

## Faces of United Way of Pasco County

Peggy, 88, moved to Pasco County from Connecticut 36 years ago.

Peggy participated in Independent Living Skills training at the Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind, a recipient of United Way of Pasco County funding.

"I remember that for quite a while I had some difficulties with seeing things" Peggy said. "At first I did not realize the seriousness of my problem thinking that the blurriness I experienced, and the ink and color spots that I saw were normal occurrences." Peggy was diagnosed with glaucoma about five years ago. Soon after she was diagnosed with age-related macular degeneration.



**1 Peggy (right) hugs Rose, another LVIB client**

Peggy's husband passed away about six years ago, so Peggy had to fend for herself and also deal with her vision loss. "Giving up my driver's license was the hardest thing" she admits. She thought this meant giving up her independence. She lived alone for about a year but her vision continued to deteriorate so she was forced to move in with her granddaughter, through whom she had learned about the Lighthouse.

At the Lighthouse, Peggy found the Independent Living course to be very helpful. It gave her the skills she needed to do things independently and safely in her home. She also got involved with the mobility course which helped her get around to do things like grocery shopping and to participate in other programs offered at the Lighthouse and in the community. She reports that she especially enjoys the social aspects which allowed her to meet new people and share stories with others that are visually impaired. In addition to learning new skills, Peggy met her best friend, Rose at the Lighthouse. Through the classes she gained the confidence that enabled her to move out of her granddaughter's home into her own apartment. "Everything that the Lighthouse offers helps" exclaimed Peggy.

The Lighthouse clients, staff, volunteers and board of directors wish to thank the United Way of Pasco County and all who support United Way, because indeed lives are changed through the Lighthouse Independent Living Program, which is made possible by the United Way of Pasco County.

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