



**Celebrating November**

**All Saints' Day**  
*November 1*

**World Kindness Day**  
*November 13*

**Mickey Mouse Day**  
*November 18*

**Thanksgiving Day: U.S.**  
*November 22*

**Cider Monday**  
*November 26*

**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*

**MY LIFE AS I SEE IT**

Dr. Wendy Stein

Have you ever woken up, felt a little off, looked your symptoms up on the internet and come up with a list of ailments more than a page long? Rather than searching online, many of our residents come to a much more practical source of medical knowledge, Dr. Wendy Stein.

Wendy was born and raised in Massachusetts and has had an incredible and fulfilling medical career. She was born on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 1959 and adopted by Arthur and Dolores Stein. Arthur was an accountant that later became a nursing home administrator, and Dolores also had her administrator's license. Wendy was exposed to the medical field throughout her life and quickly discovered that she wanted to be a part of it as well.

Wendy graduated Summa Cum Laude from Brown University with a degree in classics and community health. She continued there to obtain her master's degree in medical sociology and went on to medical school. Wendy looked up to Cicely Saunders, who was a pioneer in the establishment of the hospice philosophy of care, and hoped to work with a hospice agency. She even wrote her Thesis on the topic- "Attitudes Toward the Terminally Ill". After completing her medical degree, Wendy moved to Providence, Rhode Island and did her residency at Rhode Island Hospital. During her residency, she was able to help establish Rhode Island Hospice, working to improve the quality of patient care in the later stages of terminal illness. At the time, most members of a hospice team were volunteers, and Wendy was one of them.

After three years in Rhode Island, Wendy went to UCLA to complete her geriatric fellowship. She then became the Medical Director at the largest Jewish Home for the Aging. There, she also set up an inpatient hospice area. As the medical director, she was able to help start a program in which terminally ill patients could have a wish fulfilled of their choosing. After some time, Wendy took on the role of Medical Director of Long-Term Care Services at San Diego Hospice. She later decided to open a private practice and work with Vitas Hospice to provide services to 5 Skilled Nursing Facilities.

It must feel amazing for Wendy to know that she helped to establish hospice service programs in several locations that are still helping many patients and families every day. Throughout her career, she focused on treating individual patients and managing their pain, whether it was physical, emotional, spiritual or a combination of these. Wendy shared a philosophy that she values greatly- "Pain is what the patient says it is, where it is and how severe it is." Wendy's goal was always to treat pain appropriately and to help individuals have the best quality of life possible.

*Continued inside...*

**Miscellaneous Announcements**

\* \* \* \* \*

\*\* Family Support Group meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 6:00pm. Family and friends are invited to join us in the Conference room on the first floor.

\*\* If you would like to take your loved one out for a Thanksgiving meal or overnight stay, please let us know ahead of time so that medications can be ready for you to pick up. Also, have a conversation with the assisted living director about any concerns or special needs that your loved one may have recently developed.

\*\* Company policy prohibits employees from receiving gifts from residents or families. You can contribute to the **employee fund** which is collected throughout the year and distributed to all the employees during the holidays.

**November Birthdays**

In astrology, Scorpios are those born between November 1–21. Scorpios are passionate and deep, qualities that help them counsel others in meaningful ways. Resourceful and determined, Scorpios make good managers.

Those born between November 22–30 are Archers of Sagittarius. These open-minded travelers are in constant motion, searching the globe for meaning. Curious, optimistic, and enthusiastic, they are not afraid of change and treasure freedom.

Barbara B .....	Nov. 5th
David H .....	Nov. 6th
Diosdado P .....	Nov. 12th
Bernice R .....	Nov. 16th
Eugene R .....	Nov. 19th
Ed D .....	Nov. 20th
Betty Jane P .....	Nov. 21st
Ruth K .....	Nov. 23rd
Patricia M .....	Nov. 23rd
Mary F .....	Nov. 27th



**Stellar Care's**  
Employee of the Quarter



**Mary Grayer**  
Caregiver (PM Shift)

Thank you, Mary, we appreciate you!

## Gratitude

On a regular basis, young service members from the “USS MAKIN ISLAND” come and visit with our residents. It is an uplifting, emotional experience to witness active duty sailors offer thanks to the veterans who reside at Stellar Care. November is a nostalgic month for many of us. Our clocks “fall back” and so do we, to a place of memories. For most of us, the memories associated with Veterans’ Day carry stories told by parents and grandparents. Our Memory Boxes and bedroom walls are proudly lined with photographs of men and women in uniform.

So it only seemed the logical next step when Rachel Robinson, Stellar’s Activities Director, offered that our annual Holiday Drive be for the benefit of the members of the “USS MAKIN ISLAND.” Delighted with our partnership, the Makin’s Chaplain requested that we consider a collection drive for the more comprehensive “OPERATION GRATITUDE.” Stellar Care has accepted that recommendation and we ask for your participation to make this year’s collection drive a success.

“OPERATION GRATITUDE” annually sends 250,000 care packages to deployed troops, new recruits, veterans, first responders, and wounded heroes and their caregivers. Help us show our Heroes they are not alone. A complete Wish List is included in this newsletter but some popular items are batteries, deodorant, gum, puzzle books, socks and lip balm. Please pay attention to the sizes requested and note that the shelf life must be at least 6 months from when they are received. Personal letters of appreciation are encouraged and are often the most cherished items in the care packages. The donation box will be at the front desk through the month of November. Items should not be gift wrapped. During this month of Thanksgiving we are reminded of all we have, for which to be grateful, and sharing the purpose of “OPERATION GRATITUDE” with our residents is a project they will understand.

