



DECEMBER 2014

THE WESTCARE EXPRESS

IN THIS ISSUE



New Home for Heroes Opens Doors

History reveals a special connection to the WestCare family

By David Rosynsky, Grants Development Coordinator, Foundation



A crowd of about 150 supporters of WestCare gathered in a courtyard in **St. Petersburg's Grand Central District** to celebrate the opening of the newly renovated **Mustard Seed Inn Veterans Community Living**. Located in a large catchment area for veterans, the center offers 13 units of transitional housing and 13 units of permanent housing exclusively for veterans.

With generous support from the **Home Depot Foundation** and **Neighborhood Lending Partners, Inc.**, FitzHouse Enterprises completed significant renovations to the three-story, 20,000 square foot building over the last year.

Last month, veterans from **WestCare Gulf Coast-Florida's Mustard Seed Inn Transitional Housing Program** were welcomed as the first residents of the center. Veterans will move into permanent housing units next year. Specialized programs and services for veterans (e.g. expressive arts therapy and vocational counseling) will also commence next year.

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COVER STORY: *New Home For Heroes Opens Doors (Cont.)*

Constructed nearly 90 years ago, the building has a rich history as it housed several different hotels, a restorium, and even a bait and tackle shop.

“That’s my mother and grandmother,” said **Marcia Jackson**, Director of Accreditation, pointing to a sepia tone photo of the Hotel Pillet on display in the lobby on the day of the dedication ceremony.

The first incarnation of the building, erected in 1925, was as the French-inspired **Hotel Pillet**. When the Great Depression occurred, the hotel’s owner scrapped the hotel’s pricey dining menu and hired Gertrude Winn and her daughter Margaline Winn (Marcia’s grandmother and mother) to manage the hotel’s dining room and provide “real home cooking.”



Mr. and Mrs. Winn (Marcia Jackson’s Parents)

“There’s my father, a World War I Veteran,” Marcia said, pointing to a worn photo of a couple standing next to the Hotel Pillet sign. *“My parents met when my father applied for a maitre d position at the hotel. They were married for 35 years,”* Marcia said smiling, as she made her way out to the courtyard.

Outside, an American flag blew in the breeze and a long length of red ribbon stretched across the courtyard where the crowd gathered.

“Good morning,” proclaimed **Frank Rabbito**, Senior Vice President, *“Welcome to the dedication ceremony of the Mustard Seed Inn Veterans Community Living!”*

Following a performance of the national anthem by the **WestCare FOCUS Men’s Choir**, **Chaplain Ruben Ortiz**, of the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** offered a poignant blessing and keynote addresses were given by **Dr. Kanika Tomalin**, Deputy Mayor of the City of St. Petersburg and **United States Congressman Honorable David Jolly**.

COVER STORY: *New Home For Heroes Opens Doors (Cont.)*



Frank Rabbito, Joe Wimberley, and Richard Steinberg

Richard Steinberg, President/CEO and Mr. Rabbito presented plaques of appreciation to Neighborhood Lending Partners, Inc. and FitzHouse Enterprises, Inc.

Joe Wimberley, the Southern Division Manager of the Home Depot Foundation accepted a plaque on behalf of the Home Depot Foundation and on behalf of approximately 40 local Home Depot employees who volunteered to renovate the building's courtyard in October during Home Depot's "Celebration of Service."

The crowd cheered as Mr. Steinberg, Mr. Rabbito and honored guests cut the ribbon and two sections fell to the ground symbolizing the opening of new doorways to veterans in the community.

MINNESOTA: *A Special Message That Speaks for Us All!*



"It is an Honor to serve with all of you at Our Organization. Thanks for your help these past two years. I wish everyone at WestCare a Merry Christmas and the happiest of Holidays. —My Traditional Wish!"

- Dave Turner*, VICTRI MINNESOTA

(pictured with his favorite magical figure, in whom he still believes, on Separation Day December 1962)*

HONORING OUR VETERANS: *Standing Tall... We are Forever Thankful*

The single day set aside in November to honor those who served belies the year-round gratitude we hold for these men and women. Here's a very small sampling of our WestCare employees who have stood tall on behalf of freedom.



