

MUSH REGISTER

Ron

We studied together at Stanford. Our class' fiftieth reunion is round the corner.

Joyce

As you age, your marriage can only get better. You have done all the quarrelling. The children have left to have their own families. As work no longer has a tyrannical grip on you, there is no need to find quality time for your spouse. You are there for each other all the time. As a couple, you also have enough time for others.

Ron

Joyce has been involved with many charities. Through her, I also got involved. Becky Douglas' Rising Star Outreach Garden programme (Thottanaval village, Uthiramerur taluk) helps people with leprosy and provides education and shelter to their children. We were giving it money. We also wanted to give our time. So, last

year we came to Uthiramerur. Ever since, we have been living in the boys' hostel.

Joyce

Both of us are 71. The kids here were surprised that someone could be so old and still working.

Ron

As Americans, we thought we had a few things to teach these villagers. Instead, we have learnt valuable lessons from them.

Joyce

Sometimes, we miss our four children and eighteen grandchildren (who live in the U.S.). We have been cut off from our familiar world. There are no restaurants. No theatres. No radio. No wireless Internet. Travelling along bumpy roads does our ageing bones no good. Having said all that, we can't think of a better way of spending our time. Because, in the end, the little kids make it all worth it.

As told to PRINCE FREDERICK

