



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.
©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306

Nancy Foster
photo by Wendy Crooks



A Silver-Haired Ambassador of Good Works

By Wendy Crooks

MAHATMA GANDHI ONCE SAID, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Nancy Foster is doing just that. Born in Boston, Massachusetts during the depression, Ms. Foster has been a Frisco resident for nine years. She is currently serving her 5th term as a Texas Silver-Haired Legislator.

The Texas Silver-Haired Legislature (TSHL) is a body of 117 officials, aged 60 and over, elected by their peers. The objective of the TSHL is to serve the needs of both present and future Texas seniors.

The road to the Legislature seems like a natural progression for Ms. Foster. When she was very young, she recalls learning from her parents to help others. “I had very good parents who taught me about giving. They were not particularly long

conversations about it. It was just about doing it.” She specifically remembers making baskets for the soldiers during the war. With regard to helping others, “It was as natural as breathing.”

When Ms. Foster was a young girl, she had a tremendous desire to learn all about dance. At age 12, she recalled, “My parents would put me on a train to New York. I would take some classical ballet classes for a few days and come back.” In the years to come that passion never dwindled. She went on to dance in New York for two years and then, when she became a Texan, operated her studio for 22 years in Marshall.

At the same time, Ms. Foster became interested in dance therapy. She started working as a volunteer with handicapped children. “When I saw what therapy could

do, it became a tremendous fascination for me.” She continued to study dance therapy and became a therapist at Rusk State Hospital in East Texas.

Many years later Ms. Foster went to Harvard in Boston and studied psycho-mototherapy. When she realized how this could help the elderly, she began taking this philosophy of movement and healing into nursing homes. While doing so, she was asked by the Parkland Nursing Home Administrator to develop the first professional Ombudsman Program at Parkland Hospital and serve as Ombudsman Administrator and Director of Patient Services. Her two daughters were in college and her son was just starting high school so the timing seemed right to make the move to Dallas.

At age 59, Ms. Foster became a recipient of care rather than the giver she has always been. She was diagnosed with stage-4, small-cell cancer and congestive heart failure and given three months to live. The dedicated teams at St. Paul Cancer Center and Southwestern Medical School in Dallas never gave up on her. It was their dedication through the cancer treatment that confirmed her calling to give back to others. After completing treatment she was cancer free for more than 12 years.

Sadly, Ms. Foster recently learned that her cancer has returned. Currently it is stage-1 cancer. Earnestly she admitted, “I’m not afraid of dying.” Then she added with a small chuckle, “I’m not afraid of dying and I’m not afraid of living.”

Inadvertently, Nancy Foster has worked on quality of life issues all of her life. First, helping our soldiers as a young girl, then, working as a therapist to help others with movement. Working as a Texas Silver-Haired Legislator, she has worked diligently to improve the quality of life for many elderly Texans. And now this beautiful lady must again focus on her own health and quality of life. She offered wryly, “Everything comes full cycle, but we’re not the ones to know where the cycle ends.” Although she has had so many wonderful life experiences and accomplishments, Nancy Foster still feels there’s work to be done.

Wendy Crooks is a freelance writer living in Plano.