

## Virtual Reality to Virtual Vitality



VR Gaming and Golden Years News aren't two names you would imagine seeing together. VR Gaming in Ponte Vedra is a hot spot for all things VR, acting as an arcade for users to come in, buy allotted time, and enjoy themselves. From individuals to parties, Barry Pakenham has provided kids, teens, and young adults with terrific VR experiences. So what does Golden Years News have to do with that? And what exactly is Virtual Reality?

Virtual Reality provides the unique experience of immersing a user into a completely 360-degree space. Taking the individual, suited with VR goggles, to places of this world and out of it. While words do not truly justify what you feel during VR, consider this: As a child, many of us are inspired by our imagination. That isn't to say that nowadays it is gone but the grasp, emotions, and fun we had isn't quite the same. What we used to imagine, can now be materialized before our eyes. Not only that, with the use of an intuitive controller, someone can

manipulate what would otherwise be a dream-like fantasy.

At Golden Years News we are not only limited to a magazine. We have a strong, growing online fan base and want to provide quality content to our readers on numerous platforms. With the senior community being close to us, we want to provide just as we say, news and views about the best 50 years...and beyond. A continued issue we see in the senior community is the lack of mobility and, worst of all, Alzheimer's/Dementia. That is why we are excited to report, VR Gaming bringing VR to the senior community!

While in the early stages, scientists are beginning to see overwhelmingly positive effects of VR on seniors, specifically their memory. By using a method called reminiscent therapy, patients with Alzheimer's/Dementia are able to recall on memories "locked" within them. These seniors are very much "in the moment", and with something as revolutionary as virtual reality transporting them to the home they grew up in, pilot a plane they used to fly, or even exploring the depths of the sea; there are visible signs of the impact it has on bringing them back to their loved ones.

Apart from the medical use, which continues to be studied, seniors are finding much joy in the experience provided. We had the opportunity to cover the event as VR Gaming set up at Arbor Terrace Ponte Vedra and had a truly amazing time. The first resident to try it, David, who was more mobile and known for cracking jokes, was also placed on a nature trail. After walking around in the game for a bit, he found himself near a friendly bear. All the staff and residents began laughing and smiling, having a great time.

One resident, Rose, was placed onto a similar nature trail, and while enjoying the freedom of exploring, Barry made it rain within the game, which made her immediately lift her hand to feel it. As she smiled she said, this is magnificent.

Jennifer McCormick, the engagement director, brought in Jerry, who is wheelchair-bound and not very responsive. After his experience with VR, he was smiling from ear to ear and even cried from how happy he was.



Rose Reaching to Feel The Rain

Virtual Reality isn't a cure, but from the studies and our own experiences, appears to be opening up a new path for seniors that would have been overlooked. We are proud of VR Gaming for stepping up and offering this service to seniors. If you or a facility you know may be interested in providing a unique, one of a kind experience please don't hesitate to reach out to Barry at VR Gaming to schedule a session for your residents! **Call (904) 679-5766 or go to [www.vrpontevedra.com](http://www.vrpontevedra.com)**