



WESTCARE EXPRESS

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THE WESTCARE EXPRESS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2016

Happy New Year

From WestCare President and CEO Richard E. Steinberg

Here we are in our **5th decade** of service, and I am filled with the joy of accomplishment, and with a wonderful and exciting feeling of significant growth ahead for us all.



Richard Steinberg

While each of you plies your craft and hones your incredible skills providing extraordinary quality care, WestCare takes bold steps every day to meet ever-changing healthcare and government regulations, and adapting to new behavioral health challenges. And, as you will read in this newsletter, amazing and cost-effective use of public dollars, coupled with hard work, continues to add brick and mortar for places of refuge and healing for our thousands of new and current clients. I never truly envisioned all of these blessings when I first signed on with WestCare, 38 years ago. But as you are hopefully learning, *“good things happen to those who work hard...while they wait.”* And my, what good things have happened.

Each and every one of you has kept my personal spirit uplifted all these many years. And I will eternally be so very grateful. Sharon, Olivia and I send our very best wishes to you and your family for a safe, productive and prosperous 2016.

With love and respect,
Dick



FITZHOUSE ENTERPRISES: *Oh, Did We Grow!*

Prepared by Barbara Mason

Project List for 2015

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Location: **Key West, Florida**

7,200 sq/ft, \$411,406

Major building renovations for outpatient detention, intervention, TASC / EAP, Level 1 and II Prevention (School based services), children and adult medication management, therapy, and mental health, children psychiatric and crisis intervention services, jail-based substance abuse treatment and mental health evaluations, case management, aftercare and transportation services.

Location: **Las Vegas, Nevada**

19,740 sq/ft, \$2.2 million



Relocation - Acquisition and total rehabilitation of a building to be used as a community improvement center and triage center.

Location: **Stockton, California**

2,250 sq/ft, \$250,000

Rehabilitation / facility enhancements to provide a secure facility for housing, sustenance, supervision, security, care, custody, programming, and approved correctional programs for female participants under the care of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Location: **Atlanta, Georgia**

2,400 sq/ft, \$142,717

Renovations to an existing facility to create a Community Involvement Center for clients and staff. (See story in this issue)

Location: **Atlanta, Georgia**

20,000 sq/ft, \$209,125



Renovation of an eight unit apartment building for homeless/low income Veterans.



FITZHOUSE ENTERPRISES: *Oh, Did We Grow! (Con't.)*

Location: **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

sq/ft (varies), \$75,000

Acquisition and renovation of five (5) condos for below appraised value purchase by extremely low income persons.

Location: **Marathon, Florida**

4,912 sq/ft, \$265,000 Estimate

New acquisition. Rehab to include facility exterior and interior upgrades and seawall repair.

Location: **San Diego, California**

25,200 sq/ft, \$179,262.74

Remodel for California Corrections female inmates.

Location: **Henderson, Nevada**

24,253 sq/ft, \$354,697

Major rehabilitation of a commercial building to accommodate consolidation of Foundation and Nevada administration and staff.

Location: **St. Petersburg, Florida**

20,000 sq/ft, \$252,297

Extensive renovations provided 61 beds for permanent and transitional housing and services.

Location: **Las Vegas, Nevada**

(Women and Childrens Campus)

30,000 sq/ft, \$500,000 (+/-)



Extensive renovations to our Women and Childrens Campus facility including a new roof, doors, windows, carpeting, lighting, etc.

Location: **Orting, Washington**

(Betsy Ross Soldiers Home)

4,406 sq/ft, \$300,000

Major renovations to a historic building to use as permanent housing for female veterans and children.

And a host of new projects are lined up for 2016!



KUDOS! *Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Employees*

KUDOS!

Congratulations to **Sasha Thompson** for being promoted to Program Coordinator in Key Largo, Florida. Sasha is a clinician who first joined the Guidance/Care Center 3 ½ years ago as a TBOS therapist working with children and families. She attended the University of South Florida where she graduated with her Bachelor's in Psychology and her Master's in Social Work. Since joining the Care Center team, Sasha obtained her licensure as a Clinical Social Worker. Way to go, Sasha!

