

STELLAR CARE

4518 54<sup>th</sup> Street  
 San Diego, CA 92115  
 License # 374603625

Postage  
 Information

The  
**STELLAR CARE Chronicle**

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



**RESIDENT RAVE**

Jean Valbracht

Jean is a vibrant light in the community, with a love of sweets and classical music. You can often find her quietly enjoying activities or taking a stroll around the building, ever watchful and thoughtful.

Jean was born to a Navy father and a stay at home mom in Charleston, South Carolina. She was an only child, and perpetually shy. She was also a curious soul, always questioning the way things worked. She especially loved animals, and made good friends with one of the many chickens her grandmother owned and raised on their property. One day, she came to find that her grandma had chopped the head off of her good friend and cooked the chicken up for lunch. Jean never ate chicken again.

After high school, Jean went to the University of San Diego where she earned a degree in Chemistry. She soon worked at a research lab under a German scientist who studied osteo-arthritis. Together, they focused mainly on arthritis of the knee joint, and Jean worked with her boss at Scripps Research for thirty years. As Jean's friends would say, her work ethic and dedication to her research was unquestionable, but was outshined by her sense of humor and the loyalty and love she gave to her friends and family.

Jean went through some hard times in her adult life. She met her husband Ed when she was 40, and had 10 happy years married to him before lung cancer took him away from her. Her parents both developed dementia and she moved them to San Diego so she could take care of them, placing them in separate communities to match their needs. Through all the difficulties, Jean again focused on work and friends, and was able to lean on her friend Fiona, who became her travel buddy. With her friend's encouragement, Jean was able to push her comfort zone and began to go on more and more adventures. Prior to meeting Fiona, Jean had never left the country, but once the duo got to traveling, the travel bug bit Jean hard. From Africa to Europe, Jean and Fiona opened their minds to the world. Whenever they had a chance, they enjoyed the arts, catching opera shows in Paris, or ballet performances in London. Jean loved Egypt and most of Europe, but had a special place in her heart for Scotland and London. Through it all, Jean was ever the curious person, and was busy working on her research whenever she was not traveling. Toward the latter part of her career, Jean also put more time into her appreciation for animals. She became a very keen ornithologist, and could name everything about every bird she saw when walking around with her friends.

Despite loving animals, Jean had never owned pets or had been on a horse. With Fiona's prodding, however, Jean went on her first horseback ride during a trip to the Rocky Mountains at nearly 70 years old! Shortly after turning 70, Jean also took another big step and got her first pet, a cat. As is typical of Jean's sense of humor, Jean named her cat Chairman Meow, and while he does not stay with her at Stellar Care, he has since found a good home with her friend and she still goes to visit him on occasion. We are thrilled to have Jean in our community!

**Celebrating March**

**Women's History Month**

**Write a Letter of Appreciation  
 Week**  
 March 1-7

**Iditarod Begins**  
 March 4

**As Young as You Feel Day**  
 March 22

**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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\*\* 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.



**SAVE A TREE! GO GREEN!**

Email [barbaram@stellarcared.com](mailto:barbaram@stellarcared.com) to have this newsletter and/or monthly invoice emailed to you.

\*\* Remember to check your family members' mail on your next visit.

\*\* 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](mailto:barbaram@stellarcared.com)) with their name and address.

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**March Birthdays**

In astrology, those born between March 1-20 are Pisces. Fish are compassionate, gentle, intuitive, and artistic. Known for their wisdom, Pisces are not judgmental and are very forgiving. They never hesitate to put others' needs before their own.

Those born between March 21-31 are Rams of Aries. As the first sign of the zodiac, Aries are energetic and assertive initiators. With bravery, zeal, and speed, they jump head first into life, confident that they can navigate any challenges.

Herbert P .....	Mar. 1st
Florence C .....	Mar. 2nd
Sylvia R .....	Mar. 3rd
Teresa O .....	Mar. 5th
Edwin J .....	Mar. 10th
Patricia B .....	Mar. 10th
Jean V .....	Mar. 12th
Edward B .....	Mar. 13th
Terry R .....	Mar. 17th
Martha R .....	Mar. 22nd
Barbara D .....	Mar. 24th
Rose Marie E .....	Mar. 24th





**On March 1, 2008**, two sisters and their husbands were handed the keys to a four story building at 4518 54<sup>th</sup> Street, and Stellar Care was born. With less than fifty residents and a staff of twenty-three, Linda and Chris Cho, and Barbara and Chris Moore, approached their new business venture with a commitment and promise to provide a safe home, quality care and opportunities for each resident to experience purpose in each day. The staff were introduced to an environment of transparency, appreciation and cooperation. Families discovered the four executive owners were forever on-site, personally handling any and all daunting challenges and that they were guaranteed open and honest communication. Everyone knew that in every moment, in each interaction, our sole purpose for being part of the Stellar Team was to treat each resident with Dignity, Always.

