

## *Celebrating Twenty Years: Soda Fountain and F.O.P. Lodge #52*

Social. Ever spend any time thinking about what social means to you? How about laughter, chitchat, smiles, and belonging. To our long-term care residents at Douglas County Health Center it means much the same: talking with friends and fellow residents; mixing and mingling; enjoying the company of others; and spending time relaxed with employees. Coincidentally, the word sits right there in the name of a fun event, an ice cream social.

Several years ago, our foundation was lucky enough to partner with the health center's Security Officers Union F.O.P. Lodge #52 to create a dedicated area in Cavanaugh Care Center's Alzheimer's and dementia neighborhood for the construction of a soda fountain/ice cream bar. F.O.P. Lodge #52 donated \$2,000.00 towards the purchase of needed equipment including a freezer, cabinets, and dishware and it was their generous gift that brought this project to life. Neighborhood nurse managers and employees use this soda fountain/ice cream bar as a space for resident-focused social events, such as ice cream socials, and these events bring a sense of excitement and difference to all who attend. In fact sociability is more than simply a happy occurrence. A recent study summary shows benefits of social relationships include reduced risk of cardiovascular problems and reduced risk of Alzheimer's and depression.

Think about your own experiences. When you've spent time with friends or family, when you've engaged with coworkers whose generosity has touched your life, it makes you feel valued and respected. That's what F.O.P. Lodge #52 helped the foundation do: Value our residents, respect our residents, and create a place for well-being and fun.