



<https://www.circa.com/story/2017/08/31/nation/evan-stark-11-year-old-boy-volunteers-at-local-senior-center-because-he-misses-his-dead-grandmother>



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An 11-year-old boy volunteers at the senior center because he misses his grandmother



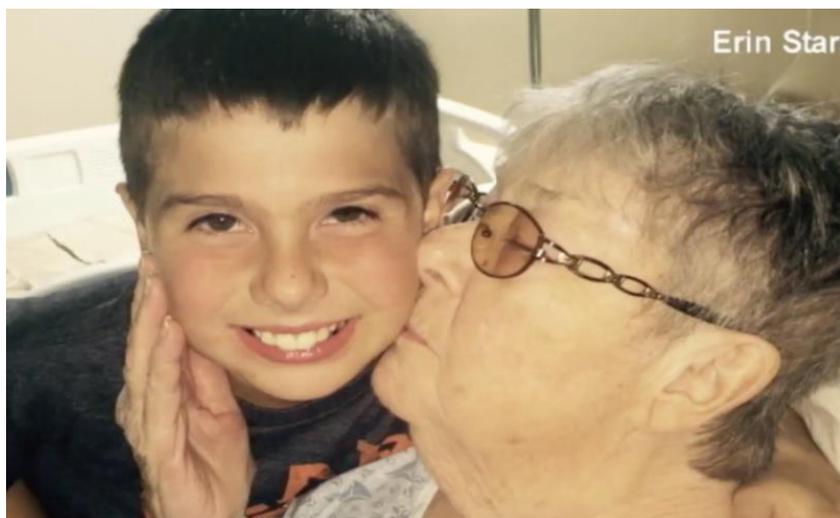
Eleven-year-old Evan Stark spends his extra time unlike most others his age. He likes to volunteer at the Poet's Walk Memory Care facility in Henderson, Nevada. He serves seniors at dinner and cleans up, plays games and watches movies. He also sings with them and anything they want to have fun doing.

But he does this for a reason -- his grandmother. As a child, his grandma helped raise him for seven years. They lived together in the same home until she had to move into a care facility. Two years ago, his grandmother passed away.

[www.PoetsWalk-SpringHills.com](http://www.PoetsWalk-SpringHills.com)



Evan talked to KSNV News about playing games with his grandmother like Yahtzee. "We would play that each time we would go there," said Stark.



"It makes me happy to be with them because it reminds me of my grandma," Stark said.



Mark Shaffer is a manager at the memory care facility. Shaffer said he laughs when he gets a text from Stark asking if he could come to work.  
"It just cracks me up," Shaffer told us.



Stark's mother, Erin, said the first time he was at the facility he text to ask her if he could stay. He said he spends four to six hours there when he can to help. Stark is building plenty of memories to keep his grandmother's spirit at heart.



Executive director Mark Shaffer at Poet's Walk Assisted Living on Monday, Jan. 16, 2017, in Henderson

Another priority at the senior community is to focus on patients' activities before their condition worsened, Markowits said. "Dementia shouldn't stop people from doing some of the activities they did before," he added. "Here, if they were a poet (before the condition), we do poetry with them. If they were an artist, we do art."

Other health care facilities are looking into adding technology that monitors patients around the clock. "This helps us establish a baseline on a patient's health," said Mark Shaffer, executive director of Poet's Walk. "That way, we can tell what their benchmarks are. If they normally have 15 breaths a minute when they sleep and all of a sudden it's 100, we know."

The high population of retirees who move to the area is one reason Nevada was chosen for a Spring Hills Senior Communities location, Markowits said.

Scott Muelrath, president and CEO of the Henderson Chamber of Commerce, said the facility addresses an area of health care that Henderson needed.

"This helps fill a niche that Southern Nevada struggles with," he said. "This will help to bring attention to this sector of health care."

Now that Henderson's location is up and running, Markowits is looking at a second Nevada location.

"We are looking at Summerlin and hope to have a facility there by next year," he said. Visit [spring-hills.com](http://spring-hills.com).



*Poet's Walk*

A Spring Hills Memory Care Community