Maurice Lee (*Foundation*)
Chief Operations Officer / U.S. Army



Jack Scharrett (*Minnesota*)
MN Vice-Chair / U.S. Army Airborne



John Bascom (*Georgia*)
Community Relations / U.S. Army & U.S. Navy



Debbie Bartleson (*FAVA/Iowa*)
Veteran Advocate / U.S. Army

Jeff Riley (*FAVA/Iowa*)
Veteran Advocate / National Guard

Evelyn Henning (*FAVA/Iowa*)
Support Services AARP / U.S. Army Airborne



Dr. Andrew Calhoun (*Wisconsin*)
Mentor Services Coord. / U.S. Navy



Carlos Sampson (*Wyoming*)
WHF Counselor / U.S. Navy

HONORING OUR VETERANS: *Standing Tall... We are Forever Thankful*



Andrew Olivares (*Wisconsin*)
Wisconsin Board Member / U.S. Army



Richard Rodgers (*Wisconsin*)
Wisconsin Board Vice Pres. / U.S. Navy

Stan Brooks (*Illinois*)
Sheridan Director / U.S. Air Force

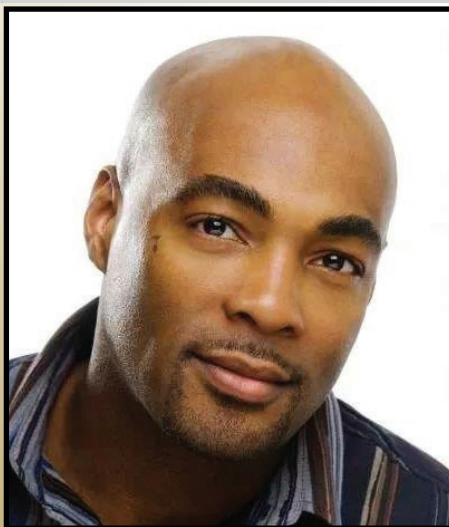
Lee Harvey (*Illinois*)
Asst. Program Director / U.S. Air Force

Jeff Adams (*Illinois*)
Counselor / U.S. Marine Corps

Joe Green (*Illinois*)
Asst. Program Director / U.S. Marine Corps

Lamont McCune (*Illinois*)
Counselor Supervisor / U.S. Marine Corps

John Zidek (*Illinois*)
Asst. Program Director / U.S. Army



Marcus Adams (*Wisconsin*)
Wisconsin Counselor / U.S. Army



Xanthia Hicks (*Illinois*)
Administrative Assistant / U.S. Army

HONORING OUR VETERANS: *Standing Tall... We are Forever Thankful*



Yolanda Richardson (Wisconsin)
Lead Counselor / U.S. Navy



Joseph Thomas, Jr. (Illinois)
Addiction Counselor / U.S. Army



Nhia Thor (California)
Supervisor on Duty / U.S. Marine Corps



Dave Turner (Minnesota)
VICTRI-MN Office Mgr. / U.S. Army Airborne

David Youngquist (Minnesota)
MN Chairman / U.S. Army Airborne

Richard Steinberg (Foundation)
President & CEO / U.S. Army

HONORING OUR VETERANS: *Standing Tall... We are Forever Thankful*



John Lee (*Washington*)
Washington Board Chair / U.S. Army



Peggy Quigg (*Foundation*)
Chief of Staff / U.S. Army & National Guard



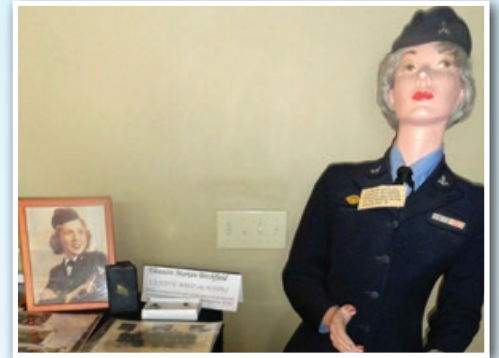
Daniel Bernal (*Foundation*)
Director, Veteran Services / U.S. Army



John Wallace (*Foundation*)
WestCare Express Editor / U.S. Marine Corps

IOWA/FAVA: FAVA Salutes Servicewomen

Submitted by Laura Lindsay



The Veterans Day program/luncheon, presented by **FAVA (Family Alliance for Veterans of America)** was entitled “*Women in the Military: Past & Present*” and consisted of female panelists who shared experiences from their respective military eras and responded to questions from the audience.

A free chili meal was provided for guests and collected a large variety of military memorabilia prior to the event to put on display; every item displayed was specific to women in the military.



ARIZONA: *And These Little Piggies Were Warm*

By Cheryl Debatt, Area Director

A local elementary school, **Mohave Accelerated Learning Center (MALC)**, held a fundraiser with proceeds to WestCare Arizona. The month of October was called “**Socktober**”. Children brought in socks all month, ending in a sock hop. The socks were donated to all the WestCare clients who will need to keep their feet warm this winter. With 720 pairs of socks, a lot of toes will stay snuggly. How wonderful. Children learning to give back!



