

Speaker 1: Now more than ever, we want to focus on reasons to smile. And we found an amazing story out of Hot Springs, where for senior citizens are inspiring others through their original poetry. And I'm joined by Tiffany Harper, Executive Director of Country Club Village Retirement Community. And thank you for joining us today. You have some amazing people there that have been doing some pretty amazing things.

Tiffany Harper: They have. Thank you very much. We are very proud.

Speaker 1: Yeah. We're going to meet two of those poets in just a minute, but first Tiffany, tell us about this national [00:00:30] contest that your residents actually took part in.

Tiffany Harper: Yes. So, Sunshine Retirement Living has communities all over the nation and we are very blessed that we have the programs in place that we have. All of the communities are able to have their residents write poetry. They are submitted to whichever community hosted annually for the year. And once that happens, they have outside people that vote for their winners. [00:01:00] And then we produce books here so that everybody is able to enjoy them all year long.

Speaker 1: That is awesome. Well, you have Nina Pellegrino with you, right?

Tiffany Harper: I do.

Speaker 1: Yeah, we'd like to bring in resident Nina to talk to her about her poem. The theme for this year was silver linings. So, tell us about your poem.

Nina: Well, my poem is about royalty, but there's a little catch to it. Have you read mine? You have not read it.

Speaker 1: I haven't [00:01:30] been given those yet. No. So, I need you to give me the scoop.

Nina: Okay. Could I read it to you?

Speaker 1: Yeah.

Nina: Oh good. All right. Royalty. They live in a palace, serve special foods, a private education, all in a regal setting. Escorted for public outings, strolling on the rolled red carpet, bathing in special waters held by admiring onlookers. One King and three [00:02:00] damsels they are. They rang for four months long to depart on a special Haven, joining others who try it. Some would say their life is ducky. When in truth, they are one Drake, three ducks who reside in duck palace, the Peabody Hotel Rooftop Palace.

Speaker 1: I love that. A little bit south flare to it. Kind of had a twist. That is so, so beautiful. Love [00:02:30] that.

Nina: At that was my first poem ever.

Speaker 1: That isn't, fantastic.

Nina: I'm a teacher. I taught the appreciation of poetry, but never wrote a poem. And so, this was fun. Something fun.

Speaker 1: What a great outlet, just to be able to be creative, express yourself.

Nina: It is.

Speaker 1: And find a voice in something that you've never done before. And Nina, I love that. It's a great poem. Thank you so much. And then you have a friend there with you too. Carol Burgess, right? [00:03:00] And Carol, I want to hear about your poem as well. Tell us about it.

Carol: Well, there were a couple. And they surprised me. They sent all this in. This is just a special little thing that we do. They provide activities for us to keep our minds working.

Speaker 1: That's right. To keep yourself busy.

Carol: So they do that, to put your thoughts down. So yes, I wrote one about trees, stately, a square. You stand to shelter and display beauty. The God of the universe gave you a duty, as I run beneath your [00:03:30] branches with the sun streaming through, I know that these things you will do, but on the other hand, sometimes you fall and you do not stand so stately and tall. Storms [inaudible 00:03:44], so thoughts of trees are good to do as under them we ponder truth. That is a little bit of a first grade teacher coming through there.

Speaker 1: That is amazing. Well, I like it. It makes you think. And I was kind of wrapped up in that. And there's a lot of meaning behind [00:04:00] it too. So, how did this help you? I mean, to just be able to sit down and be creative, is it something that's really helped you through the pandemic?

Carol: Actually, it's a time of life being a widow and having the time to do these things and having someone who sort of nudges you to do them. It's been a wonderful experience. I'm enjoying it. Things are coming in my mind and I thought, I never thought I could do that, but I like it.

Speaker 1: It's just a great way to express [00:04:30] yourself. And I love that you guys are using that skill to if there's a pandemic and also use it for this contest that was going on at your residence.

Carol: That was a surprise. Who would have thought?

Speaker 1:

Yeah, that is fantastic. And these poems are actually now included in a poetry book, as we heard with works from dozens of seniors across the country as a way to inspire good thoughts during some challenging times. So, we are so glad that you shared your poems with us today. Thank you very much.

Carol:

Thank you, my pleasure.