



### ***Spotlight on Staff***

## **BRUCE ANDREWS**

### **DRIVER TIMES TWO**

Bruce Andrews is one of Favarh's longest serving transportation drivers. He's been picking up and dropping off the people we serve for 16 years. But at 83 years old he doesn't just drive for Favarh. He also drives for the Hartford Courant, delivering newspapers.

Originally from the South End of Hartford, Bruce currently lives in Farmington, but will soon be

be moving to Bristol.

He's been a driver for most of his adult life, first driving — again delivering newspapers — for the former Hartford Times, beginning in the early 1960s. He began his work life as a sailor in the U.S. Coast Guard. He was a cook aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Yakutat, aka "The Yak," based in New Bedford, Mass. He was discharged from this service as a "Coastie" in 1959.

When the Hartford Times folded in 1976 he applied to the circulation department of the Hartford Courant and he's been there ever since. However, while at the Courant he noticed an ad for drivers here at Favarh. It wasn't that he felt a connection to the people we serve with intellectual and developmental disabilities then. It was just a job, a way to make extra money... However, that connection has grown strong over time.

"I never had any experience with people with intellectual disabilities until I came here," Bruce said. "But I've seen a lot of the clients grow up and I've seen some pass away."

One of his favorite clients, he said, is Wendy. "She stands out. She and I have been together a long time. I remember her in her 30s and now she's in her 50s."

The vans used for transporting the people we serve were very different than the ones we currently lease from Rideshare, Bruce noted.

"They were old vans — clunkers with no air conditioning. The drivers and clients would go crazy in the summer," he said. "We never had a 'drivers' room' until now. We have one in the new building across the street and it's beautiful."

Married for 36 years, he said that he has had "a very colorful life"

Bruce described himself as a "workaholic" who likely won't retire until he is 85 or 86 years old. (Sept. 19, 2019)