SUPPORT WESTCARE WITH YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING AT AMAZON



The holiday shopping season has begun! And if you do a lot of shopping online, don't forget that you can help WestCare Foundation with the purchases you make on Amazon. By shopping online at **AmazonSmile**, Amazon donates a percentage of the purchase price to WestCare.

Don't forget to bookmark the link:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/86-0852629>

and support WestCare every time you shop online at Amazon!

ARIZONA/NEVADA: *Joining Forces at High Risk Apartment Complex*

By Darlene Terrill, Director of Development

WestCare Arizona's Director **Cheryl DeBatt**, Systems Advocate **Stacey Stutsman**, Foundation Human Resources Manager **Didi Buono**, Nevada's Development Director **Darlene Terrill**, **Lawanna Calhoun** and **Caren Lopez** from the Las Vegas Community Triage Center, and the **Laughlin Metropolitan Police** joined together to participate in October's **Domestic Violence Awareness Month** event in Laughlin, Nevada.

The forum/community partnership went straight to the parking lot at Arizona's beloved **Riverwood Apartments**. This large complex has a serious history of domestic violence problems, child deaths, kidnappings and riddled with substance abuse and mental health concerns. This joint venture between our states gave an opportunity to introduce the community to services WestCare provides in the Las Vegas area and Arizona and maybe "*even shed a light for those that are on the fence about a clean and sober life style.*" The residents came out of their homes with coffee cups in hand and their children, to learn about resources.

It's all about uplifting the human spirit. Good teamwork, Nevada and Arizona.



ILLINOIS: *Sheridan Teams Up to Help Stop Violence*

By Charlene Hamann, Recreation Therapist

Three members of **WestCare Illinois at Sheridan** teamed up with residents of one of Chicago's most violent neighborhoods in hopes of stopping the violence. **Jacky Stinson**, **Melissa Lee**, and **Charlene Hamann** participated in the first annual **Ditch the Weight and the Guns 5K** in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood. The event was sponsored by **Forever Fitness** of Chicago and was sparked by three women in the Englewood community striving to get its members to put fitness first and put down the guns.

ILLINOIS: *Sheridan Teams Up to Help Stop Violence (Cont.)*

Organizers came up with the idea the week following the **Chicago Marathon**, where runners parade through 25 Chicago neighborhoods, not including Englewood. Among the reasons why Englewood isn't included in the Chicago Marathon include its reputation for shootings, gangs, and violence. The organizers of this inaugural race had initially hoped for 250 runners, but amazingly by the day of the race there were more than 900 participants, both runners and walkers! The three-person team from Sheridan heard about this race from clients on their housing units. Several clients approached staff saying they had heard on the news that there is going to be a race in their neighborhood and it's supporting a great cause, one that directly relates to many of the clients WestCare serves. These clients wondered if staff would be interested in participating to support the cause.

There was a tremendous amount of support within the Englewood community and from many neighboring communities. Every major news station in Chicago was there for the race, and Chicago's Mayor **Rahm Emanuel** ran the race, leading the pack and shaking hands at the finish line. At first I was skeptical about it simply because of this community's reputation, but then I thought the reason this race is being put on is to change people's image of Englewood.

After participating in this race and meeting many people from Englewood, I realized it isn't much different than some of the worst neighborhoods in my town, with boarded up houses, worn down yards, and closed up businesses. It really was an eye-opening experience not only to see it, but to run through the entire neighborhood and see where our clients come from and to know that it takes people like us to help change lives inside prisons and out. We can help change these communities so when our clients do return, it is not to the same environment from which they left.



Melissa Lee, Charlene Hamann, and Jacky Stinson



Mayor Rahm Emanuel with Charlene Hamann



THE GREEN CORNER: *Volume Two*

START RECYCLING...How to GREEN your desk, cubicle, or office space
From the Green Committee

Reduce your paper waste. Do you have to print out every email and handout? Reduce paper waste by deciding to go paperless wherever possible.

You can try to:

- Keep copies of important emails, files, and more on your computer.
- Use old paper with extra space to print small documents.
- Don't get any extra catalogs or magazines mailed to your office. Use a sharing system to pass around interesting materials between everyone's in-trays. This saves paper and money.
- Get your check directly deposited. Payment direct to your bank account saves paper. WestCare employees have the voluntary option to suppress paper payment vouchers and W-2s and view them online for up to 36 months @ www.portal.adp.com.
- Send company updates through email instead of on paper.
- Review any documents online instead of printing them out. It's commonplace to hear people say that they cannot read on the computer screen. However, it is a learned skill like most work skills, and with practice, it is possible to read most of your work on-screen and print only when necessary. If you have problems with eyestrain, see your doctor.



