



September 2012

Back to School with a Little Help From Some "WestCare Angels"

Darlene Terrill – Women and Children's Campus Director

The WestCare Nevada Women's and Children's Campus held the Las Vegas Emblem Club's 2nd annual "Back to School" event. The event was organized by WestCare Board Members Mary Ann Hoban, Jean Tobman and Marilyn Moran. These women all have a long, generous, and amazingly kind-hearted history with WestCare – way back to our beginnings.

They help to provide kids and teens returning to school with approximately 100 back packs loaded with school supplies. They were sure to

spread the love to all of WestCare Nevada ensuring that every school-age child in Nevada programs such as; Harris Springs Ranch BOYS, Community Involvement Center Outpatient Youth and even for the children of some recently graduated adults. To show their appreciation the kids from the Healthy Families Program hand made thank you cards and presented them to the visitors after they did a little performance. WestCare is beyond fortunate to have this group as our partners, friends, and guardian Angels! *Continued on page 2*



The wonderful Emblem Club volunteers

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Client quote

“What an awesome experience that we all here at WestCare had!! Who would have thought so many folks from the community pulled together for our kids for the school year?!?! This experience was such an emotional one just to see how happy our kids were for their back packs and school supplies!! There truly aren’t enough words to describe how grateful we all are.” Sara C.

Longtime WestCare volunteer Mary Ann Hoban holds one of the youngest residents at the Women and Children’s Campus.



Cares Team National HIV Testing Day Events

By Miltina Fraser – Outreach Specialist

The Atlanta Georgia office recently relocated and wanted to make a positive first impression by continuing the mission, “Uplifting the Human Spirit.” They planned a Healthy Living Getting to Know You Block Party. They collaborated with Mechanicsville Civic Association and other community agencies to offer HIV Testing, drug and alcohol information, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, along with FREE fire and carbon monoxide detectors, voter’s registration and several health referral resources. While receiving these services the community was offered food and drinks, as DJ Lord filled the block with music. Youth were able to participate in fun filled activities in the KID’S ZONE. It was a successful event, and they were delighted to share supportive services with their neighbors. The goal was to offer more than just HIV Testing for National HIV testing day. They wanted to help educate the community about the importance of taking care of themselves as a whole.

Part two of their mission- to educate the community on the importance of testing- was AWESOME. They were able to be on two popular Atlanta radio stations (V-103 with Ryan Cameron and Crash D and their sister station 1380 W A L K, with Derrick Bozeman.) They were interviewed by the hosts and conducted HIV testing at the studio while it streamed live on the internet. This experience took their voices further than could have done through regular outreach and educational programs. Being on the airways and the internet took their message to millions of people they would otherwise not have touched.

Georgia



Atlanta radio stations helped the Cares Team

WC’s amazing staff in Georgia



WestCare Sheridan on the “MOVE”

By Charlene Hamann – *Recreation Therapist*

The beginning of July brought with it not only extreme heat and 4th of July party plans and celebrations, but also a lot of stress and headaches as the WestCare Sheridan staff prepared to move out of a building they have occupied since the program opened in 2003. The move was in preparation for inmates from across the state to be transferred to Sheridan due to many program cuts and prison closures across Illinois.

A total of nine staff members (which included the business office, directors, and human resource office) in our administrative building (C8) were given just under two weeks to box up personal belongings, pictures, files, books, chairs, desks, and memories and to begin the long haul to either housing unit C-26 or to the academic building, which are now their new homes. For some staff members that have been in the administrative building for more than 8 years, it was their first move since they had been in that building when the prison re-opened in January 2004. Stan Brooks, WestCare's Program Director, stated, "Although our old place was a little outdated, it truly was a blessing in disguise. Be careful what you wish for, you just may already have it."

Jacky Stinson, Human Resource Manager, said she really likes the abundant space her new office gives her, but it will take a lot to get used to, as everyone is so spaced apart now.

Others who have already had a few different "addresses" at Sheridan found the move less stressful. Trista Riveland, Research Assistant, said, "I need to remind myself that the only thing constant is change."

As all settled in to their new locations, one thought that was voiced by everyone more than once was how thankful they are to still have jobs and to be able to continue to serve the clients they do each day. Even though offices may not be in familiar places, the clients served are the same and the main goal and focus each day are still the same as

a month ago. Despite all the chaos that has since settled down, no program hours were lost with the move, as many staff endured the heat and long hours, including some staff



working on weekends to make the move by the deadline given by the state. Several clients were also instrumental in moving all of the boxes, furniture, and files (including nearly 200 bankers' boxes containing files of past clients) in the 100-degree heat. Their help was invaluable! The engineering staff at Sheridan was very accommodating to their needs.

It truly was difficult trying to fit a round peg into a square hole. One member of the staff said: "I didn't realize how much stuff I had accumulated over the years here at Sheridan – my toys, board games, yard and gym equipment, posters, art supplies, and dust. Trying to move two prison cells' worth of equipment into a much, much smaller office was quite a challenge."