Nine years later, and I assure you, we remain committed to our Stellar Care Core Values. As in any family, with the years come stories of laughter, joy, growth, success and surprises. We've shared experiences with staff and family members of marriages, births, graduations, new jobs and travel adventures. We've also carried in our hearts those other life experiences which you share as a family, that are less sweet but necessary, and just as important to the story of our lives.

With each new family we meet and who introduces us to our next Resident, we become better at what we do because no two people are ever quite the same. Even with memory-care, the personality and life experiences of each Resident, presents us with an opportunity to assist an individual, unique and special, and the way we approach him reflects that understanding.

In visiting this nine year journey, I asked the Directors to share a thought on what they had learned about life from either knowing residents, families or dementia. I was moved by the responses. "The only constant in the dementia world is change. We can't reason, argue or take it personally but we can be flexible, reassuring and cheerful." "This journey is as much about the family members as the Loved One." "There is only gray; black and white does not exist here."

"Working with the Residents has taught me how to be a more patient person. I have also learned laughter and love go a long way, no matter what we suffer in life. We all want to feel love, so if I can bring a little sunshine to a Resident or family member, I feel like I've accomplished something."

"From someone very close to me with Alzheimer's, I have learned acceptance and change. Live a meaningful life and make each day count. Above all, Caregiving is about Dignity."

One Director gives us actual quotes which have stayed etched in memory and heart: "I want to be the best patient/resident." (Resident). "Make sure you acquire long term care insurance." (family member). "Treat each other kindly." (Grandpa).

"The most important thing, is the kindness with which we deal with difficulties. Through it all, love and kindness is able to reach places where medication cannot. We, as caregivers, are supported by kind words, gestures and the touch of those we care for, and by their loved ones who are entrusting us with the care."

**Happy Anniversary, Stellar Care!** Our success is measured by the smiles, hugs, laughter and joy that come from sharing and finding the sense of community within, where we are all of service. For each breath is sacred and we honor that.



Susan O'Shaughnessy

**Our Couples on Valentine's Night**



**Fun Times at SD Model Railroad Museum and Aubrey Rose Tea Room**



**Plenty to "SEA" at Birch Aquarium at Scripps**



**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**

**Josephine Ison**

Josephine joined our team over three and a half years ago as a caregiver. After a few months, she transitioned to our med department, and has been a med tech ever since. She does her work quietly but is quick to smile with a broad grin whenever she interacts with the residents or her fellow staff members.

Born in Olongapo, Philippines, Josephine had two brothers and three sisters to keep her company. Her father was an internationally traveling musician and singer, so Josephine grew up surrounded by music and laughter. After high school, she attended college where she worked on a bachelors in Nursing and a bachelors in Tourism. She had to stop her schooling to work and support herself after two years, and spent her time after university working as a band singer for three years before having her first child. She had two more children after that and became a stay at home mom for the next 12 years.

In 2010, Josephine and her family moved to San Diego, where she got a job as a private caregiver. She still works as a private caregiver for the same households she first started with 7 years ago, and enjoys what little free time she has staying at home, listening to music. Her goal is to get back into school to become a Licensed Vocational Nurse, and eventually, a full Registered Nurse. We are so glad to have her!

It's not too late to join Stellar Care



Create a Snapchat account, using your loved one's name as the account name. For example, if your resident's name was JoeSmith, enter JoeSmith as the account name. If the account name is taken, add a few numbers to the ending, or have some variation of the name.

Once the account is created, add Stellar Care as a friend, and we will receive a notification. That's it! You will be all set, and we will be able to send you updates upon request and during moments we capture with our snapchat.

Contact Sierra at [sierraf@stellarcared.com](mailto:sierraf@stellarcared.com) if you have questions or have difficulty setting up an account.