GREEN TIP OF THE MONTH: *Buy a plant and place it on or near your desk. Or, even better, purchase plants for all of your co-workers. They will not only see this as a friendly gesture, but they'll also have cleaner air to breathe! Green accessories complement your desk because plants absorb indoor air pollution and increase the flow of oxygen!!*



FOUNDATION: *Nothing Taken for Granted in This Department*

WestCare's **Grants Department** is effective at linking WestCare affiliates and subsidiaries with public and private funding that can maintain or expand the behavioral health and human services we provide. The grants department interacts with many other divisions of WestCare (e.g. finance, evaluation, clinical, etc.) to coordinate pre-award activities including funding research, sustainability planning and proposal development and submission.



Grants Meeting

Led by Vice President **Bill Stone**, who has been working in the behavioral health field for 36 years, the grants department has expanded in relation to the growth of WestCare's national footprint, and currently includes eight grant professionals.

David Rosynsky, Grants Development Coordinator, is based in St. Petersburg, Florida, and joined WestCare in 2006. He has been working in the fund development arm of the nonprofit industry for 16 years.

Barbara Mason, Grants Coordinator for FitzHouse Enterprises, Inc., has more than 14 years of experience in grant writing and administration. She oversees grant development for WestCare's transportation and facilities related projects and is based in Henderson, Nevada.

Cecily Moreland and **Kimberly Rogers** have been part of the grants department for 3 years and were both promoted to new positions this year. Based in Henderson, Nevada, Cecily is a Grants Specialist and Kimberly is the Grants Coordinator for Veterans Services. Cecily has been working in the nonprofit industry since 2006, and Kimberly has been writing grants for 9 years and held several positions in the public health and behavioral health fields.

Grant Specialists **Anna Ruth** and **Stacy Monroe** joined WestCare in 2012. Located in St. Petersburg, Florida, Anna, a proud Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, manages grant development in Florida and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and has been writing grants professionally since 1997. Based in Chicago, Illinois, Stacy develops grants for Georgia, Illinois and Wisconsin and has 25 years of experience in grant writing and project management.

Susan Decker, based in Henderson, Nevada, joined the grants department in August. Susan pursued her passion for grant writing after retiring from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department after 22 years. Susan develops grants for WestCare's operations in California and the Pacific Islands.

FOUNDATION: *Nothing Taken for Granted in This Department (Cont.)*

In addition to Susan, Grant Specialists **Melanie Stevens** and **Shaun Mollica** joined WestCare this year. Located in Pikeville, Kentucky, Melanie spearheads grant development for WestCare's Appalachian Region (which includes Kentucky and Tennessee) and Shaun, based in Henderson, Nevada, oversees grant development for Arizona and Nevada. Both Shaun and Melanie bring numerous years of experience in grant writing and administration to the team.

The grants department gets results. Sixty-two percent of the grants submitted by WestCare in 2013 were successful, equating to more than \$32 million in grant revenue. Presently the grants department is demonstrating a 63 percent success rate in 2014.

THE QUESTION CORNER: *What is the Best Gift You Ever Gave-?*

"I gave away my 1948 International truck (similar to this) with dump bed and dual wheels. I gave it to a needy family. The Lord put it on my heart to give it away when he blessed me with a paid-for car.

Before that, I was riding my Walmart bicycle to and from work 8.2 miles each day."



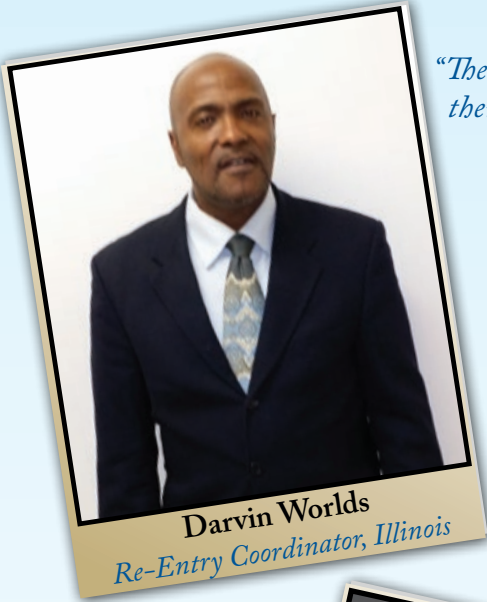
Barbara Varner's Truck
Data Specialist, California