Although we are not in the same building anymore, the "C8 family" has only been displaced, not replaced. They are still working together, keeping things in check, checking in with each other as all continue to "uplift the human spirit." They are no longer just a few footsteps away from each other, but they are only a phone call away!

Illinois

Program Director Stan Brooks oversees the big move



“I Have My Life.” An Autobiography.

By (Letha) Jeanine Diaz – *Families First Coordinator*

Preface: We all work very hard to provide the very best quality of care for our clients at WestCare. We pride ourselves on being creative and being on the cutting edge of prevention, intervention, treatment and healing. But we seldom realize that the client is the most creative and on the most cutting edge of all when it comes to their success. Frankly how much more creative and cutting edge could it be, if it weren't developed by the client themselves? Here, at WestCare Arizona, is a success story which will bring to light some of the essence of what is being presented in this writing. This client has had much diversity and demonstrated her ability to “stay the course” and maintain success. Join me in honoring this client by reading her success story.

– *Bobby Debatt, WC Arizona staff*

“**S**taying off drugs and alcohol with ‘white knuckles’ was an obstacle in itself. Adding the withdrawals took it to a whole new level. I experienced so much anxiety in the beginning. My mind would roll with endless thoughts. I would stress about where my life was going, if I was forgetting to be somewhere or pay something. I would stress about people finding out about my situation as if all they had to think about was my life. Some days the anxiety was so great I wanted to get high just to make it all go away. It’s weird how I use to think “speed” would shut off my brain and make all my problems go away. Along with anxiety I had chronic headaches, memory loss and I felt almost stupid. I had seriously affected my brain with my drug use.

At WestCare I participated in substance abuse education, my counselor presented me opportunities to, what he always says, “enhance “ my life and he would continue to say “as you continue to enhance your life, changes will happen naturally, so focus on the enhancements and those changes you want will happen!” So, I built a support network that included AA, NA and even some church. I continued, as I do now, with my participation at WestCare. I did enhance my knowledge regarding recovery, and at WestCare I was shown how to apply my knowledge in a way that worked for me; learning how to apply this knowledge is just as important, if not more important, at least I think so. Anyway, great changes did occur and I wish I could say that everything has been great since I decided to really live a life of recovery, but it wasn't. Some wreckage of my past came into play and has caused me some troubles, but I stay

the course and I haven't wanted to pick up again.”

I thought that my life was over because of the wreckage that has followed me; I was actually put in jail. I thought that I was going to prison for years and that my son was going to be taken from me. I shared all this with my counselor at WestCare and he told me that even though wreckage can follow us into recovery, we can't forget about all the good work that we do and that sometimes that good work will be an advantage for us. He was right; I have been given an opportunity to remain on probation and not go to prison. Wow, no jail and it was because of the good work and efforts I have put into my recovery.

I faced another obstacle in my recovery; I had to complete my substance abuse treatment obligations at another agency that was involved with my CPS case. Before I went to jail, the counselor there said I had to complete 4 more groups and 2 individual sessions. After I got out of jail she said I had to complete more sessions, even though I had stayed clean and sober. (I get it I suppose; jail, drugs, assumptions.) After I completed those sessions, I was told that I had to complete even more. I didn't understand why it kept going on, so I finally used my voice and asked what was going on. I had done everything that I was told to do and every time I did, I was told to do more. Well, to make a long story short, that counselor just didn't remember what she had said and with the help of my support at WestCare, I received my completion.

You would think that would be enough for one person to endure, especially since all of it was my doing, but there is more. I have

Arizona



Christine Wiedemann, loving life

to give a urinalysis test when my probation officer asks me to. So, after all the stuff that happened, one day my probation officer tells me to go and test, so I did. About a week later, my WestCare counselor tells me that my probation officer tells him that my test was dirty for “meth.” I was floored. I hadn't used and I was being accused of using and it was a laboratory test. I told my counselor that no way was I using and that I don't hang around anyone using, how could I be dirty? I was told by my counselor that they hang onto urine samples for awhile and that I should request it be retested. I told my PO that I was clean and I was told that they could retest my sample. My PO said okay and he had it done. Guess what? They told my PO that the sample was clean and that it was a false positive. I suppose I could get all upset and say a whole lot of things, but why, it would only mean that I was not applying my recovery and that it was more important to be validated than living life on life's terms.

So, I continue with my journey in recovery. It doesn't matter what comes along, it doesn't matter about the wreckage that comes into play, because as long as I have my recovery, I have my life.”

– *Christine Weidemann, 2012*

Making Healthy Happen Miami

By Shajuana William – Village South Children’s Center Director

Make Healthy Happen Miami is working to increase access to healthy foods and beverages, requiring daily activities and limiting the time children are permitted to watch television and videos as well as use the computer for non-educational purposes within child care centers.