The Stellar Care Support Group is a vibrant, thoughtful gathering of family members and friends, who find value in sharing the highs and lows of the journey of dementia. In a confidential and safe setting, participants can express their feelings and receive valuable information and ideas from others in the group, on how to respond to different stages or behaviors, while focusing on staying a healthy, well-balanced caregiver. Last week, the Group put together a suggestion list for “Making It Through the Holidays When Caring for Someone with Dementia”:

*If you are planning on bringing your Loved One to a holiday dinner be mindful of how this is a change to their new routine. Consider the size of the party and how your Loved One may react. Celebrate earlier in the day and bring them home to Stellar earlier. Consider having your Loved One over for dessert, after the bigger meal is over. Keep the visit shorter.*

*Communicate your concerns and suggestions with others in the immediate family. If you are “in charge,” delegate!*

*In every single situation, think smaller. Consider using another day in the holiday week to celebrate with your Loved One. Start a new tradition with your Loved One, while keeping the extended family celebration.*

*If going to a restaurant, pay attention to times when it is more crowded, noisy. This can be overwhelming for the person with dementia.*

*Holidays are filled with emotions and memories. Be aware of each family member’s vulnerable point and be kind and understanding of each other.*

*Have few expectations. Now is not the time to strive for “perfection.” Be flexible, forgiving and maintain a sense of humor.*

*Holiday Gifts should be simple. Lap blankets, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, pajamas, magazines, photos, or make a deposit into your Loved Ones petty cash fund. Have cards and gifts sent to a local family member to deliver, if you live out of town.*

*Your Loved One lives in the moment. Don’t miss it. Being together is usually the best gift of all.*

Celebrate your Loved One and give gratitude for the uniqueness and wisdom that he or she has shared with you through the years. Isn’t that the blessedness of this Thanksgiving holiday?



Abundantly,  
Susan O’Shaughnessy

...Stein continued

When not working, Wendy had her own stress relievers. She has always loved watching movies and reading “medical trash” novels, gardening and watching the Boston Red Sox play (The Red Sox actually won the world series as this article was being written). She would also knit at home, bake and decorate cakes and spend time with several rescue dogs that she loved dearly throughout the years. She and her dad had season tickets to see musicals at the Civic Center and enjoyed spending time together.

Wendy has truly had an amazing and impactful life. She is a great source of knowledge and insight and has made a difference in many individuals’ lives. Cicely Saunders once said, “You matter because you are you, and you matter to the end of your life. We will do all we can not only to help you die peacefully, but also to live until you die.” Wendy’s life helping others certainly mirrors this philosophy. She made sure that her patients knew that they and their life mattered and that their last moments could be filled with dignity. We feel honored to know Wendy and look forward to learning more from her and about her.

Interviewed and written  
by Mai Truong

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Julia McNeil

Julia is a very cheerful and encouraging member of our caregiving team. She can often be seen smiling and laughing with our residents, and has a positive attitude that is contagious. She is a newer member of the Stellar Care family and has proven to be kind and caring. Julia was born and raised in San Diego as one of five siblings. Growing up with three sisters and a brother, she had to learn early on to share and compromise with others. Now grown, she has her own daughter, who mimics her mom’s sassy and fun personality.

Before joining our team, Julia had several years of experience as a caregiver. She decided to stay in this field because she loves working with older adults. Julia shared that she is aware that families cannot always provide the 24-hour care that their loved ones need. Thus, if she can do something to help in such challenging situations, she is more than happy to do so. In fact, Julia hopes to continue on in this field and expand on her knowledge, going back to school to become an LVN or RN.

In her free time, Julia enjoys catching up on sleep, listening to R&B, some country and classic rock, and spending time with her daughter. They like going to Balboa Park together and have also traveled to Japan. Julia hopes to go back to visit Japan with her daughter and explore more of it. We are very grateful for Julia’s happy disposition and lighthearted attitude.

## Holiday Meals at Stellar Care

We have invited families for Thanksgiving lunches in the past, but because we’ve had to displace residents when seating family members at tables, this has caused some confusion and agitation. We want to make sure that we are focused on the care of our frail population and we do not want to cause, by our good intentions, any increase in confusion or agitation. That is why, this year, **we will have the Thanksgiving meal at lunch for residents only.**



### OPERATION GRATITUDE “WISH LIST”

- All-Purpose Wipes (single or 30ct pk or less)
- Batteries (AA or AAA)
- Deodorant (travel size, non-aerosol)
- Drink mix (individual serving pkts)
- Gum
- Hand warmers
- Jerky (individual bags)
- Lip Balm
- Pencils (mechanical preferred)
- Playing cards
- Powder (travel size)
- Puzzle books (7”x10” preferred size)
- Sewing kits (travel size)
- Socks (black crew length)
- Sunscreen (travel size, non-aerosol)



### HOMEMADE with LOVE ITEMS

- Cool ties
- Knit or crocheted hats and scarves
- Paracord survival bracelets

*All donated items must have a shelf-life/expiration date of at least six months from date of receipt*