In Miami, two Village staffers were recently recognized for their years of dedicated service to the *Healthy Start Program*. **Pierre Hayeck** has been with *Healthy Start* for five years; he is trilingual and speaks English, Spanish, and Creole; he is also certified to teach parenting, smoking cessation.

Grechel Lopez-Hidalgo joined The Village in September 2015, and has been recognized for 10 years of service with the *Healthy Start Coalition of Miami Dade*, where she has been providing intensive home visiting services to pregnant women and infants for many years.

Congratulations Pierre and Grechel, and thank you for your many years of work providing services in the field of maternal, infant and child health!

KUDOS!**KUDOS!****KUDOS!**

John Zidek relays to us that *"Uplifting the Human Spirit is what Director Stan Brooks did every day at Sheridan with the people he came into contact with, by his listening, mentoring, loyalty to WestCare, daily work ethic, enjoying daily living, and passion to help others. An award has been created to keep Stan's spirit alive throughout the WestCare nation."* (The beloved Mr. Brooks passed away in January 2015.) "Only one staff member can have such an honor each year, and the very first recipient is Administrative Assistant **Roberta Cline** (alias Gramma). The Stan Brooks Uplifting the Human Spirit award will be presented for many years."



KUDOS! *Our Monthly Shout-Outs to Exceptional Employees (Con't.)*

A Fresno Area Express (FAX) driver recently made a special point to walk back to the MLK residential campus to commend some of our residents from the *Men 2 Men* program. They were coming back from a 12 step meeting and physically carried an elderly woman off the bus in her wheelchair. The FAX driver also mentioned that she likes having our WestCare clients on her bus because they are always well-behaved and polite.



Andrew F., Richard R. with daughter **Chloe**, **Earnest J., Eric F., Oscar M., Julio D., Randall R., Christopher S., Isaac H.** and **Jared H.** are all shining examples of *"Uplifting the Human Spirit!"* Way to pay it forward, guys!

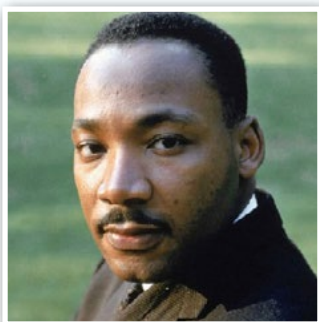


Congresswoman **Gwen Moore**, the first female to represent her district in the House of Representatives, continues to assist local WestCare programs. She recently met in Washington D.C. with WestCare Wisconsin's **James Ferguson** and District Director **Elizabeth Coggs** to discuss her continued support.



Martin Luther King Jr. Day is January 18th

Courtesy of timeanddate.com



Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a federal holiday held on the third Monday of January. It celebrates the life and achievements of **Martin Luther King Jr.**, an influential American civil rights leader. He is most well-known for his campaigns to end racial segregation on public transport and for racial equality in the United States. MLK Day is seen as a day to promote equal rights for all Americans, regardless of their background. Some educational establishments mark the day by teaching their pupils or students about the work of Martin Luther King Jr. and the struggle against racial segregation and racism.



FLORIDA: Awards Highlight End of Year Festivities

As is tradition, WestCare Florida's multiple service areas held holiday parties that included the naming of Programs of the Year, along with individual recognition.

In addition to the programs pictured, the following were saluted as Employees of the Year:

Village South

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- **Dr. Michael Miller** - Leadership of the Year
- **Carolyn Baker** - Administration
- **Anamaria Arana** - Clinical
- **Yanaitso Navarro** - Clinical
- **James Etienne** - Prevention
- **Nancy Bowe Johnson** - BHT

Florida Keys

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- **Annie Rojas** - Case Manager
- **Donna Gullia** - Front Office
- **Maureen Kempa** - Area Director
- **Barbara Blair** - Prevention Coordinator
- **Doreen Mobley** - Client Advocate
- **Joe Knoth** - Case Manager

Gulf Coast

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- **Michael McElroy** - Criminal Justice Director