The Village Children’s Center is working with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), University of Miami Department of Pediatrics and Consulting Registered Dietitians, on introducing a policy that will create nutrition standards for childcare centers in Florida. These requirements would be in effect five days a week, at breakfast and snack time, and would include:

- Low or fat-free milk for children age 2 years and older
- Provision of whole fruits and vegetables (fresh, frozen thawed, low-sugar canned)
- When milk or juice is not served, water is the recommended beverage
- All juices will be 100% pasteurized fruit or vegetable juice and will be served no more than one time per week

The goal is that all child care centers and child care family programs in Miami-Dade



County enact physical activity standards that mandate zero hours of screen time for children under 2 years of age and a maximum of 60 minutes per day for children over the age of 2.

This summer, the Village received the Platinum Award for the Making Healthy Happen Miami Program. Congratulations!

Florida

(From left) Tangela Hart, Barbara Glover, Wilma Washington, Shajuana William, Cynthia Fowler, Lakisha Nelson



Farewell to a ‘Local Legend’

On Friday, August 3rd Nadine Hood, Deputy Director and Director of Criminal Justice Programs said her goodbye after 11 years with the Guidance/Care Centers. Through the years she held many roles from Counselor, Coordinator, Keys to Recovery Director to most recently G/CC Deputy Director. Her smiling face and enthusiasm for the work in the Florida Keys will be greatly missed. Good luck in your new adventures Nadine!

Nadine Hood, pictured here with Phil Harris, Family Intervention Therapist.



The Children are Our Future

By Linda Rogers – *Prevention Specialist*

To borrow from a well known song, “We believe the children are our future, teach them well, and let them lead the way, show them all the beauty they possess inside.” With that said, the Gulf Coast Florida Prevention Program endeavors to empower youth through self esteem building, teaching, training, and reinforcing skills and techniques needed to become productive citizens and future leaders. The Gulf Coast Florida, Prevention Program is now in its fourth year of operation, providing quality services to “at-risk” youth ages 8-17. What began as a grass roots effort with limited resources, volunteers and one Prevention Specialist, the program has rapidly expanded.

The youth served exhibit severe behavior problems, have poor academic performance, lack anger management skills, have delinquency referrals, may be substance involved and reside in high delinquency areas. Some of our kids face insurmountable obstacles. One of the challenging cases includes two brothers in our program who live with their mother and siblings in a small, crowded apartment, in a high crime area, surrounded by drugs and drug dealers. They have no transportation, they have to worry whether they are going to have enough food to eat, and their former residence was a homeless shelter. It now becomes the program’s responsibility to help meet this family’s needs. By working with the family and linking them with needed resources, they create an atmosphere of trust and show them that they care. The kids now have a greater chance of success and openness to receiving prevention services.

Positive changes have been observed in the majority of the kids and a reduction in risk factors, as demonstrated by pre and post evaluations. An increase has also been seen in school attendance, improved grades, improved communication with parents, increased involvement in school activities, improved anger and behavior management skills with fewer school suspensions. Much of

this success has been attributed to the efforts of our caring and hardworking staff members. Prevention Specialist, Loretta Randolph is called, “Ms. Loretta” by the kids. She not only provides counseling services but also makes sure the kids receive a delicious and nutritious meal. Prevention Specialist, Nicholas Samuels, is known as “Mr. Nick” by the kids. If a child is absent from the program, Nick is quick to do a home visit. We also have a part-time Prevention Specialist, Loretta Poole who works very closely with both the kids and their family. We salute each of Prevention Specialist for providing quality services to these kids.

A graduation ceremony was held a few months ago. The youngsters eagerly ushered their parents into the ceremony room, they were also in charge of passing out programs outlining the events to follow. Each graduate was asked to talk about the changes they had made since entering our program. One kid said, “My biggest change was learning how to control my anger; I’m not getting into fights at school or getting suspended any more.” Another child said, “My counselor said that I’m a role model for the new kids.” At the close of the ceremony each graduate presented his mother with a single rose and thanked her for her support. The moms fought back tears as they accepted the rose, a thank you, and a promise to continue on the right path. The kids were proud! The parents were proud . . . and so was the staff!

Florida



The children learn important skills that help in school and at home ▲



Some of the Prevention Program graduates ▲



There’s always time for ice cream! ▲



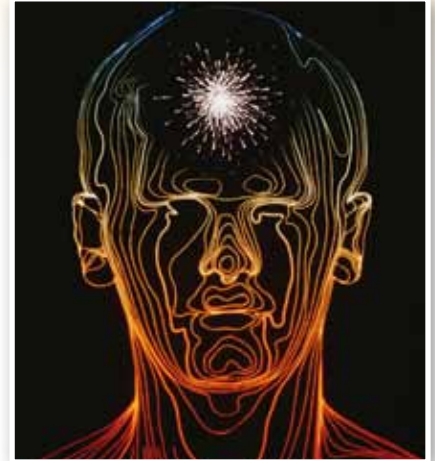
Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE)

Veterans Services

The Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) was established in November 2007 to integrate knowledge and identify, evaluate and disseminate evidence based practices and standards for the treatment of psychological health and TBI within the Defense Department. DCoE is part of the Military Health System, which provides a 'continuum of care' – from initial accession to deployment to discharge. DCoE works across the entire continuum of care to promote resilience, rehabilitation and reintegration for warriors, families and veterans with psychological health concerns and traumatic brain injuries.

