

# The Stellar Care Chronicle

Stellar Care \* 4518 54<sup>th</sup> Street \* San Diego, CA 92115 \* p 619-287-2920 \* f 619-286-8534



## Celebrating December

**National Tie Month**

**Eat a Red Apple Day**

*December 1*

**Pearl Harbor  
Remembrance Day**

*December 7*

**Cocoa Day**

*December 13*

**Egg Nog Day**

*December 24*

**Christmas Day**

*December 25*

**Linda Cho**

*Executive Director*

**Barbara Moore**

*Business Director*

**Annelie Damasco**

*Assisted Living Director*

**Susan O'Shaughnessy**

*Marketing Director*

**Rachel Robinson**

*Activities Director*

**Chris Cho**

*Building & Maintenance Director*

**Chris Moore**

*Culinary Services &  
Laundry Director*

## Miscellaneous Announcements

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\*\* A reminder to families, we have a policy of no tips or gifts for individual staff members who work here at Stellar Care. We do however have an employee fund. Donations are collected throughout the year and distributed to all staff during the holiday season. **If you would like to make a contribution to the employee fund, you can contact Barbara in the business office.**

\*\* Flu season is here! For your well-being and that of our residents, please make sure you are not sick when you are visiting Stellar Care.

\*\* Because we want to ensure proper nutrition, please be mindful of the amount of sweets (including unhealthy amounts of treats being sent and left in residents' rooms. Abundance of candies and sweets discourages participating in regular dining (proper nutrition). Thank you for your assistance and understanding.

\*\* If you would like to see your loved one featured in an upcoming newsletter, forward their story to Brandon Cho.



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[Facebook.com/stellarcare](https://www.facebook.com/stellarcare)

## December Birthdays

If you were born between December 1–21, you are Sagittarius, the Archer. Archers are optimistic, energetic, generous, and honest. They enjoy exploration and keep an open mind during new encounters. Those born between December 22–31 are Capricorns, the Goat. Capricorns are the most stable and serious signs of the zodiac. Reliable, resourceful, and determined, they make excellent leaders and managers.

Jeanne C. ....	Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup>
Rita G. ....	Dec. 5 <sup>th</sup>
Bernice K. ....	Dec. 6 <sup>th</sup>
Gene W. ....	Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup>
Mary S. ....	Dec. 12 <sup>th</sup>
Corinne M. ....	Dec. 13 <sup>th</sup>
Betsy A. ....	Dec. 15 <sup>th</sup>
Kathleen M. ....	Dec. 28 <sup>th</sup>
Lois S. ....	Dec. 29 <sup>th</sup>
Bessie Mae G. ....	Dec. 31 <sup>st</sup>



I am a child of the 1950's, and my first Christmas memories are treasures to me. After being carried up three flights of stairs to our Brooklyn apartment, the much too large, live tree took hours for my parents (who were in their twenties) to decorate. The lights were big, in primary colors and some of the paint had rubbed off some of the bulbs, so they were banished to the back of the tree. The ornaments went next. They were made by the company "Shiny-Brite" and all glass, many hand decorated. Lastly, a true art form, the ever messy tinsel was added as the finishing touch. With the little Manger scene under the aromatic pine branches, I knew it was the most beautiful tree in all of New York. Looking back at some of my favorite gifts I remember my Shirley Temple doll by Ideal, my Kodak Brownie camera with bulbs we licked before putting in the silver cone, and a Mickey Mouse clubhouse made out of cardboard. Mass was said in Latin and I learned the dreidel song in school. My little friends and I learned carols, ate ribbon candy, and watched "I Love Lucy", Bob Hope and Perry Como on our black and white console television that received three stations. Macy's had the best decorated windows and we marveled at the displays before ice skating at Rockefeller Center. Extended family lived nearby, so I was surrounded by my two grandmothers, aunts, uncles and cousins. The 8mm home movie camera, with lights that could cause eye damage, was always ready to document every family moment.

Memories and Traditions; the stuff of which our family holidays are made. The good ole days. How times have changed, or have they? Children still marvel at the sight of the beautifully decorated tree. Yes, it comes out of a box, already assembled with fiber optic lights and shatter proof ornaments, but thank heaven, America is over its love affair with tinsel! The toys have changed, but we still love watching the faces of happy recipients as they open their presents. Television is still front and center and now we can watch hundreds of channels in high definition and even find classic reruns of "I Love Lucy." "30 Rock" is now an Emmy-winning show and Macy's still has the best decorated windows. The home movie camera was just a precursor to our phone camera, which still tortures unsuspecting family members as we catch that historical moment, which can be posted in seconds for the world to see, and just as easily deleted. We have also perfected the "selfie" which when added to holiday scenes can be quite amusing.