Guidance/Care Center (Keys), In-Patient CSU - Program of Year



Village South (Miami), Keys to Recovery - Program of Year



Employee Rewards Luncheon



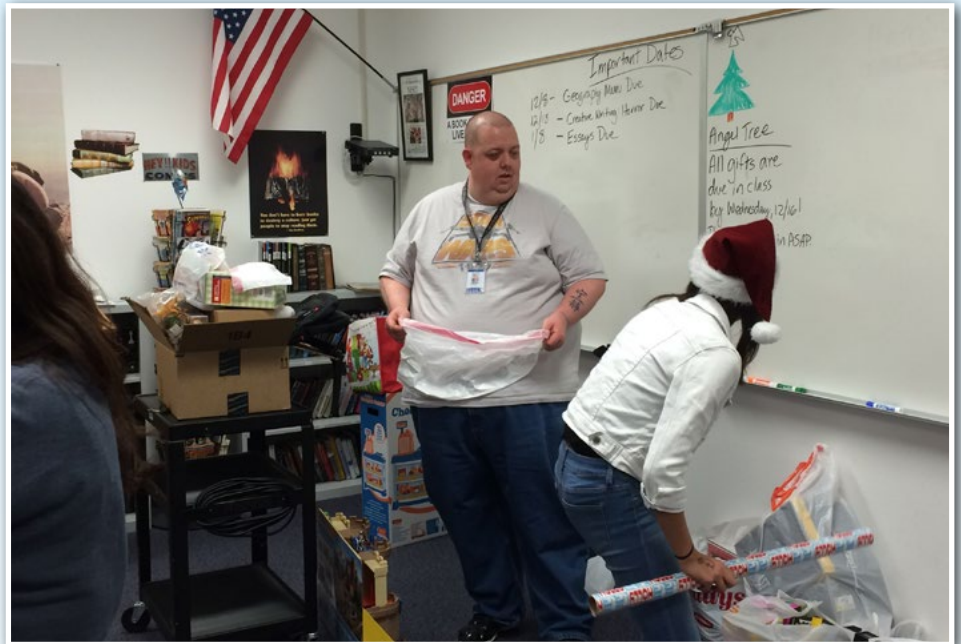
James Dates, Michael McElroy, and Frank Rabbito



NEVADA: *A Man of Class, In More Ways Than One*

By Darlene Terrill, Director of Development

Every year, when the holiday season falls upon us, we have been very blessed to have Mr. **Brian Lowery**. He is a teacher at the *Jack and Terry Mannion Middle School* in Henderson, Nevada, and he has adopted our WestCare children's needs for the last nine years. Mr. Lowery has been by our side faithfully while instilling in his six classrooms of 8th graders the importance of giving. Planning starts around Thanksgiving, gathering wish tags and distributing to the students who want to shop and meet the requests of our children.



Children buying for children, wrapping tenderly with love and pride, expressing hope that the child they adopted will like their gifts. Our agency has been truly blessed to have all this goodwill coming our way yearly. The students and Mr. Lowery have generated thousands of dollars of gifts for us.

Thank you, Mr. Brian Lowery for keeping this tradition alive and growing. You are one special man and we are so blessed to have you in our lives.





HUMAN RESOURCES: *'Tis the Season... Year-Round*

By Michael Shields, Senior Vice President - Human Resources



First of all, Merry Christmas to everyone! Depending on when this publication hits the streets, you may have already had one! It may already be 2016!

Along with the holiday cheer/madness, it's time to remind everyone to contact your friendly neighborhood Human Resources professional to take care of name changes and/or address changes so that W2s can make it to the right places in time to file your taxes. For any number of reasons, that's something you certainly don't want to miss.

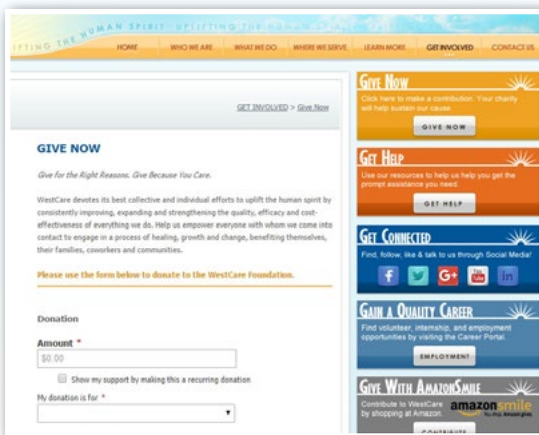
On another holiday topic, it is heartwarming the way all of us at WestCare, across the nation and around the world, seem to be able to be positive, supportive and helpful to those around us during the Christmas season. Even politicians get along!