DCoE leads a groundbreaking collaborative effort that includes the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), civilian agencies, community leaders, advocacy groups, clinical experts and academic institutions that are dedicated to expanding the state of knowledge of psychological health and TBI.

Their monthly webinars and training resources may be found at: <http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Training.aspx>
All members of the WestCare family are encouraged to use DCoE as a resource, specifically the monthly webinars. Past DCoE webinars are available for viewing at their website.



Patriot Day – September 11th

Patriot Day is an annual observance on September 11 to remember those who were injured or died during the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. Many Americans refer to Patriot Day as 9/11 or September 11.

On the direction of the President, the flag of the United States of America should be displayed on the homes of Americans, the White House and all United States government buildings in the whole world. The flag should be flown at half-mast as a mark of respect to those who died on September 11, 2001. Many people observe a moment of silence at 8:46 AM (Eastern Daylight Time). This marks the time that the first plane flew into the World Trade Center. Some communities, particularly in the

areas directly affected by the attacks, hold special church services or prayer meetings. People who personally experienced the events in 2001 or lost loved ones in them, may lay flowers or visit memorials.



E-mail Etiquette

Here's a handy guideline about the proper use of e-mails, excerpted from an in-house memorandum at WestCare Florida

E-mail is an easy, fast way to keep in touch with co-workers and business partners. E-mails keep us from wasting valuable time being placed on hold when you need to contact someone regarding work related issues. It also allows us to disseminate information a lot faster than ever before.

Please read below and become an e-mailing pro!

Section 1: Courtesy

1. Be concise and to the point.
2. Answer all questions thoroughly.
3. Respond as quickly as possible.
4. Do not attach unnecessary files.
5. Do not overuse the high priority option.
6. Do not write in CAPITALS.

7. Don't leave out the message thread. When you reply to an e-mail, always include the original e-mail in your reply, by using the Reply option instead of New Mail. This will maintain the substance and intent of the message allowing the recipient to have all relevant information in one e-mail message.
8. Read the ENTIRE e-mail before you send it.
9. Do not overuse "Reply to All." When an e-mail is sent out for congratulations or an FYI only – Don't reply to all . . . it isn't necessary.
10. Take care with abbreviations. In business e-mails, try not to use abbreviations such as BTW (by the way) and LOL (laugh out loud).
11. Be careful in using the "request delivery" and "read receipt" options. It may be more effective if you want to know if an e-mail was received to ask the recipient to respond when they have read it.



12. Don't use the "message recall" function. More often than not, your message has already been read when you issue the message recall request. It is usually better just to send an e-mail to say that you have made a mistake.
14. Using the Subject line. Enter a subject line that allows the recipient to easily search for e-mails related to a specific subject. This is especially helpful when a records request is made. Remember do not use client names in the subject line or message.



Labor Day – September 3rd

Labor Day is annually held on the first Monday of September. It was originally organized to celebrate various labor associations' strengths of and contributions to the United States economy. It is largely a day of rest in modern times. Many people mark Labor Day as the end of the summer season and a last chance to make trips or hold outdoor events.



September Calendar

September 3rd
Holiday – Labor Day

September 6th
9am - 10am Florida FLGC-CAC
Weekly Fund raiser Conf. Call
12:00 Noon/ET – 9:00am/PT

September 10th
12noon-1pm/PT – 3pm/ET
Central Kentucky-CAC Meeting
Irvine, Kentucky

September 11th
Florida FLGC-CAC Meeting
3:30pm/PT – 6:30pm/ET
City Center, 100 2nd Ave

September 13th
9am - 10am Florida FLGC-CAC
Weekly Fund raiser Conf. Call
12:00 Noon/ET – 9:00am/PT

September 13th
3pm - 4pm/PT
FAVA Board Meeting

September 14th
Date/Time TBA
WestCare Pacific Islands
Open House

September 18th
Executive Committee Meeting
8:00am/PT – 11:00am ET

September 20th
9am - 10am Florida FLGC-CAC
Weekly Fund raiser Conf. Call
12:00 Noon/ET – 9:00am/PT

September 21st
California CAC Meeting
1:30pm-3:00pm/PT
MLK Campus, Fresno, California

September 22nd
WestCare Kentucky
6th Annual Golf Scramble

September 27th
9am - 10am Florida FLGC-CAC
Weekly Fund raiser Conf. Call
12:00 Noon/ET – 9:00am/PT

September Observances

National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

Courtesy of – <http://www.fitness.gov/about-us/what-we-do/national-monthly-events/childhood-obesity-awareness-month/>

While the President's Council encourages all Americans across the lifespan to adopt a healthy lifestyle, September brings everyone increased cause to take action with National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. To do your part, set goals for you and your family this month to live a healthier lifestyle that includes regular physical activity and good nutrition:

Get Active Outside

Our kids spend a lot of time in front of screens—televisions, computers, mobile devices. When you add it up, kids spend an average of seven hours per day experiencing entertainment media, in addition to computer learning. As a family, limit screen time and choose active entertainment in the month of September. Make it a goal for your family to get outside, go for walk, or play with friends at least five times a week. Or try something new each week like participating in Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day



Exit Disclaimer. Learn more from Let's Move! about reducing screen timing and getting active.

