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Mountain Shadows Support Group

MOUNTAIN SHADOWS COMMUNITY HOMES

SPRING ♦ 2005

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Spotlight on Jacaranda, Palm and Spruce

Mountain Shadows Community Homes serves people with developmental disabilities from all walks of life. Our residents live in homes designed to allow them to live in a family environment. We coordinate a wide variety of activities and service programs to assure not only that each resident's individual needs are met, but to facilitate active and meaningful socialization among residents, their families and staff members. Each of our homes has a living and dining area, kitchen, private or double bedrooms, bathroom and laundry facility. But, as you will see below, that is where the similarity ends. Each house is made into a unique home by the residents that live within.

Jacaranda House

"Jacaranda House residents are always on the move," says Fred Lindahl, QMRP of the Jacaranda, Palm and Spruce houses. Ivan Mitchell, 22, is a good example of this movers and shakers mindset. "Ivan is very active. He plays baseball on the Mountain Shadows Challenger baseball team. And he volunteers every year, with his father Keith, at Circus Day." Keith and son Ivan act as the local Sheriffs at the spine tingling, show of all shows event. Adds Fred, "Ivan is a great guy. He really has a great personality."

Jon Lofton always likes to be in on the action too. "Jon is a really happy guy who loves sports—he *used* to like the Chargers, but ..." Fred's voice trails off for a moment, then he continues on another track, "He also enjoys being read to and likes to watch music T.V." David Dunton is a big action movie fan, loves music (especially rap) and collects beanie babies.

Please see HOUSES on page 2



Residents and Staff of Jacaranda House

What's Inside...

Fred Lindahl Enjoys the Simple Things . . 3

Brittany Barnson:
Mountain Shadows Angel 5

Dennis Mattson—Doing What's Right. . 7

Mountain Shadows Activities
Spring into Full Bloom 9

Mountain Shadows Awarded Two
New Clatrans Grant Buses. 10

■ HOUSES *(continued from page 1)*

Fred adds, “David has a great sense of humor and loves to play practical jokes on staffers and residents.”

“Michael Galicia *really* looks forward to Friday,” says Fred. “He is crazy about balloons, so his father sends him a bouquet of balloons every Friday. He really loves it! Michael has a great personality, loves to play tug of war and also enjoys drawing.”

Another long-time resident is Michael Haskin. “Michael is very intellectual,” says Fred. “He enjoys classical music and loves to watch videos, everything from Disney to classic films.”

“The residents are all very different and yet they have bonded and created their own special family in Jacaranda House,” says Fred.

Spruce House

“The men in Spruce House have been together for a long time,” says Fred. “Many of the residents have lived in Spruce for more than a decade. They’ve become very close.”

“Rudy Gastello, who was born in Mexico, understands both English and Spanish. He watches Mexican T.V. And he loves music, Northern Mexican music,” says Fred. “Dwayne Haller loves music too. He



Residents and Staff of Palm House

plays the tambourine and likes to sing, especially Christmas carols.”

Says Fred, “Richard Hobson likes McDonald’s collectibles, binoculars, camping and skiing. He has a great sense of humor and loves to tell jokes.” Adds Fred, “Michael Norris is Richard’s best friend. Michael is very social and greets everyone with hugs and pats. His most cherished possession is a family photo album. He shows it to everyone!”

“Frank Lane is always happy. His favorite thing is kicking back in his recliner and listening to music,” says Fred. “Norman Ross is the oldest resident at Mountain Shadows.

He enjoys being independent and loves to listen to music.”

In several early cultures, it was believed that bringing a spruce tree inside the home would bring hope and good fortune in the upcoming spring. May hope and good fortune continue to grow for the residents of Mountain Shadows Spruce House as well.

Palm House

“The women in Palm House are always very busy,” says Fred. “They have wonderful families who are very involved in their lives.”

“Brianna Barnes is the youngest resident at Mountain Shadows,” says Fred. “Her father and brother visit her every other weekend, and her mother and brother come to visit on alternating weekends. They all go out to eat together, or go to the beach. Sometimes they go bowling or out to movies. She has a really great family.” Brianna is a huge Elmo and Big Bird fan and her favorite video is *Home Alone*.

“Amanda Bryant’s mother, grandmother and brother all live right here in Escondido,” says Fred. “Amanda spent Christmas with



Residents and Staff of Spruce House

Please see HOUSES on page 4

Fred Lindahl Enjoys the Simple Things

"Life becomes complicated only after 5:00 p.m."

—FRED LINDAHL

Fred Lindahl came to Mountain Shadows in 1986 as a member of our Direct Care Staff. Today, he is the QMRP of the Jacaranda, Palm and Spruce houses. "Over the past 19 years, I've done just about everything at Mountain Shadows except janitorial work!" he says. And while many would consider what he does to be difficult, back-breaking, financially unrewarding, emotionally taxing work, he believes that life's real challenges begin at 5:00 p.m.—when he leaves Mountain Shadows and goes back into the "real world".