My charge to all of us is to figure out how to stay in the "Christmas Spirit" mode throughout the rest of the year. That extra word of kindness, paying it forward, helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Once a year we all show we can truly "uplift".

If we can do it for a few days, we can do it for longer periods of time. And longer, and longer! My best to everyone for a great 2016!!!



Did You Know?



There are many ways to make a contribution to help WestCare's mission in *uplifting the human spirit*. However, did you know that you can make a donation directly to WestCare through the organization's website?

Simply head to www.westcare.com and access the donation form by clicking on the **GIVE NOW** button on the right-hand pane.

You can also bookmark the following link that's easy to remember:

<https://www.westcare.com/donate>

This Month's Question: *"When you were in high school, did you have future goals? What were they?"*



"When I was in high school I wanted to go to college and earn my credentials in counseling so I can help other youth who were struggling like I was. Like most challenges and triumphs in our lives, those experiences made me who I am today! I am now in the business of helping people who are lonely, need answers, feel depressed or don't know the healthiest way to handle their circumstances. I followed through with my plan and accomplished my goal. Not only do I have credentials as an Addiction Specialist, but I also carry Mental Health Counseling and Therapy credentials."

- Virginia Tolento, Community Service Specialist, Bakersfield CA

"I have always said, 'I just want to help people!' I think every job I've had along the way has helped me do that – but none more so than WestCare. Here we are able to touch so many in just an hour of our day – that is phenomenal!"

- Gabriela McNiel, Director of Marketing, Fresno CA



"I graduated from high school in 2001. My goals at the time were like most of my peers which was to earn a bachelor's degree. I just knew I wanted to do something that I loved and that school would help me find that out. Those two goals led me on a journey working with adolescent and foster youth in a residential treatment setting. The experience would change my life and future goals. Having the opportunity to come on board with the WestCare Support Overnight Stay program I have had the opportunity to live out my goals and work with amazing people who share the same passion. Working with the adult population struggling with mental health illness, substance abuse and co-occurrence, has brought great joy in my life and work satisfaction."

- Diego Baca, Case Manager - Supportive Overnight Stay, Fresno CA



For February: *"What do you hope to accomplish in 2016?"*

Send response and photo by **January 15** to john.wallace@westcare.com.



CALIFORNIA: *Big and Little Angels with Bikes and Trikes*

(Stories Submitted by Michael Mygind and Gabriela McNiel)



We were invited once again by the Hells Angels of Fresno to participate in their *17th Annual Toy Run* and bike giveaway! We are so thankful to them and all of their donors and sponsors. 527 bikes were given to children from four local charities, including WestCare California. Great job, Fresno Hells Angels!



CALIFORNIA: *Supporting the Troops During the Holidays*

The men from the MLK Residential Treatment Facility wrote letters of gratitude to the service members overseas. Outreach Specialist **Raymond Gonzales** of San Joaquin Valley Veterans sent them off to *Operation Gratitude*. A special thank you goes out to Men to Men Counselor **Vincent Monk** for helping the residents with this project!

"From all of us here at the WestCare family to all of you wonderful men and women who are a part of our great Armed Forces, God bless you and your families."





CALIFORNIA: *More Vet Families Get End of the Year Cheer*

Representatives from **Gill Ranch Storage** gave \$5,000 to split between five veteran families in need to spend on gifts and supplies to make this a truly happy holiday season for them and their loved ones. Local real estate agencies, **EVC HOMES LLC**, **Matthews, Wallace & Co CPA, EAs.**, **MC Real Estate Corp**, **Home Rescue Corp.**, **California Funding** and **Kathy Mendonca**, donated an additional \$3,000 to make the total \$8,000, making it possible to provide for eight families! Each family was picked by their respective veteran advocate.



This is the fifth year that Gill Ranch Storage has given this generous gift to families that are receiving services from our San Joaquin Valley Veterans program, and now with more donors onboard, even more joy can be spread!



KENTUCKY: *Joyful Return for Pike County Shelter Kids*

(Information courtesy of WYMT)



WestCare and Pleasant Valley Church partnered together to throw a homecoming Christmas celebration for the children who have stayed at the WestCare shelter in the past year, but now live elsewhere.