Make Healthy Meals

Small changes can make a big difference with healthy eating and proper nutrition. And as adults, you have the ability to set an example for your children when it comes to making healthy food choices;



learning these habits at an early age will last a lifetime. Start with small changes, like swapping out your cookie jar for a basket filled with fruit or making sure vegetables are served with every meal. Print out a copy of the new MyPlate food icon and make it a family activity to fill your plate accordingly. Use these tips and resources to make healthy meals the easy option.

Need some extra encouragement?

Sign-up your family for the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award Exit Disclaimer to track your daily activity.

Other September Observances and ways to get more info:

National Women's Health and Fitness Day (Sept. 26th) – www.fitnessday.com/women/

National Gay Men's HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (Sept. 27th) – www.cdc.gov/Features/HIVAIDSawareness/

Fruit and Veggies – More Matters Month – <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/>

Healthy Aging Month – www.healthyaging.net/



AmeriCorps Spotlight

AC Member Honors Family with Service

By Daniel Bernal – AmeriCorps Peer Team Leader

First recruited into the AmeriCorps ranks in 2010 by Mr. Pete Molina, California Undersecretary of Native American Affairs, Yolanda “Yoli” Armendariz renewed her AmeriCorps membership in 2011 to serve in WestCare’s United By Service Mission. Her father is a WWII Battle of the Bulge veteran, and her mother was a Pascua Yaqui tribal member before her passing in 2009. It is in their honor that Yoli serves thru AmeriCorps at the San Joaquin Valley Veterans (SJVV) office in Fresno, CA. Brittney Beer serves as Yoli’s supervisor.

Yoli is a two-service veteran; having first served in the United States Army, then with the United States Air Force at Ramstein Air Force Base, Germany with the 86 Airlift Wing where she was assigned to the 86th Law Enforcement/Security Squadron working in investigations and as an assistant law enforcement/security police trainer.

At the SJVV, Yoli assists veterans with housing, utilities, clothing, haircuts, DMV, food and other resources available to veterans in the local community. Yoli states, “Being able to be there for my fellow veterans on a daily basis is a constant highlight of my day.”

She has participated in the Veterans Service Fair, Native American Pow Wows, and the opening of the Veterans Plaza. She is involved with preparation for the Cal/Vet Women’s Veterans Conference on October 4th, as well as the American Indian Veterans Association Conference on October 23rd and 24th.

For Yoli, part of what she enjoys most about her AmeriCorps experience has been the opportunity to meet and collaborate with other AmeriCorps members from different parts of the United States. She treasures being able to reach out to other veterans and to see the expressions of joy and relief they get when they come to understand and realize that they are not alone. Yoli hopes to continue to serve as an example to fellow veterans that things can change for the better.

Thank you Yolanda for your continued service!



National Grandparents Day – September 9th



Many people honor their grandparents through a range of activities such as gift-giving, card-giving, and for children to invite their grandparents to school for a day where they participate in special lessons or special assembly programs. Many school students take part in story-telling activities that relate to their grandparents, as well as art or poster competitions where children often use a story about their grandparents in their artwork.

HEALTH *focus* from Human Resources

A message from HR Director Michael Shields

Caring for Our Clients . . . and Ourselves

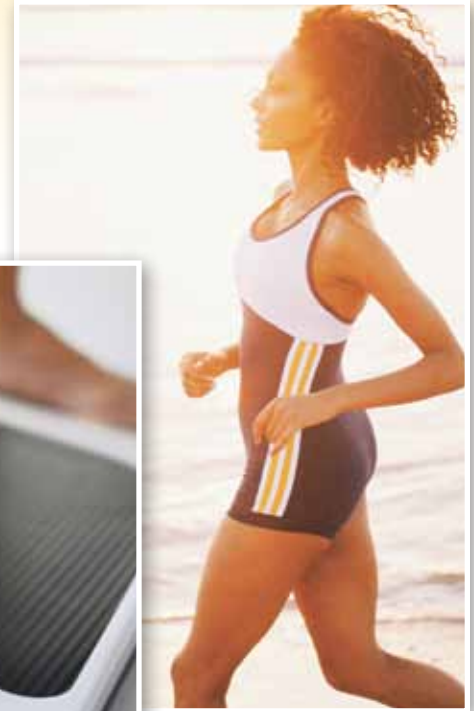
As it cools down to a comfortable 108 degrees in lovely Las Vegas, it's a startling reminder that fall is not too far around the corner. While there is still lots of good weather left, and before (some of you) start to deal with cold and snow, there are lots of good opportunities left to help take care of yourself.