"I can be upset when I come into work, then Dwayne Haller (Spruce House resident) will come into my office and he'll start singing *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town*. Or I'll drop by a house and one of the residents will start singing *You Light Up My Life*. Or another resident will pop in and say, 'Hi! I missed you, Daddy Fred!' How can I possibly stay upset?"

"Mountain Shadows is in Fred's blood," says Stacy Kendall, MSCH Director of Residential Services. "This is more than a career to him. The residents and staff are a part of his family. He takes his responsibility of caring for the well-being of the residents very seriously. He has seen many of them grow into adulthood over the years and is very emotionally attached to them."

"Fred has built a reputation within our industry as someone who looks out for the best interests of those he serves. He's willing to fight for the rights of disabled individuals and has worked with many agencies and legislators to improve quality of care," adds Stacy.

"One of the things I like best

about Mountain Shadows is their flexibility and creativity in meeting the needs of the residents. When a problem arises, we ask, 'what can we do to change and adapt? How can we better provide for our residents?' In many ways we operate more as a family than a business," says Fred. "That's one of the many things that is very special and unique about Mountain Shadows."

"The residents have a special place in my heart," says Fred. "They have changed me just by being who they are. Sometimes I wonder who is taking care of whom. I take care of the residents physically; they take care of me emotionally. They are great people who will be forever remembered in my heart."

When he's away from Mountain Shadows, Fred enjoys traveling. He recently spent two weeks in Colombia. "I visited Bogotá and Cartagena. It was incredible! Colombia has a beautiful countryside, friendly people and fantastic food." Fred has also traveled to Mexico, Europe, Spain, Italy, France and Great Britain. "I enjoy exploring the commonalities and differences between cultures," says Fred. "There are many differences between cultures, and yet we are all connected. And I always learn something new about myself when I travel."

Fred comes from a very close family. One of the defining moments in his life came when his grandmother died. "I looked at my grandmother's life and asked myself, 'what is her legacy?' When she was ill, we really came together as a family. We nurtured each other. And when she took her last breath, we were all there with her. There was nothing but love in the room. We held onto each other and knew



Fred Lindahl

that it was OK for her to die. It was a great and honorable moment. The experience taught me about how important it is to say the things you want to say to the people who mean the most to you. My grandmother's entire life was about simplicity and family. She told us, 'Life is not about possessions, or big houses, or fancy cars. It's really about living life well and honestly.' I believe that is her legacy."

It is a legacy that has been carried on by her grandson. "Working with the residents at Mountain Shadows allows me to appreciate and enjoy the smaller, simpler things in life," says Fred. "They help me realize that living a good life isn't about what Hollywood or popular culture presents to us. It's not about acquiring money and possessions. The simple things are most important. A smile, a look, a laugh, watching the joy on a resident's face when they learn a new skill or try something for the first time. These are the things that have kept me at Mountain Shadows for all these years." And we hope he will stay for many years to come. ■

Our employees, like Fred Lindahl, consistently tell us that Mountain Shadows is a unique and highly rewarding place to work. If you know of anyone who you feel would qualify and would enjoy the many benefits of joining our family, please contact Toni Albright, our Human Resources Manager at 760-743-3714, ext. 203.

Sponsors Needed for the Second Annual Golf Marathon

Last year, the first-ever Mountain Shadows Foundation Marathon Golf Tournament raised over \$40,000 in support of the Foundation.

The Second Annual Mountain Shadows Foundation Club 100 Golf Marathon will be held on June 13, 2005, at the Oaks North Golf Course in Rancho Bernardo. This year, our very own Wade Wilde, Executive Director, and Stacy Kendall, MSCH Director of Residential Services, will team up to play 100 holes in one day.

You can help the 117 residents of Mountain Shadows—and cheer our home team on—by sponsoring our players. Please go to www.MountainShadowsFoundation.org to learn more about the Golf Marathon and complete a Sponsor Form or send your donation to us in the envelope provided.

Your donations will be used to enrich the lives of all our residents and is a tax-deductible donation. Thanks!



■ HOUSES *(continued from page 2)*

her mother. They have a very good relationship.” Amanda is an excellent puzzle solver, likes music from the 80’s and is wild about Dr. Seuss books.

Says Fred, “Jasmine Ansari wants to be where the action is. She has a great smile and loves to play with balls. Her mother and sister both live in San Diego County. They visit every weekend and often take Jasmine home for the afternoon just to hang-out.”

Resident Denise Carlson has close family ties as well. “Denise is very close with her three sisters who live in San Diego County,”

says Fred. “She loves to sing, especially Oldies, and is an avid magazine reader. Her favorites are *Martha Stewart* and *Home and Garden*.”

