

STELLAR CARE 

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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 Margaret Kennedy

Margaret Kennedy is the epitome of what we think about when we imagine an elementary school teacher. She is soft spoken, witty and has a great sense of humor. She is approachable, kind and appreciative. As we sat together in the courtyard, her smile and laughter even drew some extra company toward us, illustrating what captivating and welcoming company I had for a few precious moments.

Marge was born in the Los Angeles area on January 7th, 1939. She and her family led a quiet life, as she was an only child born to parents in their fifties. She went to a Catholic grade school, then went on to obtain her teaching credential from USD Women's college. It was at a dance in college that she met her husband, Ian. He was a student from Canada studying at SDSU's engineering college. She shared that what first drew her to him was that he was tall, well above her taller than average self. He asked her to dance and two years later, they were married.

With time, Marge and Ian relocated to the East Bay Area. Her husband worked for an electronics company, she taught and they had three children. They lived in a warm, welcoming community where the neighbors traded off taking care of each other's kids. She was able to work with kindergarteners, 1st graders and 5th graders. I asked her which students were her favorite to teach. She laughed and shared that her favorite grade to teach was always whichever grade she was teaching at the time because they were all so wonderful. Marge thrived on the joy of helping young ones to learn and grow. She taught at several schools, including with the diocese. In her free time, she even volunteered at a museum, giving tours to visitors.

After 25 years of living in Sacramento, the Kennedys came back to San Diego. Their kids finished school and started their own families, giving Marge and Ian six beautiful grandchildren. They obtained a motorhome that they took with them on travels to different locations here in the United States. After years of companionship and marriage, Ian passed away and Margaret had to decide where she wanted to begin the next chapter of her life.

Moving forward, Margaret decided that she would live in a home at Mission Beach, which she shared was absolutely wonderful. She spent time traveling around the world, through Greece, Spain, Russia, India and other countries. In her travels, she even lived in London for five months. Marge was an avid painter and took up working with a clay wheel. She explained that for her, painting and working with clay is cathartic. It allows her to relax and rejuvenate through focusing on the art in front of her instead of any anxieties of the day. To this day, Marge spends much of her time filling in books of designs and mandalas. She also participates in our memories in the making watercolor painting program. Though she acknowledges that each day presents a set of unique challenges, she is willing to meet these with the help of her many friends surrounding her.

After chatting for some time, the words of Maya Angelou came to mind when she said, "My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style." Margaret definitely embodies this attitude. She emanates such warmth and compassion that is absolutely contagious. We are so appreciative to have her company and look forward to seeing more of that smile of hers every day.

Celebrating January

World Braille Day
January 4

Bubble Bath Day
January 8

International Kite Day
January 14

Activity Professionals Week
January 21–27

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

** 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.

** 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.

January Birthdays

In astrology, those born between January 1–19 are Capricorn's Goats. Goats are practical, determined, and focused on ambitious goals. They follow a straightforward, well-planned path and persevere with grit and honesty.

Those born between January 20–31 are Water Bearers of Aquarius. Water Bearers are creative and intellectual philosophers at heart, getting to the root of problems and using their energy and passion for the benefit of others.

Mieko L.	Jan. 1 st
Wendy S.	Jan. 6 th
Margaret K.	Jan. 7 th
Evelyn T.	Jan. 16 th
Don E.	Jan. 16 th
Amina L.	Jan. 29 th
Constance K.	Jan. 30 th
Barbara M.	Jan. 31 st



Congratulations to Our Incredible Stellar Care Staff:



Employee of the 4th Quarter
Armida Mendivil
Laundry Department

Employee of the Year 2017
Mischa Vlasic
Assisted Living Department

The Gratitude Habit

Welcome to January, 2018! One of the longer, more quiet months, it is almost a relief to travel through thirty-one days of ordinary time after watching 2017 vanish into our memories among too much food, celebrations, decorations and the Winter Solstice. Now we concentrate on resolutions, losing weight, exercising more and basically trying to break poor habits.

But what if we started a new positive habit here at Stellar Care for 2018? Staff, residents and family members are invited to join me in becoming addicted to the gratitude habit. It would be a “recurrent, often unconscious pattern of behavior that is acquired through frequent repetition of a feeling of being thankful for the people you see each day, and for those you carry in your heart.”