Samantha Hattan and Family
Re-Entry Coordinator, Wyoming

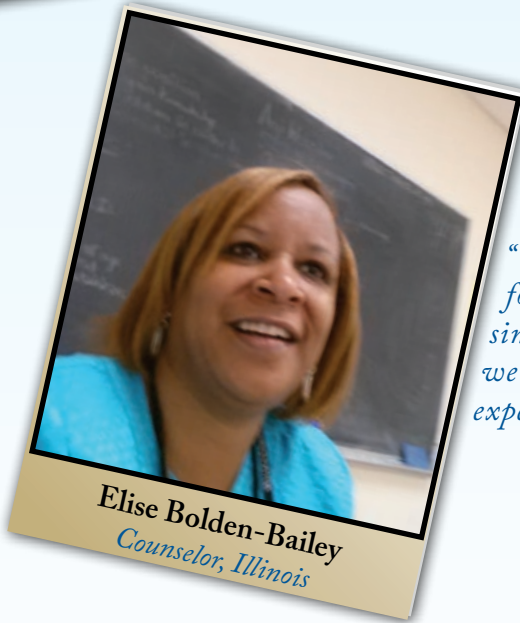
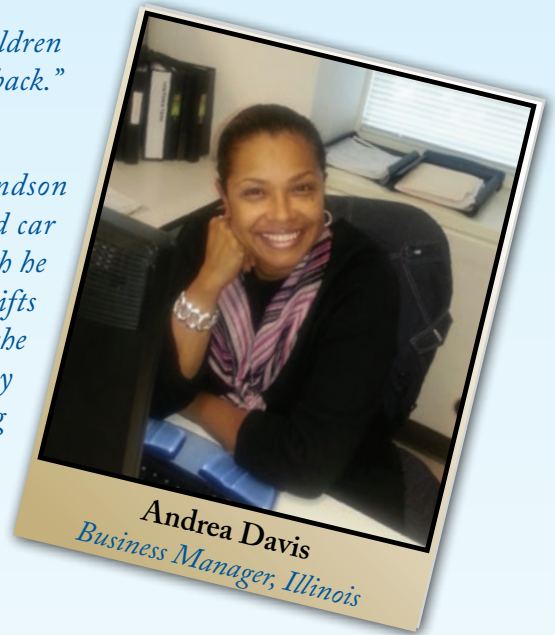
"I was blessed with the gift of life, so it made perfect sense for me to pay it forward! And in doing so giving my son Hunter, 12 and my daughter Ashlee, 9 the gift of life has not only gifted my husband and me, it's been a life changing experience for my mother and father in law. With my husband being an only child it was the only opportunity for them to become grandparents. We get to celebrate everyday with their hugs, kisses and lots of laughter. It's like we get to unwrap presents every day."

THE QUESTION CORNER: *What is the Best Gift You Ever -Gave-? (Cont.)*



"The best gift I ever gave, was giving my children their father back and my parents their son back."

"I gave my 5 year old grandson a Lightning McQueen red car for Christmas. Even though he received an abundance of gifts from his parents, he spent the remainder of Christmas day and the next two years eating and sleeping with the car. Now that's what I call a gift!"



"The best gift I ever gave was taking a family of four on a vacation for the very first time. It was a single mother and her four beautiful daughters and we all went to Great Wolf Lodge in Wisconsin, all expenses paid!"

THE QUESTION CORNER: *January Question*

This month's question is: **"What 2015 Resolution is Most Attainable and Realistic For You?"**

Please send your answer and a photo to john.wallace@westcare.com by December 19th.

NEVADA: *WestCare in the News*

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Full article at <http://www.reviewjournal.com/life/woman-s-path-sobriety-inspires-alcoholics-change>

Woman's Path to Sobriety Leads Alcoholics to Change

By MICHAEL LYLE

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

David Becker, Photographer

November 17, 2014

It was 7½ years ago in bed No. 24 at a WestCare detox facility that Heather Frost reclaimed her life from alcoholism.

"I got my life back in bed No. 24," she says. *"I have no idea where my life would be (otherwise)."*



Frost not only faced her addiction and ventured on the road to recovery, but she became the director of residential services for WestCare and has helped other women down the same path.

For more than 40 years, the organization has offered substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation and detoxification shelter. At the **Las Vegas Women and Children's Campus**, the nonprofit offers substance abuse treatment for pregnant adults, outpatient counseling, family support groups, temporary housing, intake services available 24/7, individual and group counseling, drug and alcohol assessments, and health education and prevention.

