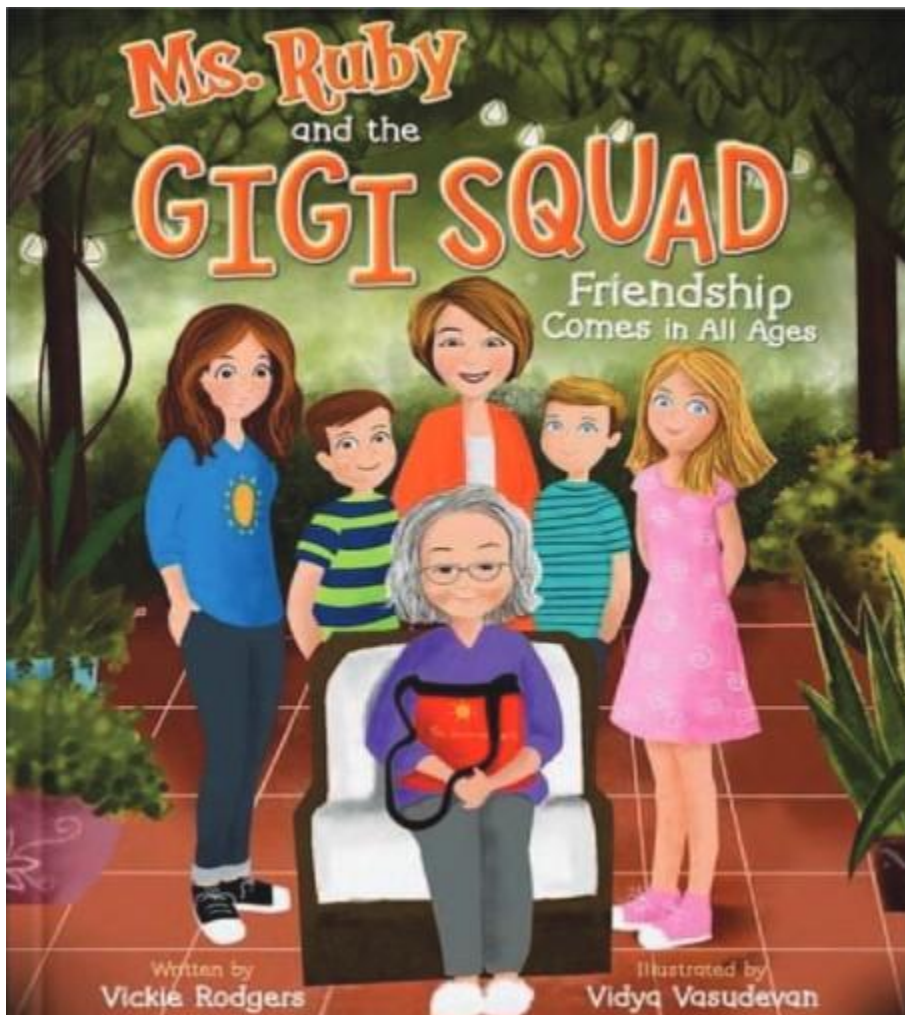


# **An Advocate For The Elderly: Retired Nurse Publishes Book Encouraging Children To Connect With An Older Generation**

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## **An Advocate For The Elderly: Retired Nurse Publishes Book Encouraging Children To Connect With An Older Generation**

By Tara L. Cale

Vickie Rodgers recently retired from a 32-year nursing career (the last chapter in Nursing Education at a local community college). Throughout her career, she witnessed firsthand the high number of care center residents that receive no visitors and the loneliness these wonderful elderly citizens endure.

Several years ago, Vickie met an amazing, now 93-year old, resident in a local long-term care center - Ms. Ruby. Ms. Ruby is a former World War II United States Cadet Nurse. In fact, she was the first Cadet Nurse in the nation to be honored by a trip to Washington D.C. with the Greater St. Louis Honor Flight. Vickie and Ms. Ruby became the best of friends. Despite her accolades, Ms. Ruby had no children or family in the area, so Vickie began bringing her own grandchildren to visit with her. Vickie watched as the children brought joy and sunshine to Ms. Ruby and in turn, Ms. Ruby showed the children unconditional love. The intergenerational bond and friendship that formed was very heartwarming and Vickie looked for a book that would motivate other children to visit lonely older adults. Her search was unsuccessful and it inspired Vickie to write the book that she wished she could have found.

*Ms. Ruby and The Gigi Squad: Friendship Comes in All Ages* is a true story of the fun days her grandchildren planned and brought to Ms. Ruby at the care center. Birthday parties, tea parties, Halloween parades, decorating her room for the holidays, and creating her a hand-stamped necklace that dubbed her their “bonus grandma.” Vickie’s grandchildren lifted the spirits of Ms. Ruby and added precious quality to her life. In turn, the children gained an understanding and immense respect for a different generation and learned that sharing time, love, and compassion with an older adult is not only fun and rewarding, but educational. The intergenerational friendship between Ms. Ruby and the kids is inspirational.

Children need to understand that they have a magical power to make difference and bring happiness to an older generation. That is the heart of Vickie’s book. *Ms. Ruby and the Gigi Squad - Friendship Comes in All Ages* launches on Amazon on November 8th, and Vickie has several upcoming book signings scheduled in the area.

Bonar Boutique, East Alton Saturday, Nov 13: 2-4 pm

Charlie Belle Shop Edwardsville Saturday, Nov 20: 10:30 -3

The Grapevine, Alton Saturday, Nov 27: 11-1

Books a Million Edwardsville Saturday, Dec 4: 2-4

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