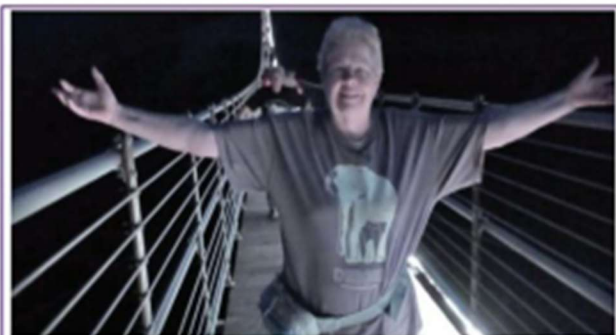


Fifty Forward 1st!



Anne McKinney (above) on the Gatlinburg SkyBridge

FiftyForward celebrates **FiftyForward Firsts** and encourages members to step out of their comfort zone to try new things, take a new class, try new foods, or learn a new skill. We offer hundreds of classes and programs throughout the year so you can embrace your second chapter.

Walking across the Gatlinburg SkyBridge

FiftyForward Madison member **Anne McKinney** tried something new. Her three "bucket list" items included ziplining and white water rafting which she's already done. In October, while visiting East Tennessee, she walked across the Gatlinburg SkyBridge, completing her third bucket list item. Located at the top of the SkyLift, the Gatlinburg SkyBridge is the longest pedestrian suspension bridge in North America and offers an exhilarating experience. Spanning 680 feet across a deep valley in a single span, SkyBridge is 140 feet high at its midpoint with glass-floor panels in the middle of the span. Guest can walk at their own pace to take in the spectacular setting and panoramic views of the smokies.

Buying a house at 71 years old!

Patricia Ayres, or "Pat" as she likes to be called, was reading the September issue of *Forward Focus* when she saw an ad by Brandy Heath, one of the many advertisers in the paper. Heath is a realtor with EXIT Realty Tristar who specializes in helping seniors with downsizing, home sales, and the entire move process. At the time, Ayres was living in a home owned by her church. The home had structural issues and she knew it was time to start looking for a new

place to live, so she decided to give Heath a call.

The two met for coffee and chatted about Ayres's living situation, what she was looking for in her next residence, budget, and the typical things discussed when contemplating a move. The two discussed buying or renting possibilities.

Then Heath asked if she ever considered buying a home? Ayres said she has never owned a home but "had dreamed of owning a home since her 20s," but now felt she was "too old" to buy a home. Heath shared stories of helping people in their 80s and 90s downsize and purchase smaller homes and condos so her young age of 71 was definitely not too old to make the purchase. The two discussed the pros and cons of homeownership versus renting, including the fact that when you own a home, your monthly mortgage is predictable, and you don't have to worry about a landlord raising the rent. That makes a big difference for those on a budget or fixed income. Heath crunched some numbers and Ayres agreed to see what was out there in her budget to both buy or rent.

The next day, Heath emailed Ayres several homes for sale in her area that met her criteria and some information on apartments in her budget. Ayres decided to look at some of the houses and fell in love with one particular house! She was so nervous and scared, but also excited. Ayres said the experience was "challenging and nerve-wracking" because of all the paperwork, but "Brandy walked me through every step." Ayres is now a proud first-time homeowner. ▶▶



(L-R) First-time homeowner Pat Ayres and Realtor Brandy Heath

Downsizing?

Let's Make It Easy!

- Thinking of moving but not sure where to start?
- Ready to sell your home for something more manageable?
- Want to know more about housing options?
- Ready for someone to help you through the entire downsizing process?
- Want an experienced Realtor who specializes in helping seniors find solutions?

If you said **YES** to any of these ... Give me a call, I help with it all! I'm your **ONE STOP RESOURCE** for anything related to downsizing and moving.



Brandy Heath

REALTOR®, Registered Nurse,
Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES®)

Cell: (615) 522-3388
Office: (931) 548-2300
Email: brandy@SeniorHomeSeller.com
www.SeniorHomeSeller.com

License #346043



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