a pastoral



Herald photo by Susan Wenner
Ron Rodgers (above) shows off his work station in his home.

staff at a large church in Maitland and later pastored several churches throughout Florida. Before his retirement at the age of 79 he also worked at a retirement community as a Retirement Counselor.

Since his last retirement he has enjoyed more time to work on his beloved hobby turned business.

"Now, I am able to devote more time to a clock restoration business," said Rodgers. "I have had the joy of bringing many really neat clocks to life again, including several Grandfather clocks dating back to the 1700's or earlier. There have been a wide variety of clocks made over the years but there is a common thread that runs through the construction of a movement. Clock cases are the main variant. The movements are more similar than different."

Rodgers shared that another interesting fact is the origin of clocks.

"Much of the impetus came from France, when King

Louis became very much enamored by timekeepers. At that time, clocks were a novelty and very expensive. Only Royalty and Aristocrats could afford them. In early America, there were a limited number of clockmakers, but they were very prolific and creative, inventing an 'American movement' that was very rugged and long lasting, compared to the delicate precision movements of Europe. There are excellent museums and other displays of clocks, including Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts."

He considers his work challenging but is amused by folks that see the parts of the clock "strewn on a workbench" and are overwhelmed.

"I take pride in my work and treat each clock as if it were my own," said Rodgers. "I guarantee my work from 3 to 5 years depending on the type of clock."

For more information about his clock repair contact Rodgers at 321-277-0193.

Longwood clinic provides low-cost sterilization in an effort to help pets

By Susan Wenner
Herald Staff

Phyllis Ayoob has always loved animals, particularly cats since childhood and even joked that she was probably born a "crazy cat lady or crazy cat aficionado" but she came to realize that adoptions weren't saving those precious animals and something else must be done. That is when she began her non-profit, Spay N Save Animal Clinic in Longwood in 2012, to offer affordable prices for spaying and neutering.

"I come from a background of animal rescue and realized that you can't adopt your way out of saving animals through adoptions alone," she said. "Our county shelter was killing 500 cats and kittens a month and we were only adopting 200 or so back in 2005. My rescue group, CATS-CAN, Inc. knew we needed to do more than just try to find homes for all the homeless animals so we began to fund-raise to get our own spay/neuter clinic where we could do more to save lives."

She shared that, "Spay N Save is modeled after the Humane Alliance clinic in Asheville, NC. They were one of the first, high-volume, low-cost spay/neuter clinics and they help clinics like ours learn how to become operational. Spay N Save operates with the same high standards of other veterinary clinics except that we specialize in spaying & neutering as our primary focus."

Before opening her business she had made arrangements with several veterinarians in the area to perform low-cost spaying and neutering for her.

"We were able to do as many as 45 surgeries a month but that did not handle the high demand for affordable sterilization," said Ayoob. "We needed to do more. Spay N Save has been able to obtain several grants from PetSmart Charities, Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, and the Florida Animal Friends license plate funds. We also have a 'Spay It Forward' fund that comes through client and supporter donations to help supplement surgeries in many cases. We will continue to use those grants to reach the owners who haven't heard about us or who need extra help to reach us, such as transportation to the clinic for their pet. We also plan on going into the communities that need our services most and help to vaccinate pets right in their neighborhood."

In October Spay N Save will be celebrating National Feral Cat Day with free spays



Photo contributed
Phyllis Ayoob (above) with a kitten at Spay N Save, her nonprofit.

and neuters for community cats. Other special events are offered throughout the year. In fact, through the PetSmart Charities' grant the organization ran 5 free spay days and some of only a \$20 co-pay that "fixed" over 420 cats and dogs. Last year alone they also completed a grant by sterilizing some 1,000 feral cats in Sanford causing a 25 percent decrease in intake numbers at Seminole Animal Services.

Ayoob has the firm belief that "all life is precious, animal and human."

She said, "We all have a purpose for being here and need to follow the passion we have been given. My particular passion has been to help the cats and dogs in my community by helping them live better, healthier lives. Everyone can do a part, large or small, to help another being. I knew that when we built our clinic that it was greatly needed. In only 3 years, we have performed over 22,000 spays and neuters and we haven't slowed down."

For more information about Spay N Save go to their facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SpayNSave?fref=ts> or call 407-920-4894. They are located at 988 Ronald Regan Blvd. in Longwood. Their office hours are Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

WELDING

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first graduating class, eight quickly earned jobs in welding, and the ninth opted to pursue further education before entering the workforce.

Cumulatively, the nine students earned more than 45 certifications from the American Welding Society across a variety of trades, processes and procedures, including shielded metal arc welding (SMAW), gas metal arc welding (GMAW), flux cored arc welding (FCAW) and tungsten inert gas welding (TIG).

"Since the program opened in January 2014, we've seen more than a 200 percent enrollment increase," says Jason Becker, who helped develop the program's curriculum and now serves as one of three instructors. "We've had so much demand for this program we can barely keep up."

And the timing couldn't be better. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the welding trade could comprise some 400,000 jobs nationally

over the next 10 years, many in Orlando thanks to Central Florida's booming construction industry. According to the Palm Beach Post, Orlando is by far Florida's largest market for upcoming construction jobs, with projected numbers more than two times higher than second-ranked Miami-Dade County.

"Employers have noticed a skills gap in recent years where welding is concerned," Becker says. "Seminole State College is doing its part to fill that need. We understand the industry's demand and needs, so we've developed a program that not only teaches students to weld, but also encompasses theory, practical application and critical thinking."

Demand is so high that a waiting list has been implemented, along with a night shift to supplement the morning and afternoon classes. A fourth shift is being considered.

Arnold, who utilized a Workforce Investment Act grant that covered her tuition, says Seminole State's convenient classes fit well around her work schedule, and welding's unique mix of scientific and artistic components appealed to her.

"Welding is like the adult version of arts and crafts to me," she says.

Except these "arts and crafts" involve working with superalloys and repairing combustion components for land-based gas turbines.

"Welding can be a lot more complicated than people think," Becker says. "At our school, we don't just teach people to pass the certification test. We also focus on applications and technique, like how to identify certain types of metal and determine the correct welding process. There's a lot more science and a lot more mathematics involved than people realize."

Arnold is satisfied with her experience in the program, where professors were able to provide one-on-one attention to help her achieve her highest potential. And now she has a rewarding career that she hopes will last a long time.

"It's been a really great experience," Arnold says. "I stepped outside of the box and gave it a shot, and I love it!"

To learn more about the Applied Welding Program, contact Keemah Platt at 407.708.2848, or visit www.seminolestate.edu/welding

CENTER

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FACHE, President, HCA North Florida Division. "As the nation's leading provider of healthcare services, our extensive resources and expertise will provide patients with a continuum of quality care, and we look forward to offering residents additional options to meet all their healthcare needs."

The \$109 million, 198,000-square-foot construction project is expected to take between 18 and 24 months to complete. A new medical office building will also be built adjacent to the hospital. Oviedo Medical Center will bring an estimated 200 new jobs to the region, including nurses and other skilled medical professionals as well as a wide variety of support positions. The hospital's medical staff will include specialists in primary care, cardiology, general surgery, gastroenterology, orthopedic surgery, neurology, pulmonology, nephrology OB/GYN and hematology/oncology.

"Oviedo Medical Center will have a significant impact on the quality of life in the region," said Oviedo Mayor Dominic Persampiere. "Not only will we now have convenient access to quality medical care, we will all benefit from the economic impact of new jobs, tax revenue and community support the hospital will bring. We are incredibly grateful to HCA for sharing our vision and staying the course to bring us to this great moment in the history of our community."

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