



For the first time, an Influencer Award recipient is a couple! The 2023 Influencers from Lakewood are Jim and Sally Barrett.

Jim Barrett was born in Bristol, Virginia on February 19, 1946, and then moved to Richmond when he was five years old. Jim wanted to be an architect from an early age but after attending Richmond Professional Institute, became a civil engineer with the Virginia Department of Transportation, where he worked 41 years in highway design and then with the Environmental Division. After retiring from VDOT, Jim continued to work in various positions before finally serving as a clerk of the House Appropriations Committee for the Virginia House of Delegates.

Sally was born in Portsmouth, Virginia on October 21, 1949, and lived there until she came to Richmond to attend the Medical College of Virginia. She always wanted to be a teacher, but her parents encouraged her to go to nursing school. Her dream of teaching came true at J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College when she began teaching in the nursing school - a wonderful fit for both her nursing career and her teaching aspirations. After earning a Master's from the Medical College of Virginia, she was a licensed clinical nurse specialist and taught nursing for the next 25 years.

Jim is committed to continuously promoting community service, volunteerism, leadership, and patriotism. He started while in college when he joined the North Richmond Jaycees. His chapter organized a Memorial Day Parade in downtown

Richmond for several years, worked with underprivileged children, and set goals to provide for community needs.

In 1996, he and three friends established the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Erosion Control Association focusing on erosion and sediment control and stormwater management between Virginia and New Jersey including the Chesapeake Bay. He was president in 1999 and remained a member until 2008 leading the fight to preserve the Chesapeake Bay and clean waters. Jim served as a member of Keep America Beautiful and was appointed to Keep Henrico Beautiful until moving to Lakewood in 2013, where he then represented the Tuckahoe District. He also was on the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission's Community Transportation Advisory Committee for four years as a voting member representing Henrico County.

Jim has also been a member of the Richmond Concert Band as president eight times and is currently a member of the Henrico Concert Band serving as trumpet section leader. At River Road United Methodist Church, he sang in the choir and played trumpet preludes at numerous Sunday services. He is currently a member of Discovery United Methodist Church where he continues to provide musical support by playing trumpet preludes at Sunday services.

Jim served in the U.S. Marine Corps as a part of the 3rd Battalion, 14th Marines Regiment and was a gunner on a 105mm howitzer for 6 years. In 2008, Jim joined the James M. Slay Detachment of the Marine Corps League. He has served in various offices including State Commandant in 2020. He was appointed to the Joint Leadership Council which is a council of 25 veteran service organizations focused on developing legislative initiatives to help veterans and their families statewide. As part of the James M. Slay Honor Guard, he has provided Taps at over 175 veteran funerals. He also organizes Marine Corps League breakfasts and birthday celebrations at Lakewood.

Sally's close friend Jane O'Toole died suddenly in December of 2017 and Jane's husband established the Walk4JaneO in her memory at Short Pump Park each year. Sally serves on the planning committee, raising funds to support children and teachers at Ruby F. Carver Elementary School, and patients and nurses at Chippenham Hospital. Donations include a Buddy Bench in Jane's memory, school supplies, Thanksgiving meals to families in need, a welcome back teachers' breakfast, and items/decorations for the 5th grade graduation party. Donations from the Walk4JaneO also provide clothing to

patients at Chippenham hospital from a fully stocked closet for patients who need items when they are discharged. The team also provides recognition to all nurses at Chippenham during Nurses Week in May each year. Their goal is to continually volunteer in the community for others as Jane O'Toole would do.

Jim and Sally met on a blind date following some friends and co-workers urging them to get together. "It seems that God put us together and for the last almost 30 years we have enjoyed love, friendship, and companionship together. We enjoy traveling and are both avid Mickey Mouse fans. We have been to Disney World many times and have done three Disney cruises. We have also traveled to England, spent a month in Scotland, three trips to Cancun, Mexico, and numerous trips to other Caribbean islands" says Jim.

Jim and Sally moved to Lakewood in 2013 following the death of Sally's mother at Lakewood in 2012. Her mother was a Lakewood resident for 12 years, giving them precious time to appreciate Lakewood and its team members. Living at Lakewood has given them peace of mind and the enjoyment of new friends. It has also given them time to enjoy giving back to both the community at large and Lakewood in particular.

At Lakewood, Jim has served as a member and as president of the Resident Council and was a part of the LifeSpire Resident Engagement Committee representing Lakewood residents. He serves Lakewood by being a member of the Lakewood Building and Grounds Committee, the Resident Advisory Committee, the Audio/Visual Committee, the Garden Committee and by being a Lakewood Resident Ambassador. He is now chairing a subcommittee to refurbish the Dog Park and a landscape committee to identify areas on campus that can be spruced up.

He and Sally coordinated and taught new resident orientation classes monthly for two years while the new Clubhouse was under construction.

Sally's interests and volunteerism inside and outside of Lakewood have threads of utilizing her creativity and love of music to bring fun and joy to others. Sally has facilitated monthly crafting and shopping experiences for residents. After the pandemic, Sally approached Lakewood Resident Services about restarting these for 2023 and now the "Lakewood Crafter's Corner" classes are providing creativity for residents with the goal of providing handmade crafts at the 2023 Lakewood Fall Craft Show. The adventurous shopping trips are popular as well with full bus trips around Richmond and beyond! "I am so thankful that I can plan and organize each step of these wonderful opportunities" Sally says.

Planning and designing the Lakewood Olympics

Dominican Republic flag, colors, dress, banner, and puppet show brought our team of residents a solid win three years ago this July with many volunteer hours of comradery and fun.

Prior to Lakewood's expansion, Sally worked in the "former" Briar Patch and has helped new move ins and long-time residents to downsize and organize their belongings. Recently, residents learned that the Lakewood Chrismon Tree ornaments needed attention. Sally is working with residents and team members to fix and make new ornaments, and to share the meaning of each Chrismon in a service during the Christmas season to share the light of Christ.

Music has always been part of Sally's life and she has sung with the Lakewood Trinity Singers and is singing with the Lakewood Singers. Sally has enjoyed singing at both River Road United Methodist and Discovery United Methodist Churches, Heartstrings Chorus, and The Good Vibrations Chorus.

When asked about who has influenced them, Jim says his father and his colleagues throughout his career mentored him. Sally's father and grandmother mentored and influenced her, as well as her teachers and fellow nursing colleagues.

They say, "We both mentor each other to be better each day and the residents and staff at Lakewood influence us to be better."

Jim's future goal is to encourage Lakewood residents to become more actively involved in volunteering in progressive leadership roles. Sally's goal is to continue to explore more volunteer opportunities for residents and team members with creative endeavors and in music.

Jim is most proud of his service to his country and the community. Sally is most proud of being able to serve and help people from all walks of life.

Sally's motto is "Serve each day with gladness and joy", while Jim's motto is "Volunteering for others is the best work in life."