

## April 2018 Caregiver of the Month: Doris Hudgens!



### Showing Love through the Eyes of a Daughter

Doris Hudgens has been taking care of her 92 year old mother, Lila, for three years. Mentally sharp and determined, Lila still remains independent in her own apartment in the same town as Doris. Lila suffers from Neuropathy which has gradually progressed over the years. In public, she relies on a wheel chair to get around but manages with a walker at home for short distances.

A typical day for Doris and Lila begins with Doris going to Lila's apartment, making her coffee, and getting her dressed for the day. Wheel of Fortune, one of Lila's favorite shows, is usually on when Doris arrives, so they wait until it is over before leaving to start their day.

Doris takes Lila to the local senior center where they eat lunch and socialize, enabling Lila to experience social skills and positive relationships with peers, an important part of successful aging. Lila is known throughout the center and is very social, keeping up with conversation with the best of them. The two of them get their hair done once a week or attend a doctor's appointment. They usually get back to Lila's apartment around 3:00 p.m. Doris will get Lila situated and comfortable before she goes home. Doris returns to Lila's apartment at 7:00 p.m. and prepares dinner, ensuring proper nutritional needs are met. Doris then dresses Lila and puts her to bed for the night. Before Doris leaves, she sets something out for breakfast for Lila. A couple of nights a week, Doris helps Lila with her bath. She hires extra help to assist with getting her mother in and out of the tub, as she is unable to do this herself. Lila manages her own medications; however, Doris makes sure she takes the correct dosages at the scheduled time. Doris encourages Lila's independence as much as possible. Doris provides a clean and healthy living environment for Lila by washing dishes, vacuuming, and taking out the garbage.

"A lot of people do not realize how much work goes into caregiving until they are put into the situation. I don't feel like I'm an expert at this, I just do what feels right, by doing right by my mother. I admire anyone who is a caregiver knowing how much of yourself that goes into it. I am very fortunate to have a mother who is easy to work with. Mom is still of sound mind and engages in activities that keep her brain active."

Lila is an avid Kansas City Royals fan and keeps up with the team's roster and each player's number. She also enjoys reading the local newspaper and follows what is going on around town. Lila is also very proud of her iris garden and often shares photographs of her flowers with others.

Doris and Lila enjoy going for car rides through the country and every now and again, they go out to dinner at the local Golden Corral. "As a caregiver, I have learned to appreciate what other caregivers have gone through. I appreciate my mother more and have grown closer to her. I have learned to appreciate each day as it comes along," says Doris.

Doris credits Care Connection for Aging Services for all of the support they provide to her, her mother, and all of the other seniors in the community.

Roy Qualls, care manager with Care Connection for Aging Services states, "Doris and Lila come into the center daily for lunch. I always observe Doris communicating with the deepest respect and dignity for her mother. She is very patient and respectful with her mother when challenges occur throughout the day. Without hesitation, Doris contributes lovingly as a daughter and significantly as a caregiver with her mother. Her proactive

attitude, and willingness to accept nothing less, enables her mother to have and maintain a productive and meaningful life with dignity and respect.”