“We want to see our kids and make sure they’re doing well and make sure they’re doing ok for the year, and see how they’ve grown and tell them that we still care about them, we will always think about them, and we’re still involved in their lives,” says **Anna Coleman**, Program Coordinator.

A meal was prepared for the families and each child was given a stocking full of surprises.



GEORGIA: A Renovation Celebration

By Michael Langford, Regional Vice President



Senator Fort, COO Frank Rabbito and other Community Partners and Supporters

On Tuesday, December 8th, the Georgia WestCare Family was joined by community partners, elected officials, funders, clients and friends to celebrate the completion of much needed renovations of our Administrative office in Atlanta.

The renovations were made possible through the City of Atlanta Community Development Block Grant funding, and *“will provide a first class environment for clients and staff,”* stated Georgia’s Board Chairman, Dr. **Eugene Walker**. *“We are extremely proud of the quality workmanship and the enhanced security system installed by Fitzhouse as part of the overall renovation”*

In addition to local community partners, like Atlanta’s finest First Lady **Sarah Elizabeth Reed**, Councilman **Kwanza Hall**, Senator **Vincent Fort**, Fire Chief **Joel G.**

Baker and Assistant Chief **Shawn Jones**, several senior officials from WestCare Foundation were on hand, including President and CEO **Richard Steinberg**, Deputy COO **Frank Rabbito**, and Senior VP of Facilities **Mike Lavin**.



Richard Steinberg, Kwanza Hall, 1st Lady Sara Elizabeth Reed, and Mike Lavin

We are very pleased with the finished product, which would not be possible without our valued partners, including City of Atlanta Mayor **Kasim Reed**, **Aaron Rents**, local residents and our volunteer **Community Advisory Council**.

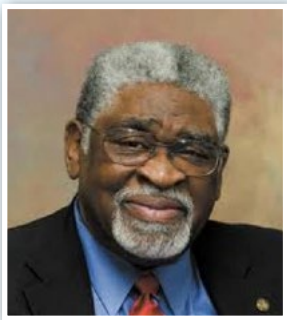
“If you see a Turtle sitting on a fence post, you can bet one thing: It did not get there by itself.” And neither did we.

GEORGIA: *Five Volunteers Who Make a Difference*

By Michael Langford, Regional Vice President

WestCare Georgia is tremendously blessed and honored to have five volunteer servant leaders who provide valuable guidance, service, and resources as members of the Georgia Board of Directors, our local Community Advisory Council, and on the WestCare Foundation Board of Directors.

They all have distinguished backgrounds as public servants, including public officials, elected office holders, military service, and administrators. Collectively, they have over 150 years of public service, and are affectionately known around WestCare as *"The Dream Team"*.



Dr. **Eugene Walker**, is a former State Senator, DeKalb School Board Member, Commissioner of the State of Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice, Member of State Pardon and Parole Board, to name a few positions of trust that Dr. Walker has held. He also served as State Chairman of the Georgia Jesse Jackson Campaign for President in 1988. Dr. Walker and **Derrick Boazman**, a former Atlanta City Councilman, Community Activist, and host of one of Atlanta's most popular talk shows on CBS Radio, share the distinct honor of being the longest serving Georgia Board



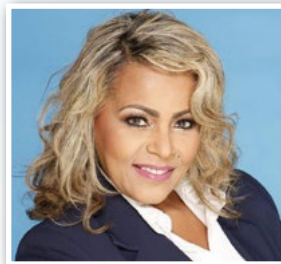
Members. They served for approximately 13 years, and were members of the original Board when WestCare incorporated in Georgia in 2003!



Doris Michaux, however, has been affiliated with the WestCare family for more than 25 years. She has served on both the California and Georgia Board of Directors and is retired from Fresno County Dept. of Social Services in California, where she served as Executive Administrator for all service divisions, inclusive eligibility, social work, and administrative services.



Qwynn Galloway has served for several years. She is an Army Veteran and serves as a State Program Coordinator for the Georgia Army National Guard. She is the lone Veteran of our CAC and provides valuable recommendations to our VetsCare Services.



