

Gold Coast

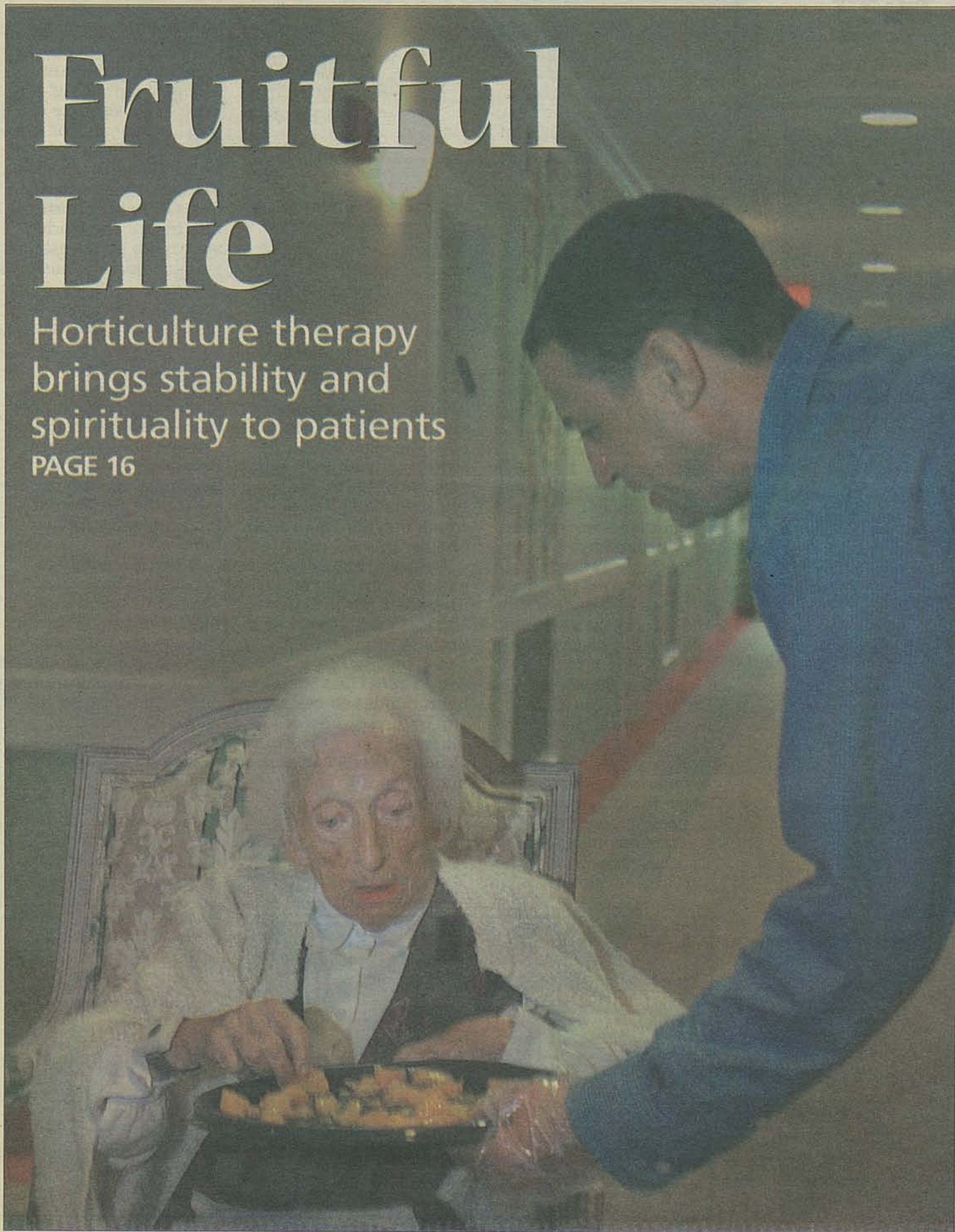
LIFESTYLE

THE TIMES • JUNE 27, 2002

Fruitful Life

Horticulture therapy
brings stability and
spirituality to patients

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SOCIALLY SPEAKING

PAT WILSON

Panthers score with Big Brothers, Sisters

The Florida Panthers invited 50 Big Brothers, Big Sisters and their little brothers and sisters to attend the final two home games of the season. One goal emerged: to create an experience so memorable, so positive that it equaled what 510 national BBBS chapters do daily for more than one million children – make little moments into big magic and lifelong memories.

“These types of activities are representative of the Panthers’ commitment to the community we live and work in,” said Chief Operating Officer Jeff Cogen. “We look forward to building upon these initiatives for the upcoming 10 year anniversary all star season.”