Frost was a home drinker, thinking her lies were hidden behind the safety of her door.

"At least I thought I hid it," she says. *"You never think the cat is out of the bag."* Through a DUI, being arrested and constantly letting her family down, which included her two children, her life swerved out of control under her addiction. Frost did something she still can't believe.

"I called my ex-husband and told him I needed to get sober," she says. *"There is no way I would have called him."* She says it must have been a higher power who prompted her to call.



NEVADA: *WestCare in the News (Cont.)*

Frost moved from the WestCare detox center to a residential recovery program known as **We Care Foundation**, a private nonprofit that helps women with sober living. During her time in her recovery program, she worked as a concierge. About two years into her sobriety, WestCare hired her. Starting as the Deputy Director of Recovery, she wrote grants, raised money and performed other tasks.

"It really helped me grow and learn," she says.

But that's not where her passion is.

"I get to watch the light come on in someone's soul," she says. *"That is the best part of my job."*

Alyson Martinez, the Deputy Director over the Women and Children's Campus, says working with Frost has been inspiring. *"I very much look up to her,"* she says. *"You see this strong, independent woman who has gone through trials and tribulation, yet sits up straight and commands a room in a very powerful way. It's very powerful for me to witness."*

No matter how many steps forward she takes, Frost says she never forgets her journey. Every year for New Year's Eve, she gathers with her family to celebrate her recovery and the people who have made it possible.

"My kids are my oxygen," she says. *"Without a doubt, they were a huge part of my recovery."*

JOIN TOGETHER NEWS SERVICE: *Many Positive Aspects to Recovery*

By Celia Vimont

There are many positive aspects to being in recovery, suggests a new survey of people who are experiencing recovery from alcohol or drug problems. The findings of the national survey of more than 9,000 people will help both people in recovery, and those who treat them, according to the researchers.

Currently there is no agreement about the definition of recovery, says lead researcher Lee Ann Kaskutas, DrPH, of the Public Health Institute's Alcohol Research Group in Emeryville, California. Many people believe it requires total abstinence from drugs and alcohol, while others do not.

JOIN TOGETHER NEWS SERVICE: *Many Positive Aspects to Recovery (Cont.)*

Survey respondents were most likely to say recovery is:

- *Being honest with myself.*
- *Being able to enjoy life without drinking or using drugs like I used to.*
- *Living a life that contributes to society, to my family or to my betterment.*
- *Being the kind of person that people can count on.*
- *About giving back.*
- *Striving to be consistent with my beliefs and values in activities that take up the major part of my time and energy.*

Dr. Kaskutas says people in recovery can use the findings to explain to family and friends what they are going through. “*They can say, ‘When I say I’m in recovery, I mean that it’s an ongoing process, and I’m actually trying to live a life that’s contributing to society,’*” she says. “*Recovery doesn’t just (or always) mean abstinence—it can also mean you have a positive way of being that you didn’t have before.*”

(The findings are published in the Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs.)

CALIFORNIA: *Veteran’s Day Parade*

California articles courtesy of Michael Mygind



WestCare Staff and **San Joaquin Valley Veterans (SJVV)** staff and client veterans took part in the 95th annual **Fresno Veteran’s Day Parade**, the largest such parade in the west.

Amazing show of support, everyone!

CALIFORNIA: *Home Depot Beautifies MLK Residential Facility*

As part of their annual **Celebration of Service** campaign to give back to veterans, The **Home Depot Foundation** awarded WestCare California with an **\$18,000** grant to beautify the three courtyards at our **MLK Residential Facility**. They also sent over 50 associate volunteers from their Team Depot group to help with an assortment of landscaping around the campus.!



CALIFORNIA: *The Biggest Winner*



After 3 months, the results for our **Biggest Winner** weight-loss contest are in!

In third place was **Jerrold McWilliams** from San Diego with 14.8 lbs.

In second place was **Irene Gutierrez** from SOS with 15 lbs. Jerrold and Irene both won gift cards.

The grand prize winner of the \$260.00 entry pool was **Hilda Garcia** with 16 lbs! Congratulations to our winners and all that participated in this great event!

CALIFORNIA: *Fall 2014 Graduation*



We would like to congratulate our newest **WestCare alumni**, including our teenage graduates! We are so proud of all that you have accomplished and wish you all the best on your newly paved road of recovery! Take the tools that you have been given and achieve greatness!