Debra DeBerry is serving her first term as elected Clerk of DeKalb County Superior Court. Debra has a distinguished public service career with both the City of Atlanta and DeKalb



GEORGIA: *Five Volunteers Who Make a Difference (Con't.)*

County Government. She has been a part of the WestCare family for 6 years.

As we come to the close of another productive year of “*Uplifting the Human Spirit*,” we pause to say “*Thank you*” for taking time from your families and busy schedules. Most of all, *Thank you* for **Making a Difference**.



ILLINOIS: *Finally, I Have Refuge*

By Joe Olvera, former client at WestCare Illinois - Sheridan

I came to Sheridan in August 2011, with 30 months remaining of my 5 ½ year sentence for aggravated DUI w/death. Before my incarceration, I was a prisoner to a lifestyle of drinking. Alcohol had robbed me of my confidence, courage, clarity, and communication skills. I was in bad shape and could not reach out to anyone for help due to shame and humility. I held everything inside until the alcohol sent me on a rampage of destruction, just as pressure can burst a pipe. It was here at WestCare that I learned about cognitive behavioral therapy and how to communicate my feelings.



I spent the last 2 ½ years of my sentence learning all I could about addiction, support systems, and communication. I was confident that by mastering these important life skills, I could re-build myself on a steady foundation so that

I could aspire to be the man, husband, and father I always dreamed of.

Here I am, coming up to my two-year anniversary from being released (and my discharge from parole). I feel like I have done so much in such a short time. I have secured a job with the federal government, married a childhood friend, had my first child in August, and we are about to close on our new home this month! I am truly blessed!

Before I came to the program, I could not imagine what a life without alcohol would be like. I did not see how I could enjoy living without the crutch that I depended on for almost 20 years. Now, after 6 ½ years of sobriety, I am no longer in the darkness of denial and dependency. I can see how much brighter my life is and how much joy there is. Right living never felt so good! Thank you WestCare staff for everything! You have helped me to make the most of my second chance at life. May God bless you and the work you do in the lives of all you try to help. **Have a happy and safe New Year!**

THE GREEN CORNER: *Upcycling Ideas for the New Year*

Courtesy of www.popsugar.com

What Is Upcycling? It is the process of converting old or discarded materials into something useful and often beautiful. Upcycling is not a new concept. Some of the best examples of modern-day upcycling come from the 1930s-40s when families had very little economic or material resources. While Recycling requires energy or water to break down materials, upcycling only requires your own creativity and elbow grease.

Here are a few for this month:

Pillowcase Garment Bags - Add slits to old pillowcases to turn them into garment bags.



Denim Bracelets - Make denim bracelets by wrapping scraps of your old jeans around slim bangles as seen in *Green Craft Magazine*.



Drawer Bulletin Board - Upcycle an old dresser by taking one of the drawers and hanging it up for use as a bulletin board.



Paper Bag Baskets - Weave strips of paper bags together to make these cute baskets.



USVI: *Addiction Perspective from the Heart of a Client*

By Kim Nosek, Director of Treatment Services, WestCare Virgin Islands

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery; None but ourselves can free our minds.

“Redemption Song” - Bob Marley

The Village Virgin Islands has been gifted with a powerful recovery message. **Calvin B.** has spent the past few months painting a mural depicting the pain of a brother enslaved by his addiction.



Located in the main Group Room of the Sion Hill Therapeutic Community, this chained man serves as a visceral reminder of where we have been and of some of the behaviors that kept us at the mercy of our addictions. The mural is especially meaningful for our clients.

The Sion Hill facility is located within the buildings and ruins of one of the most intact sugar cane plantations in the Caribbean. The buildings that we live in and the roads we walk on here were built by the hands and sweat and blood of enslaved Africans.

In 1848, the slaves of St. Croix, including those at Sion Hill, staged a rebellion and emancipated themselves from slavery. Today, the struggle for freedom continues at Sion Hill. Today the slave masters are drugs and alcohol rather than plantation owners. But the misery of addiction is just as real. And the joy of emancipation from drugs and alcohol is also just as real.

We thank those who walked these grounds before us for their struggles. And a huge thanks to Calvin B. who gave such a powerful and beautiful reminder.