Big Brothers and Big Sisters, founded in 1904, is the only national youth service organization specializing in youth mentoring. For many, the positive experiences they enjoy with a committed adult mentor become the foundations of lifelong memories. This is especially true in Broward and Palm Beach counties, where, according to the

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Gold Coast

Horticulture therapy keeps body, mind and spirit in bloom

Cover Story

JOAN LINDSLEY

Times Staff Writer

ON THE COVER:

Molly Emple, of the Plaza at Boynton Beach, takes a piece of mango from Robert Bornstein, a horticulture therapist.

PHOTO BY KATHERINE COMBS

Preceded by a cart full of potting soil, plastic pots and green cuttings, Robert Bornstein makes his way through the beautiful halls of The Plaza at Boynton Beach, a senior assisted and independent living facility. It's the last Monday of the month and he teaches horticulture therapy to a group of young 82-year-olds.

Bornstein, a Broward County resident, leads recreational therapy classes designed to encourage participants to live with a holistic approach to life. He offers classes at the Forum at Deer Creek, the Horizon Club, and the Plaza facility.

Bornstein explains the classes concept, "It's the use of plants and related activities to improve the mind, body and spirit."

He performs his small miracles of laughter, joy, and information at about 40 different places in our area. Today it may be The Plaza, the Abbey Delray in Delray Beach, North Park, a classic residence by Hyatt in Hollywood, Forest Trace at Inverrary, Stratford Court in Boca Raton, Cypress Place, a day treatment center, and the list goes on and on.

Bornstein's motto is,

"Bring me your sick and weary, plants that is."

Bornstein brings different props with him to each class. One day there may be a party at a facility and he'll show the folks how to make a corsage. He used one class time to make a potpourri. He supplied the class with little round cloth cut outs and all sorts of herbs and sweet smelling things which they tie into a small bundle.

By nurturing a plant, patients turn outward from their physical problems. "I can't do this because of my arthritis," doesn't work. It's a "you can...I can" class which helps build self esteem and in turn promotes independence.

Bornstein has a very humorous side of his nature and has an enormous amount of energy and versatile ways of teaching and sharing to interest his growing

group of seniors. They learn to cultivate plants, appreciating the sensory aspect of gardening. Pressed flower note cards provide a means for sending letters. They use the herbs they grow to season meals, and sometimes even play horticulture bingo. The world appears to be Bornstein's garden which he nurtures by giving.

It all began when he transferred from Rutgers University in New Jersey to the University of Florida where he graduated with a bachelor of science degree from the College of Agriculture. Before he graduated, he became a nursery inspector for the Division of Plant Industry for Florida.

When his wife was expecting a child he wanted to spend more time at home. Glancing through the want ads in the newspaper, he saw an ad for a horticulture therapist. "It intrigued me. It was a life-changing moment and set my course on a new path," he explained.

Bornstein brings a unique twist to his work, through his technical knowledge and insight.

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COMING WEEK OF JULY 22ND

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THERAPY

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"Do you like honey?" Bornstein says, "You can treat burns, cuts and even bed sores with it. It's good for you and helps prevent infection." There's a discussion on honey and a little tasting. How about chocolate? He laughs, "Everyone has a story about chocolate." He'll explain it to his attentive group.

Rushing off to get home to cook dinner for a couple people from different countries, he says, "I've had over 35 language students board

with me over a period of time. They attend the nearby Florida Language Center and learn practical English by being with me at breakfast and dinner time." He likes the company.

Horticulture as a profession, came about in 1973 with the forming of the American Horticulture Therapy Association. Bornstein takes it to new heights without the stress and apprehension that can occur in a sterile institutional setting. "Plants and people appear to have a lot in common," he said, "They enjoy being nurtured.



DONORS CELEBRATED: Donors for the Lion of Judah Endowment cruise down the Intracoastal. Enjoying the night were Shirley Marcus, Margie Baer, Ann Katz-Lederman and Edith Stein. Contributed Photo

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assortment of desserts.

PhAB membership is open to all willing to commit their time and talent in support of the Florida Philharmonic. Call 392-7230 for details.

Donors enjoy Intracoastal cruise

The Jewish Community Foundation and the Women's Division of the Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County recently sponsored "The Ultimate Thank You - for LOJE's Only." This was a special event to thank Lion of Judah Endowment donors for their commit-

ment to the Jewish community.

The women enjoyed a cruise along the Intracoastal Waterway aboard the Lady Lucille. Merrill Lynch was the event's underwriter.

For information on becoming a LOJE, call Ava Sobel, assistant executive director, at 852-5014.

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