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STELLAR CARE

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April 2015

The Stellar Care Chronicle

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Celebrating April

Stress Awareness Month
Jazz Appreciation Month

Passover
April 4

Easter
April 5

International Moment of Laughter Day
April 14

Earth Day
April 22

Linda Cho
Executive Director

Barbara Moore
Business Director

Annelie Damasco
Assisted Living Director

Susan O'Shaughnessy
Marketing Director

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Activities Director

Chris Cho
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Chris Moore
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"MY LIFE, AS I SEE IT." Dana Hunton

"Wait in the library while I get my binder..."

Dana C. Hunton is a retired U.S. Military Captain and when he tells you to do something I would suggest doing it. Retirement may have taken a little bite out of his bark but Mr. Hunton still carries himself with authority, a posture of respect sculpted from 30 years of military service. Years he proudly carries around with him in story and mementos.

I was waiting patiently (as ordered) in the library when Mr. Hunton appeared. He marched right up to me and presented a heavy blue binder filled with numerous awards and accolades he had earned during his time in the military. From letters of commendation to notes of appreciation from President George W. Bush each page in this massive collection of accomplishments represents a lifetime of hard work and perseverance.

"As soon as I turned 18 I joined the Army. This would have been in 1950. The Korean War was over by that time so I didn't see any fighting – thank goodness. I did a 3 year tour over in Germany and was sent home. Once I was back in the States I realized that there was nothing for me here so I enlisted again and knew I was going to stay in the military."

Out of all the accomplishments Mr. Hunton has attained throughout his life it's a degree in business from the University of Maryland that holds a special place for him. The boy from Fort Fairfield Maine who struggled in school and "quit the eighth grade" went on to meet a personal challenge; attaining a higher education.

"The school I was in wasn't for me. I couldn't focus for some reason. It was in Germany that I found out that the military would provide me with an education. Wherever in the world I was going to be stationed I could take classes through the Army. So I did. All my extra time was spent studying until I got a college degree. Once I got in there I got ambitious and couldn't stop."

And the ambition and focus wasn't just limited to book studies. His leadership skills were rewarded during a tour in Vietnam where he was awarded the Bronze Star as well as the Cross of Gallantry for "...heroism in the face of enemy fire."

"We were pumping sand out of the water to build a landing strip when we were attacked. I had the situation under control quickly and we saved a barge worth 4 million dollars. I didn't lose a single man during that fight. I'm no hero, but it's nice to get the awards."

Continued inside...

Miscellaneous Announcements

** Family Support Group meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month. Families are invited to join us in the Library on the first floor.

** Do you have a family member, friend, or neighbor who would like to receive this newsletter? Please leave a note or email Barbara (barbaram@stellarcared.com) with their name and address.

April Birthdays

In astrology, those born between the 1st and the 20th of April are Aries, the Ram. Rams are adventurous go-getters and full of enthusiasm, charm, and energy. They make dynamic pioneers and adventurers, and are undeterred when the going gets rough.

Those born from the 20th to the 31st in April have the star sign of the Bull of Taurus. Bulls show steady, dogged persistence in achieving their goals. Once goals are reached, they enjoy being rewarded—especially with beauty and peace at home.

- Jerry J. April 5th
- David D. April 9th
- Lillian V. April 13th
- Jerome S. April 14th
- Norma T. April 15th
- Alice C. April 15th
- Joe F. April 16th
- Vonda R. April 19th
- Shirley S. April 20th



WE ARE GRATEFUL...

Thank you, Terri Pocock, for volunteering your time to go on outings with our community.

Many thanks for the wonderful art supplies donated to the Activities Department by Ann Burgess

On March 10th, Roberta Flynn and I went to a screening of “Glen Campbell...I’ll Be Me.” This is a documentary about one of the most famous country singers of our lifetime after his diagnosis of Alzheimer’s in 2011. Unlike other families of nationally recognized celebrities, Glen and his family decided to go public with his fight against Alzheimer’s, sharing private and public footage over 425 days in 2013/2014. Based around a “Goodbye Tour” that started out as a three-week engagement, the film covers what turns into a 151 show nationwide tour, and all that happens to this brave family as they race the clock against a war they will not win.

Why would they do this you may wonder? Kim Campbell, Glen’s wife answers, “Together with Glen, our family is invested in changing the national conversation around Alzheimer’s disease. Glen has chosen to intimately share our experience with Alzheimer’s with the world so that we can raise awareness about the disease and make a difference both in the search for a cure and in supporting families and caregivers of the diagnosed.”

I was moved by the experience of this film. I learned new information and was reminded of ideas that needed to come to the forefront again.

Glen Campbell was born in 1936; that means he was diagnosed when he was 74. He has entertained us since the 1960’s and although he gets lost in his home, shadows his wife and struggles to find words for simple conversations, the magic of his music allows him to remember the words of his songs and the chords of his guitar during his concerts (up until the end of the tour). My mind was amazed and my heart hurt to witness the ravages of this disease on the big screen.

Glen has sold millions of records, won hundreds of awards and was recognized by his peers with the 2012 Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, yet he is more than the public person. He is a husband, father, friend, relative, neighbor. He is a man who needs to be bathed, dressed, fed and directed. He can remember the words to “Gentle on My Mind,” but not his children’s names or birthdays. His family is losing their father and husband.