I know most of us go 100 MPH all day every day. While that is good for the Clients we care for, it's not particularly good for us. We all need to take care of ourselves so that we can continue to be able to take care of others. If you don't, the burnout rate among caring professionals is incredibly high!

Here are some ideas:

- **Get outside! Take a walk during the day.**
Enjoy the fresh air.
- **Before the Holiday ramp-up begins, watch what you eat.** None of us have any self control November though December!
- **Spend some time with family and friends.** We are blessed to have them in our lives.
TURN OFF YOUR PHONE WHEN YOU ARE WITH THEM!
- **When you go home after a long WestCare day, find some way to "shut it off."** As my wife says, **"I do my job; I go home and do my life."** Find a way to make that happen.

Let's take care of our Clients; take care of each other, and take care of ourselves!



The Month of September

September Birthstone:

The Sapphire

Sign of the Zodiac and Dates:

Virgo – August 23 - September 22

Characteristics of Virgo:

Orderly, Modest, Diligent, Analytical and Self-sufficient.

September Birth Flowers: the Aster or Morning Glory

The meaning of the September Birth Flower, the Aster is Love, Faith, Wisdom and symbolizes Valor.



And the Family Grows . . .

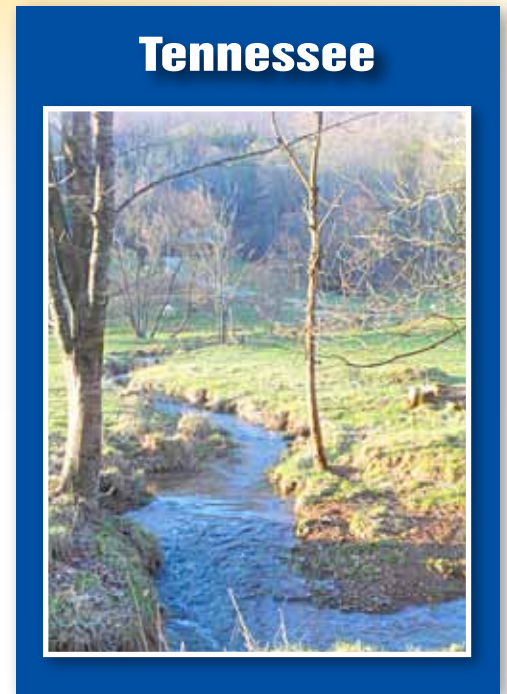
Submitted by Mary Phipps – *WestCare Tennessee Office Assistant*

WestCare Foundation is now in the Volunteer State. They opened our newest location in Sneedville, Tennessee in July, moving into a much larger facility with two large rooms.

They are currently hard at work trying to meet the needs of the area by offering mental health First Aid training to members of the community. They have also been meeting with local law

enforcement and elected officials to find out where their services will be needed as they grow larger. We are currently working on possible collaboration with our court system and local probation office to provide education for their staff as well as their clients.

We will hear more from Tennessee as they move forward with this exciting venture.



Tennessee



FAVA News!

Family Alliance for Veterans of America

WestCare's affiliate agency, Family Alliance for Veterans of America, held its Grand Opening on Saturday, August 25th. The new headquarters is in beautiful Forest City, Iowa. Here are a few photos from the long-awaited event.



▼ (From left) VA Director Jack Caputo, WestCare Senior VP Dr. Judi Kosterman, CEO Richard Steinberg, Iowa Congressman Tom Latham

▼ FAVA staff with Congressman Latham

▲ A splendid afternoon at the City Park gazebo



Kudos!

WestCare Honors Their Employees and Clients

Our monthly shout-out to members of the WestCare family, who stand tall and 'uplift' others in their care and peers around them. Please submit your nominees by the 15th of each month.

WestCare employees have earned special recognition from their supervisors:

Michelle Giddings ▶

WestCare first met *Ms. Michelle Giddings* when her career in mental health and substance abuse blossomed in 2005 as she began her first Directorships with the WestCare Nevada Mental Health Crisis Unit (MHCU) and WestCare Nevada Community Triage Center in Las Vegas. Ms. Giddings clearly states that the experience and knowledge gained in that position fueled her passion to pursue further education in the field of mental health and substance abuse. Today I am extremely proud to say that Ms. Giddings has completed her Doctoral program at the University of South Alabama. She now holds the degree of Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) with the added specialty of psychiatry. This is in addition to being a nationally certified Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP-BC).

Dr. Giddings currently is employed as coordinator of the Master of Science program and the undergraduate psychiatric nursing course at UNLV School of Nursing (SON) which is allowing her the opportunity to influence the practice of a new generation of nurses in their approach to treating individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues.

