

# "Live and Let Live": 105-Year Old Celebrates Milestone Birthday

By Allison Lax on January 11, 2024 · No Comment



On Thursday, January 4, The Willows at Ramapo Rehabilitation and Nursing Center was excited to host a momentous birthday celebration for 105-year-old beloved resident Betty Haimowitz. Attending the party was her son Alan Haimowitz and nephews Mike and Randy Harris, along with Alan's wife and granddaughter.

Born on January 4 in 1919, Betty grew up in the Hebrew Orphan Asylum, eventually caring for her younger sister and brother at the age of 18. A resident of Manhattan's Lower East Side until she was 100 years old, Betty kept a catering business with her best friend Alice, retiring in her late 50s after 30 years.

Throughout this time, she was married to her Veteran husband Benjamin, with whom she had her only son, Alan. Now a grandfather himself, Alan comes to visit his mother at The Willows every day before his shift as a school bus driver—an opportunity, he emphasizes, he remains grateful for.

"It's a blessing," Alan said. "It's a miracle to have her here this long, to know that she still understands who I am... Years ago, the doctor told me that that's pretty much what keeps her going. She's always wondering how I'm doing, if I'm ok."

When I come in, she asks me if I've eaten. She's always concerned about me."

When RCT visited Betty to offer birthday greetings, she wore a hot pink cardigan, sun hat and sparkly leggings. During the visit, Betty sang Bing Crosby's "Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella," a song Alan said is one of her favorite tunes, and repeatedly expressed her love for her son. A poet all her life, Betty also recited verses from a poem she wrote about her own mother decades ago.

"Friends may come and friends may go, like scattered leaves in a winter snow," Betty recited. "But there's one who always, till the end, remains your true and staunchest friend. And that's your mother, sacred and true—the one that'd gladly die for you."

When asked the key to living a long and happy life, Betty gave a small smile and said, "Live and let live."

"She's affectionate, caring and loving," Alan said, when asked what three words would best describe his mother. "She's incredible, the things that she's done."



*Photos provided*



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