WASHINGTON: *Sometimes, It Takes a Marine!*

By Donald Lachman

As we enter the building we can observe a mix of veterans seated in a well-lit comfortable waiting area, a common sight occurring daily in clinics and service centers across our country. But, this scene offers a unique twist, this veterans service clinic, launched through a collaboration with the **WestCare Foundation, Washington State Department of Veteran Affairs** and the **Department of Corrections**, is in a prison. It ensures these inmates, half of whom served in combat, no longer represent our country's most isolated veterans.

Today, each is confident of access to professionals representing multiple disciplines from services officers to civil legal and behavioral health professionals. This clinic has another unique element essential to its successful operation and customer service focus: **Edwin Corbett**, a Vet Pod inmate and Marine who serves as the inaugural volunteer Clinic Coordinator.

Edwin understood some of the challenges when striving to provide professional services in a prison setting and determined it would **take a Marine to help put things right**. He worked closely with the *Tera McElravy*, the Vet Pod Unit Supervisor and other DOC staff to develop operational protocols to support the clinic's mission and commitment to providing consistent high quality customer services.

The benefits of these changes were immediately felt as

Edwin implemented the improvements. The monthly services clinic now runs efficiently, a direct result of the inmates taking increased ownership for the programs offered in the Vet Pod Unit. For the WestCare Foundation and other partners committed to expanding our engagement with our country's most isolated veterans, it offers a valuable lesson: include the inmates in the design and operation of the programs.



Edwin Corbett, a Veteran, observed a situation that required improvements to achieve its mission. He stepped up to the situation applying the same skills and competencies that make him a proud Marine!

ARIZONA: *Grand Giving in the Grand Canyon State*



This season, WestCare Arizona was able to provide gifts for 22 families, which included 55 children. We helped the City of Bullhead adopt two families in need, in addition to providing all WestCare SafeHouse, Sober and Transitional Living residents Christmas ham with dinners and gift bags. We also had three families in the community in need of meals, so we gave them each a Christmas dinner.

Donors included **SuddenLink, Bank of America, Holy Spirit Church, Best Buy, River Lodge, Carpenters Union** and **Legacy Foundation**.

It was a fun season, and one of the times of the year that we all come together and joyfully provide not only gifts, food, clothing, and blankets, but we are also happy to assist with bells and Santa hats donned, while singing Christmas carols.

INDUSTRY NEWS: "I Don't Drink. Got a Problem With That?"

By Christopher Post, via The Huffington Post

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/self/13-things-im-tired-of-hearing-when-people-find-out-i-dont-drink_b_8547290.html



I can't drink. It's not by choice. It's medical. Really. Whenever I've touched the stuff. Breathing problems.

So I don't drink. Yet I am constantly in situations where drinking is, at minimum, a central activity. Not only am I everyone's favorite designated driver, I am also confronted with incredulity and a lot of stupid assumptions -- nonstop. Here are the things I'm tired of hearing when people find out I don't drink.

1. Are you (insert religion that prohibits the consumption of alcohol)?

No, I am not a Mormon or Muslim or Southern Baptist. I wonder if these same people ask total strangers who don't grab a rack of ribs at the pig roast if they are Jewish?

2. Are you straight edge?

If you ask me this, I already know you grew up in the '90s. Anyway, the answer is no.

3. What step are you on in the Program?

Honestly, this is the one I get the most. People automatically assume that because I'm not drinking that I have a drinking problem. I am not sure exactly how AA works, but I am pretty sure the people working the steps are avoiding shitty dive bars in Detroit at two in the morning.

4. Seriously, are you really allergic to alcohol?

At least one person had the dignity to preface this question with: "If this is too personal, or you don't want to answer, you don't have to." Oh, gee. Thanks!

5. When did you find out that you were allergic to alcohol?

This one I can actually understand.

6. Did you find out the hard way?

I am not exactly sure what people mean by this. And, I'm not sure they do either.

7. Yeah, I'm allergic to alcohol, too. It causes me all sorts of problems!

No you're not, shut up.

8. How do you relax?

I don't.



INDUSTRY NEWS: "I Don't Drink. Got a Problem With That?" (Con't).

9. What do you do when everyone else is drinking?

I dunno, converse with other people? Same as you.

10. How can you even have any fun?

Yes, it is possible to have fun in social situations without alcohol. I don't even know how to answer this one. Sometimes, I just laugh and nod.