The most wonderful part is that the WestCare organization and family continues to be her oasis, as she states "it is the place I go to maintain my contact and practice with the patient population which I have chosen to dedicate my profession to caring for." The Women & Children's Campus is very blessed to have Dr. Giddings still employed on a part-time basis to render necessary medical care for all our clients. Her patience, teaching style and genuine radiant personality is exactly what the Doctor ordered for our clients and staff! We love you Michelle and are so very proud of you . . . – Darlene Terrill – Director



From Florida

Members of the Village South (FLA) Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (ACRA) Team (A program funded by CSAT) were selected to do a presentation at the Annual FADAA/ FCCMH Annual Meetings in Orlando. Great work Team!

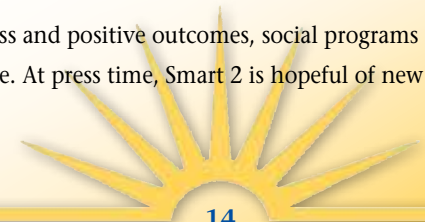
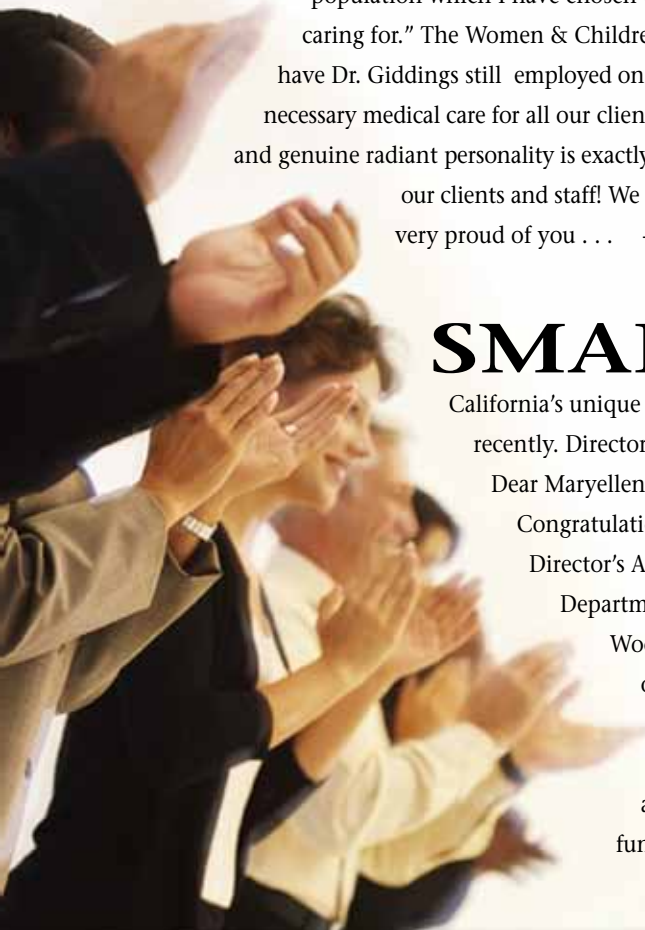
SMART 2 – From California

California's unique and effective parenting/child development program, SMART 2, received a top state honor recently. Director Maryellen Pistalu was notified by Suzi Rupp of ADP:

Dear Maryellen:

Congratulations! It is my pleasure to announce that SMART 2 has been selected to receive the 2012 Director's Award in the Innovative and Effective Approaches to Treatment category at the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs' Training Conference on Tuesday, August 21, 2012, at the Woodlake Hotel Sacramento. The awards presentation will occur immediately following lunch on the first day of the 3-day conference. This year's theme is "Journey to Integration: Opportunities and Challenges."

(Editor's note: Ironically, regardless of success and positive outcomes, social programs are at the mercy of budgeting farther up the pipeline. At press time, Smart 2 is hopeful of new funding to continue its remarkable work.)



Growing for Good

By Michael Mygind – *Special Projects*

During a time when so many people are out to see what they can take, a local veteran isn't setting a limit to how much he can give. **Dan Johnson**, a retired veteran of the Air Force, is using his life's worth of knowledge in horticulture to benefit those in need. He grows a variety of produce and donates it on a regular basis to HomeFront, a project of WestCare and transitional living facility in Fresno for homeless female veterans and their children.

Johnson started as groundskeeper with the Air Force, but tested into the flight crew. He eventually worked his way up into the position of crew chief for working on the F-4 Phantom jet; but his heart was always set on farming and plant science. After leaving the Air Force, he went straight to school for horticulture. Since graduating, he has managed numerous nurseries and has worked in custom landscaping on an international level.

Marda Fields, a local Navy veteran, has benefitted from his kindness. "We are having a bake sale with zucchini and banana bread," she said. Susan Shaw, Coordinator for HomeFront, said, "He's not only donating produce, he's willing to teach us how grow in our HomeFront garden. It's a huge benefit for our residents."

With his expertise in landscaping, Johnson has also given back to Veteran's Plaza (transitional living for homeless male veterans), which recently opened. He not only purchased everything needed for both the flowerbeds and the front yard, he also taught the veterans how to take care and maintain it.