FLORIDA: *A Perfect Program in a Serene Setting*

(Editor's note: The Heron is a prized WestCare assisted living facility that is celebrating its 26th year. How successful is it? A client tells her story)

By Haley

"The Heron, situated in Marathon of the Florida Keys, is in a wonderful environment. Once a year we get to swim with the dolphins at the dolphin-consensual (they open the gates sometimes) Dolphin Research Center. Sixteen residents live here, and they are a really good group. I would say we live in a happy home, with a lot of freedom besides having to take prescribed medicine regularly. We have a calm environment, which most people that live here need, but we also have opportunities to do fun things. On Holidays we have big dinners, and contests, and Easter egg hunts. We can go to church if we want. During the week we go to the Personal Growth Center. I have been here for 2 ½ years and am now beginning to search for a job. My life here is healthier and more productive than if I was living on my own, but, as always, that is something to strive for."



KUDOS! Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Employees



Monet Davila

Therapist, Middle-Keys, Florida

"My name is Al Flowers. I am an ESE Teacher at Sugarloaf School. I have had the privilege of working with Monet Davila of WestCare for 2 years. She attends ESE meetings, helps students with special needs and is always cheerful, professional, caring, and a diligent worker. The students that she works with have a lot of respect for her and they really try to work on their specific issues. I want to thank her for the work she has done at Sugarloaf School and what it has meant to the people around her."

Way to represent, **Monet!**

Assisted by Executive Assistant **Mardi Palacios** and Sr. VP **Shawn Jenkins**, the Council formed a **Native American Subcommittee**. This is an amazing group pushing to improve services to the Native Americans in our community at **North Fork Rancheria**.

Outstanding effort by the **Community Council** to reach that sector!



Community Council Native American Subcommittee (California)



Holiday Mail for Heroes Program



Lynn Pimentel

Deputy Administrator, California

Here's an idea for every region. **Lynn** recently sent this out to her employees:

"As we approach the holiday season I want to challenge each of you to help make the Holiday Season a happier time for the Veterans who serve our country. The Holiday Mail for Heroes program provides an opportunity to send cards of thanks and support to members of the armed forces, deployed veterans and their families and those in hospitals. I encourage each program to engage clients and staff in a card making party that will kick off the holiday season and allow us to give back to those who have given so much. The cards must be sent to the Red Cross by December 6 so we have lots of work to do in a short period of time!"



KUDOS! *Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Employees (Cont.)*



John Wallace
Express Editor, Foundation

John Wallace was given the **Zinkin Award** for community service and lifetime achievement by the **Fresno Athletic Hall of Fame**. John, who had a 40 year career in television and radio news, served many years as **Chairman of the WestCare California Board**.

PACIFIC ISLANDS: *WestCare in the News*

(Excerpted from Marianas Variety)

WestCare explains new program to help Guam's homeless veterans

BY JASMINE STOLE | VARIETY NEWS STAFF

WestCare Pacific Islands presented a new program to help homeless veterans to stakeholders at its Tamuning office and explained who is eligible, how they will be helped and introduced new staff that will help veterans who are homeless and those at-risk of homelessness when the program begins Dec. 1.

WestCare Pacific Islands Vice President **Sarah Thomas-Nededog** said the program aims to serve 150 veterans and their families during the one year that they have the federal grant.



Through the U.S. Department of Veterans Benefits Administration's Supportive Service for Veterans and Families (SSVF) grant, WestCare will be able to refer, counsel and provide some monetary aid for local veterans.

The focus needs to be on helping veterans and their family members before they are without a home, said **Maurice Lee**, WestCare Foundation Chief Operating Officer. *"Let's not wait until the point that they're out on the street,"* he said.

WASHINGTON: *WestCare in the Evergreen State*

Collaborating and Implementing: A summary of Veterans Services

Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA) Department of Corrections (DOC), Veterans Initiative, WestCare WA support for expansion Vet Pod Unit's, PTSD Groups

- Desired outcomes include increasing access to PTSD groups available to Veterans in the Vet Pod Unit.
-

WestCare Oregon and WestCare Washington Home Base, WA and Oregon Rural Veterans Implementation of the VA Rural Veterans Coordination (Demonstration) Grant

- This is one of five demonstration grants awarded to WestCare Washington.
- The award amounts to \$1 million annually for two years, which will offer the VA various models to consider toward improving the access, coordination and continuity of services to Veterans in very rural counties.

Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs (WDVA) Department of Corrections (DOC), Veterans Initiative

- Desired outcomes include reducing recidivism while concurrently improving formal re-entry practices of Veterans under DOC supervision.
- WestCare Washington directly supported the development of new Veteran practices and services at the Stafford Creek Prison, pilot Vet Unit Pod and Washington Women's Corrections Center at Purdy by providing two AmeriCorps positions.