My mother is now 83. My father, grandparents, aunts and uncles have passed away. Today I am the sage of my family, the storyteller. My adult children have their own holiday memories they are placing in their hearts. And so it is for all of you, our Stellar Care families. Each of you will honor your loved one as you create new memories and cherish those gone by. Collwood Terrace staff will have delighted in decorating trees, wreaths, and instigating surprises and festivities. Good food, singing and laughter will accompany your visits. Children will remember these visits and this holiday by the genuine love in your hearts as you visit. This is a joyous season, a holy season, a time of Family.

Enjoy your time together. As Staff, we are dedicated to giving you and your loved one a blessed holiday season, because what really matters, never changes.

Blessings,  
Susan O'Shaughnessy

## VETERANS & Friends



### Dress Rehearsal of *Giselle*



## Halloween is not just for kids



We're hosting a... **Christmas Toy Drive**

Drop off a **new, unwrapped toy** at our location

Benefitting homeless kids at Solutions for Change

[solutionsforchange.org](http://solutionsforchange.org)

### RESIDENT RAVE: Robert Mazalewski

One of our most interesting residents here at Stellar Care is easily spotted by his well-groomed mustache and Jimmy Buffett shirts. Robert, or "Bob" as he likes to be called, has an infectious smile that he is always eager to share, and can carry on conversations on topics ranging the parallels of Roman Polanski's Chinatown with William Mulholland's life to the history of politics in East Africa, and enough side tangential subjects to make one's head spin. He is easily one of our most well-read and informed community members, whose life has led to the fascinating and eclectic wealth of knowledge he holds.

Bob grew up a San Diego native, as the only child of parents running a small horticulture business in La Mesa. As such, he spent much of his time helping out at any one of their three locations, acquiring knowledge and skills that would be applied for a lifetime. After graduating high school Bob studied briefly at UCSD where he pursued his passion in mathematics and physics. He soon found, however, that his true talent lay in his roots, and he decided to transfer to UC Davis to complete his bachelor's degree in Botany. He went on to get his Master's degree in Botany as well, and was working on finishing his doctorate degree when he had to choose between starting a family or continuing his education. He decided on the latter, and postponed his academic pursuits to move back to San Diego to get married in 1978. Bob did put his education to good use, and kept busy running the family business while simultaneously teaching as an adjunct professor at Cuyamaca College and raising his two boys. Despite being busy as a business owner, teacher, and family man, he stayed heavily involved in the academic horticulture community, and served as president of an international plant group in 1990. After finishing his term, he stayed involved with the board of directors, and thus was plugged into all of the major industrial agriculture events of the past half century. At one point in his career, he was featured on television when SDSU was working with the zoo and the United Nations in Honduras to help the Miskito Indians, during which he taught the natives how to grow orchids (all in Spanish, of course).

In 2007, Bob moved on to the next part of his life, selling his family business and moving up to UC Davis to work as a grant manager of a \$3 million grant from the State Water Boards. Far from being a calm, stable change, Bob used the flexible hours of his position to embrace new opportunities. Ever the adventurer, Bob was once briefly involved with a Ugandan company via the Peace Corps, and served as an environmental consultant in the cleaning up of an old copper mine.

### EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: Bryan Finnigan

To wrap up the fifteenth year of this no-longer-so-new millennium, we decided to spotlight a true renaissance man on our staff.

Bryan spent his childhood on the set of the tonight show, keeping his father company as he wrote for the Johnny Carson show. Surrounded by the musical, comedic, and theatrical talents of the nation, it was no surprise that Bryan fell in love with the arts. Fortunately, he was also talented enough to turn his passions into a mind boggling assortment of careers.

Bryan moved down to San Diego four years ago with his wife and two children to pursue opportunities as a creative writer for both television and radio. On top of working on shows such as The Big Bang Theory and It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, he has also kept himself busy in theater, therapy, and the kitchen. Specifically, Bryan ran a non-profit theater company for adults with developmental disabilities, became an award winning playwright, stays involved with behavioral therapy for at risk teens, is an actor, a teacher of the arts, and most recently, a returned pastry chef.

After 10 years of being far too busy, Bryan decided to once again indulge his passion for baking and joined Stellar Care as our pâtissier. The effect was immediate, with a noticeable increase in blissful smiles at the dinner table (and loosened belts after meals). Now with the holidays coming up, he is going to be as busy as ever, and we can't wait to see what he will be baking up for our residents. Make sure to stop by the kitchen and say hi on your next visit; chances are he will have a few extra sugary bites to share.

... continued Robert Mazalewski

As an expert in the geopolitics of water reclamation, irrigation, and pollution, Bob has decided to put his insight to good use, and is currently writing a book on the history of horticulture in San Diego from World War II to the present. While this may sound dry, his discussions will cover subjects ranging from the policies that could have mitigated the effects of the current drought in Southern California, to the politics behind the "Toilet to Tap" drive that halted the progress of water reclamation plants, leading to a now \$140million tab to expand these plants to their originally designed scope. These are just among a few of the headlines for topics he loves to discuss and is working on putting into his book, a project that we are proud to support and cannot wait to see finished.