11. Dude, how much weed do you smoke?

None. I smoked pot once and cried for three hours. Not really my thing.

12. Coke?

Oh for God's sake, no! Just because I don't drink doesn't mean I smoke weed, snort coke, drop acid, take molly, or shoot smack. Damn it, I am starting to think that I really am straight edge.

13. That must suck.

Not really. I've never known the difference. I haven't even been close to buzzed, so I have nothing to compare sobriety to. All I know is that I save a lot of money and that I am willing to sell pieces of my perfectly healthy liver to the highest, drunkest bidder.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: The IT Files

By Sean Harrigan

Happy New Year From Your WestCare IT Team



2015 was a busy and eventful year in the WestCare IT department. Our Software Development team, Support team, and the Infrastructure team have all put in a lot of time and effort to expand our network and services to better meet the needs of our

customers (that's you!).

Software Development

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The Software development team had a number of large scale projects in 2015. Diane, Jason, Danny, and Tiffany worked hard to improve and expand the WestCare CDS



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: *The IT Files (Con't.)*

footprint to encompass more programs and meet more of our program's requirements.

Looking forward in 2016, WestCare CDS will be certified to meet the requirements of The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) for electronic health records technology. Outside of WestCare CDS, the time reporting system is expanding, and Incident Reporting will be revamped.

IT Support

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In 2015 the support team was restructured to better serve our customers. JB, JK, Phil, and Scott have all put a great deal of effort into streamlining processes, documenting procedures, and improving performance. As a result, the team has been able to improve performance, and to expand coverage by increasing hours of operation.

In 2016, our support team will be adding on-call emergency after-hours coverage for outages and work stoppage events, more online self-service support options, enhanced CDS support. The team will likely expand to cover the additional extended hours and responsibilities.

IT Infrastructure

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In 2015 the Infrastructure team made progress improving hardware and software platforms. Rolando, David, Leo, and I (Sean) have been working hard to upgrade our systems, creating configurations that are dependable,

manageable, and cost efficient, while also bringing our security in line with the requirements of WestCare CDS.

Executive Management

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With the addition of Jason and Ken to our team in 2015, we've been able to better integrate our team with the organization as a whole by adding an ever present interface to Senior Management. We look forward to working with Ken and Jason in 2016 to further develop and expand our presence, and to better serve our customers.

YOU!

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In 2015 you helped us to make our services better just by using our team, and in particular our help desk. Your participation allowed us to show everyone just how much we are needed, and how much we can do to increase efficiency.

In 2016 we're going to be looking for ways to further improve all of our services, and to help you work smarter. We need you to continue being a part of our team! So keep calling, keep submitting tickets, and keep using the team for your technology needs.

If you've got some ideas regarding how IT can help you and your team to work more efficiently, shoot us an email at ITSuggestions@westcare.com to let us know. We'll review every idea, and see what we can do to implement them.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS: *January 2016*

January 1

HOLIDAY - New Year's Day

January 6 (9am-11:00am PT / 12pm-2pm ET)

FL - Guidance/Care Center - CAC Meeting (*Marathon, FL*)

January 11 (9am-9:30am PT / 12pm-12:30pm ET)

Central KY - CAC Meeting (*Irvine, KY*)

January 12 (8am-9am PT / 11am-12pm ET)

Executive Com Pre-Board Teleconference Meeting

January 12 (3pm-4pm PT / 6pm-7pm ET)

FL - Gulf Coast - CAC Meeting (*City Center Office*)

January 15 (1:30pm-2:30pm PT)

CA - CAC Meeting (*Fresno, CA*)

January 18

HOLIDAY - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 19-21

Sr. Management Team Meetings (*FND Office, Henderson, NV*)

January 21-24

Annual Foundation Board Meeting (*Henderson, NV*)

JANUARY

| 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 | | | | | | |



January Observances

- Cervical Health Awareness Month
- Glaucoma Awareness Month
- National Birth Defects Prevention Month
- National Blood Donor Month
- Thyroid Awareness Month
- National Bath Safety Month
- National Blood Donor Month
- National Braille Literacy Month
- National Hobby Month
- Hot Tea Month
- National Oatmeal Month
- National Soup Month