WestCare Washington Women Veterans Day Empowerment and Wellness Academy

- Funded by a small grant from the Paul Newman Foundation, this day academy will serve women Veterans who could benefit from spending time in a supportive service-rich environment with a focus on wellness and health offered at the beautiful tranquil campus offered at the Orting Soldiers Home.



WYOMING: *A Poem From Mr. Ray*

Submitted by Kristi Flury, Wyoming Honor Farm counselor.

(The author, Mr. Ray, is a client who will graduate from his recovery program in January and continue to mentor others.)

LISTEN

By Mr. Ray

*I came to a meeting, sad and alone.
So sick and tired, of the life I had known.
Aching and dying, deep down inside.
And feeling the pain, from the things I must hide.*

*They told me they loved me, and were glad I was there,
Who are these people, and why should they care?
But the more that I listened, the more I could see,
This room full addicts, were all just like me.*

*So I started to share, trying hard not to cry,
And I no longer felt, like I wanted to die.
I wanted to live, but hadn't a clue,
Of what to say, feel, or do.*

*These people were clean, and would show me the way,
So I listened some more, to what they had to say.
They spoke of a God, and "Just for Today".
So I thought, what the hell, and I started to pray.*

*They told me they loved me, and to "Keep coming back".
They said that a program was all I did lack.
They said "Work the steps", or you're going to die,
So I got me a sponsor, and I started to try.*

*I shared with my sponsor, who I had become,
The people I had hurt, the things I had done.
He told me he loved me, and then shared with me,
The things he had done, and who he used to be.*

*That's when I knew, and could truly see,
That if I worked the steps, that I too could be free.
Free from using, and feeling this way,
Free from active addiction, "Just for today".*

*So I still try to listen, to what you have to share,
Tell you "I love you", let you know that I care.
Let you know I have found, a much better way,
By working a program, we call N.A.*

*If we listen and learn, we will surely see,
How truly wonderful, recovery can be!*

EXPRESSIONS: *The Best Medicine*

By Michael Shields, VP Human Resources



The Christmas season is coming at us quickly. Add in a mixture of “Post-Thanksgiving” and “Pre New Year’s planning stress, and you have a perfect mixture of stuff that can make you crazy if you let it!

Those of you who know me clearly understand I am a big fan of fun! We work incredible hard every day. Most of you have daily duties WAY more stressful than mine! I personally think it’s a great idea to try to find the humor in almost everything you do. It’s there if you look closely enough. It is also easier than letting things build up and cause stress.

Turns out my approach to life has some validation!

A recent article in the Las Vegas Review Journal by **Drs. Mehmet Oz and Mike Roizen** was titled “He who laughs last (or first) lives healthier”. What follows is

a plagiarized summary:

“From 1985 to 2014, comedies took in \$38.6 billion at the box office, more than action, adventure and horror movies. And that’s not even counting romantic comedies, which grossed \$9.1 billion. Comedies bring laughter, a great medicine.

Laughter lets you go with the flow: A University of Maryland study found that laughter helps your blood vessels relax, promoting health blood flow and good blood pressure. (Suggestion-“This is Spinal Tap”)

Laughter makes you a flu-fighter: Several studies indicate that laughter boosts levels of antibodies that help the body fight off upper respiratory infections. (Suggestion-“National Lampoons’ Christmas Vacation”)

Laughter helps you lose weight and distress: When you laugh, even if it’s not spontaneous, you lower cortisol and epinephrine levels that are implicated in weight gain, blood vessel damage and depression. (Suggestion-The Legend of Ron Burgundy”)

Laughter keeps glucose levels level: Want your post meal blood sugar spikes to be slower and lower? Try watching a funny movie before or during your meal. (Suggestion-“Bad Santa”)

So, while we are in the process of developing a WestCare-wide “Wellness Program”, jump out on your own, enjoy your life, enjoy your family, enjoy your friends, enjoy your job. And maybe have a good laugh as well, right?!!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!



WESTCARE CALENDAR OF EVENTS: *December 2014*

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

December 6

Nevada / Las Vegas Holiday Party (Elks Lodge)

December 16 *(8am-9am PST / 11am-12pm EST)*

Executive Committee Teleconference

December 17 *(5pm-6pm Arizona Time)*

Arizona - CAC Meeting

Bullhead City

December 19

Florida - Guidance/Care-Center Holiday Lunch

December 19 *(11am-12pm PST)*

California - CAC Meeting

Admin. Bldg, 1505 N. Chestnut, Fresno CA

December 25

HOLIDAY - Christmas