Our focus at Stellar Care is to provide quality and dignified care, at all times, for the wonderful residents who reside with us. In addition, as staff, we are empathetic to the emotional and sometimes physical struggles with which families are dealing as they journey through the stages of dementia. But if you knew that I was grateful, every day, for the opportunity to talk with you, listen to your concerns and thankful that you chose Stellar Care, wouldn't that help cushion you when change or decline occurs? If you were aware daily that each employee was grateful to be of service to you and your family, wouldn't you feel nurtured and resilient during a difficult or stressful situation? Honestly, we are all already grateful, it now needs to become something we can easily say to each other. We're in this together.

In 1992, Kathryn Stripling Byer, North Carolina Poet Laureate, penned, “I will learn to be grateful for whatever comes to me,” in her poem “Wildwood Flower.” In her aloneness on a barren, dark mountain of thawing winter, she expresses an understanding for the beauty and fertility that she believes is yet to come and she is thankful for the thought. This is a reminder that sometimes we are in a similar, temporary circumstance, but we can learn to be grateful for what lesson we are given. The circumstance does not define us.

Let's start small. Even though we are dealing with serious choices and uncharted territory, isn't there some hidden blessing that crossed your vision today? Something had to make you smile. Research shows expressing gratitude can increase your overall well-being. “The Healthy Living section of the Huff Post listed 100 Things to Be Grateful For.” Here are a few: “Your pet, good hair days, coffee, friends, Adele's new album, thank you notes, co-workers, a great hike, chocolate, an awesome boss, craft beer (or wine),

jeans, your parents, Sunday mornings, Netflix, a great joke, your team, old yearbooks, a perfectly ripe avocado, old songs, bubble wrap.” Let's be more aware of the often overlooked treasures that line our day with beauty and gratitude and acknowledge them.

I do not know what 2018 will bring us. For some the lessons will be difficult. But even looking back on a serious experience we should find ways to be thankful for someone or some part of the event. I do know that in 2018 we will also get joy, births, new love, adventures and beauty. I pray that where ever your journey takes you in 2018, you are surrounded by love, kindness, happiness and gratitude.

Susan O'Shaughnessy

Winter Activities in Full Swing



Family Holiday Party with Mrs. Klaus



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Jessica Meza

Jessica has been a part of our Stellar Care family for about a year and a half now and is likely one of the first cheerful faces you see walking into our Santa Barbara room activities. She is a native San Diegan and the second youngest of thirteen siblings. With such a large family, she remembers growing up in a loud and boisterous household, competing with her siblings over who could have the top bunk in bed and many other daily quarrels. Now as adults, many of these quarrels have turned into cooperation, as several of her family members work with us as well. She has relatives in the activity, laundry and culinary departments.

Jessica has a few years of experience assisting older adults and shared that she loves working with them. Before coming to Stellar Care, she worked as a caregiver and in activities at other residential care facilities. She likes to shine as an optimist, always seeing the bright side to coming to work every day. According to her, you may come to work and see that someone is having a bad day. That is an opportunity to change it. Part of what she enjoys most about her job is being able to be the person who changes someone's day for the better, whether it is through singing a song, telling a funny story, or simply holding someone's hand.

In her free time, Jessica enjoys camping, fishing, hiking and doing many outdoor activities. She also likes bowling and going to theme parks (although she admits that she is afraid of heights!) She loves taking her daughter to the zoo, aquariums, or anywhere that she has an opportunity to learn, especially if it is somewhere that she can learn about Egypt. Jessica is fascinated with Egyptian history and loves seeing relics from the past and learning about Pharaohs and the Egyptian way of life.

Future plans for Jessica include going back to school and becoming an LVN. She hopes to continue working with older adults and expand on her knowledge. We are excited to be a part of this compassionate person's journey and appreciate her positive attitude here at Stellar Care.

We are Grateful

As we begin 2018, we want to recognize the many people who help us to create the warm and caring environment in our resident's home. Hospice nurses, chaplains, and social workers; home health nurses, physical therapist and occupational therapists; physicians and physicians' assistants, as well as the nurse practitioners; the many musicians, performers and volunteers; together with our partners, the families of our residents, have all helped to make this, the very special place your loved one calls home.

We are grateful for your help and support and for understanding the importance of our calling. Hope you'll have a happy and blessed New Year!