"I've been in horticulture my whole life," said Johnson. Now he is giving back and passing on his knowledge to others in support of a truly worthy cause.



Veterans Plaza Landscaping

California

Home Front coordinator Susan Shaw (right) with veteran Marda Fields and daughter



Recovery Month Quotes

Dreams are renewable. No matter what our age or condition, there are still untapped possibilities within us and new beauty waiting to be born.
– Helen Keller

The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.
– Winston Churchill

Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.
– Thomas Edison

We must accept finite disappointment, but we must never lose infinite hope.
– Martin Luther King



A Haven for Heroes

By Michael Mygind – *Special Projects*

After its initial planning over a year ago, Veteran's Plaza, Fresno's transitional living facility for homeless male veterans has now opened its doors. The August 15th grand opening was a day spent honoring the sacrifices, dedication and resilience of those that put their lives on the line in the name of our country while celebrating a fresh start for those who fell upon hard times. US Congressman Jeff Denham was on hand for the festivities.

"This is something that is personal to me. This is about veterans helping veterans; brothers and sisters keeping each other off the streets," said Denham, who served 16 years in the Air Force and has been a champion for providing proper support for our veterans. Other speakers included Roberta Rosenthal, Coordinator of Network Homeless, and Susan Shyshka, Acting Director of Fresno Veterans Affairs. "This is a true example of ending veteran homelessness and is truly a beautiful place to transition into and live," Shyshka said.

The 28 bed apartment complex currently has 11 residents, including its House Manager, Richard Barnes, who has been living at Veteran's Plaza since February of this year with his dog and companion, Baby Girl. "I'm jazzed now to

see the other residents move in and see the joy on their faces and in their hearts," said Barnes, a veteran of the Marine Corps. "It's pretty overwhelming," said Michael Grimmer, an Air Force veteran who lost his job, his mother and found himself living in homeless housing. "My life's not done yet, there's still stuff that I want to do," added Grimmer.

Veteran's Plaza will house clients for up to 2 years or until they find work and are able to get back on their feet. The facility has its own case manager on site to assist each resident in our



goal – achieving economic self sufficiency. With the help of Congressman Denham's call to action, all of the apartments have been furnished by countless donors in the community.

California



Congressman Denham with resident veterans, including Richard Barnes and 'Baby Girl.'

Color Guard opens the festivities

Guests salute the new 'haven' and its residents



Alumni News

Submitted by Erin Shelton

The Alumni Association had a day of fun at Sierra Lanes in Fresno. Virginia Sparks said it best, "I wouldn't miss an opportunity to make more memories with you guys." We maintain that close fellowship with every event that WestCare is a part of.

The big winner of the day was Mark Leanhart when he tripped down the lane. In attendance that day was, Sean Whitten, Jeffery Davis, Mark Leanhart, Virginia Sparks, Cleadus Shelton, Erin Shelton, and our cheering section was led by Gary Knepper and Eric Carr.



Build Today, Play Tomorrow

By Michael Mygind – *Special Projects*

Earlier this summer, over 300 volunteers including Counselor Tech, Mamie Welch and her crew of generous clients from Bakersfield’s residential program, joined together to build a park in a single day. Construction on the park took place at The Friendship House on Cottonwood Road, an area of Bakersfield that had yet to have a public playground.

This project was put on by KaBOOM!, a non-profit group that builds public parks in one day’s time with the help of local volunteers.

The Dr. Pepper Snapple Group funded the project by giving a grant to the Community Action Partnership of Kern. The helpful Bakersfield clients took part in all steps including laying the cement, installing the playground’s poles and fixtures and filling the area with wood chips. This goes to show that a big part of recovery is learning how to give back. Great work, guys!



WestCare volunteers help their community ▲



◀ Wow! Finished product!



◀ Starting from scratch

WestCare Foundation

The Legacy of Tex – 1932-2012

By John Wallace

Only his family and close friends likely knew the name William Lindsay King. But everyone knew his public moniker: Tex. Our WestCare family lost a legend on June 29th, when Tex King passed on.

One of the longest serving WestCare volunteers, Tex helped grow the agency for 32 years. First, as an original Fitz House board member in 1979, and continuing as Chairman of the Board and then long-time Treasurer. More recently, he also chaired the WestCare affiliate Fitz House Enterprises. Tex selflessly gave his time and leadership to our cause. He was soft-spoken, but led by gentle persuasion.

“a solid man who cared about his fellow man no matter what their condition might be. An example for us all.” Indeed, that’s what Mr. King leaves for those crossing the bridge that Tex helped build.

Tex King was an Air Force veteran and a retired Clark County teacher. He and his late wife Lee were married for 50 years. One of his grandchildren, Spencer Overman, put it this way: “He was the rarest of men. His integrity, unmatched. He loved all without hesitation, and gave without a second thought.”

William Lindsay King lived a long and significant life. And WestCare will forever remember him as, simply, Tex.