The Campbells are us. Ultimately, there are no differences.

Kim Campbell and her daughter went before Congress and spoke about the need for more funding for Alzheimer’s research. Support through programs and services for caregivers, advocacy at the state and federal level and research to find a cure are all priorities.

Glen has written one more song, “I’m Not Gonna Miss You.” He sings, “You’re the last person I will love, You’re the last face I will recall, And best of all, I’m not gonna miss you.”

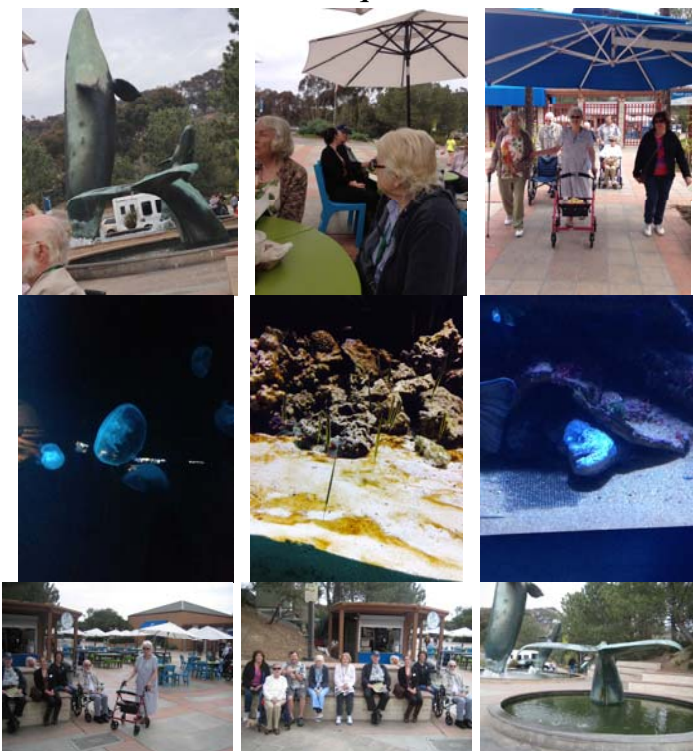
But as family members, we miss them as they slowly slip away. And we miss you, our Rhinestone Cowboy.

Susan O’Shaughnessy

Artist’s Corner



Birch Aquarium



Song and Dance



Mr. Hunton

...Continued from front page

I spent about an hour going over Mr. Hunton's binder and noticed throughout his collection were reminders of a part of his life that we hadn't yet talked about, his wife Mickie. A picture and degree from beauty school were the only windows I had into the life of his partner of many years.

“It's been about a year since she died. I'm not sure. I don't think about the date, it's too hard. She was the only one I truly loved.... memories are fun..if they're good ones. These are all memories I'm proud of.”

At this point we both agreed that the allergies were exceptionally strong this year and was causing our eyes to water. Much like someone who has seen battle, some stories tell themselves if you listen close enough to the silence.

After a long career in the Army Mr. Hunton decided it was time to settle down in the states. But that didn't keep him away from the military life. He continued to support the armed forces and worked out of San Diego for the Navy as a civilian where he quickly worked his way up to GS10, one of the highest ranks a civilian can achieve in the Navy.

“The Government has been really good to me. It gave me a lot of opportunities. Of course I had to work my butt off for what I've accomplished but the opportunity was there. I would recommend the military for anyone who wants to get ahead. But you've got to do it yourself.”

The spine on Mr. Hunton's binder was worn. Tattered from frequently opening up the past for a visit. He holds it close like a close friend. A friend that has been with him through it all. That's why I was surprised and honored when he suddenly handed it over to me.

“Here, take it if you want to. I've never let anyone take it before. Take your time and look it over. Just bring it back later.”

And when Dana C. Hunton tells you to do something....you do it.



Interviewed and Written by
Bryan Finnigan

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jocelene Ramirez

If you ever come to visit Stellar Care during the wee hours of the night, chances are you will be greeted by our nighttime supervisor, Jocelene. She is one of our strongest staff members, and we trust her with the care of our residents during the night for good reason!

Born in the Philippines, Jocelene moved to San Diego in 1997 with her parents and two brothers just after finishing high school. Once in the states, she worked for a sister company of Boeing for two years, and after the company closed down, went back to the Philippines to attend a nursing program, bouncing back and forth across the Pacific during her schooling to keep her visa current. She received her Bachelor of Science in nursing in 2007, and shortly after graduating, returned permanently to San Diego.

After her return, Jocelene worked part time at Seafood City while adjusting her studies to accommodate the slightly different curriculum covered in American RN programs. To stay busy, she joined Stellar Care in 2011, and has been working our NOC shift ever since, to give herself flexibility in the daytime for her studies.

When not busy at work for Stellar Care, or working part time as a private caregiver, or with her textbooks, Jocelene enjoys cooking (especially pastas) and shopping for her son. Once she passes her Nursing Board Exam, Jocelene plans on applying her skills to the ER, pediatrics, or to acute care with the elderly. We were lucky to have such a skilled staff member on board, and are thrilled with her continued leadership and excellent care of our residents.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

Join Stellar Care at Collwood as our
San Diego Padres take on
the St. Louis Cardinals



Sunday, Aug. 23rd at 1:10pm

\$25.00/ticket (\$37.50 value)