“Allysa Layne is a very, very happy lady with a great smile. She loves lying in the sun in her beanbag chair,” says Fred. “Her family lives in the area and visits her regularly. She goes home often to visit too.”

“Tori Taylor loves music,” says Fred. “She listens to it all day long. A local singer wrote a song about Tori and she appeared in the music video.” Tori’s mother lives in Escondido.

Lyndon Baines Johnson once said that the family is the cornerstone of our society. More than any other force it shapes our attitudes, our hopes, our ambitions, and our values. The young women in Palm, we feel, are twice blessed in having not only strong bonds with their biological families, but with their *second* family, the entire Mountain Shadows Community, as well.

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family.

—THOMAS JEFFERSON

Brittany Barnson: Mountain Shadows Angel

“Angels and ministers of grace defend us.”

— WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Abraham Lincoln frequently mentioned he was visited by them at the White House. St. Joan of Arc once said, “I saw them with my bodily eyes as clearly as I see you. And when they departed, I used to weep and wish they would take me with them.” Socrates, pronounced by the ancient Greeks to be among the wisest of men and an acute reasoner, saw them routinely in dreams and heeded their advice. “God does not deal directly with man,” Socrates said. “It is by means of spirits and angels that all the intercourse and communication of gods with men, both in waking life and in sleep, is carried on.”

[Editor’s Note: The dictionary defines angels as immaterial beings, pure spirits, intermediaries between man and God who are always at our side, instructed to guard and guide us. To those willing to believe, no explanation of angels is necessary, and to those who are not willing to believe, no explanation is possible. But I ask you, whatever your beliefs, just for the brief time it will take you to read this article, to open your mind to the possibility ... for if we could all see our angels for just a single day, I believe this world would never be the same again, nor would we ever wish it to be.]

Brittany Barnson of Orange House has Cerebral Palsy and is legally blind. She has a seizure disorder, can’t walk and has limited use of her arms and legs. When Brittany, who was raised to have a very strong faith, was young, she used to ask her mother, Kelli, “If Jesus heals people, why doesn’t he heal me?” Kelli answered, “He could heal you if that was his plan. Do you think that’s his plan for



Brittany Barnson with Santa Claus

you?” Over time, Brittany came to understand that wasn’t his plan for her—but she also realized that she did have a very special purpose and plan in life.

Brittany came to Mountain Shadows in 2003. “There was never a plan for Brittany to move,” said Kelli. “She lived in our home until she was 19 years old. But now that we’ve found Mountain Shadows, we wish we had considered moving her sooner. We’re so grateful she’s there. They are able to give her so many things that we couldn’t provide for her. Mountain Shadows is a blessing.”

“It was important to us to let Brittany make the decisions regarding her future home,” added Kelli. “When she graduated from high school, the timing seemed right for her to become more independent. A friend had recommended Moun-

tain Shadows, but we wanted Brittany to have a choice. We narrowed the options down to three facilities. Jeff, Brittany’s father, and I went to visit the facilities first to do some research. As soon as we drove onto the Mountain Shadows campus, we knew it was the right place.”

“When Brittany visited Mountain Shadows, she loved it too!” continued Kelli. “The staff recommended that Brittany attend one of the Challenger Baseball games to meet some of the residents and she had a blast. She immediately connected with several residents, including Sherry McKinney, who is now her roommate and best friend.”

“Brittany has never considered herself to be disabled. She just faces different challenges than others. I believe she’s a great blessing to all that work with her. She has an uplifting spirit and she’s always content and positive. She’s a kick!” said Kelli. Adds Tamara Degner, QMRP of Lemon, Tangelo and Orange Houses, “Brittany is extremely creative. She loves writing, especially poetry. Often, she’ll have a dream, and when she wakes up, she says ‘a poem or song came to me’ and then she asks the staff to write it down for her. She’s really very gifted.” Brittany wrote the following for Tamara:

Song for Tamara

*You are the miracle in my life
You are the angel I’ve been looking for
You are the sunshine in my soul
You are the healer of my life
There is a hero, and it’s you
You are the beginning of my heart*

Says Tamara, “Brittany also enjoys music. Her favorite singers
Please see BRITTANY on page 6

■ BRITTANY *(continued from page 5)*

are Brittany Spears and Justin Timberlake.” Brittany’s love of music was influenced by her mother, a voice teacher, who has spent most of her life singing and performing. “Brittany really connects with music,” says Kelli. “She hears a song once on the radio and has it memorized.”

“Brittany is very attentive to other people’s needs,” says Tamara. “She looks out for the other residents in Orange and volunteers at a local nursing home. Brittany’s long-term goal is to work with children. She wants to help inspire them through her poetry and writing. She wants to help people feel better.” Adds Kelli, “Brittany has a very sensitive heart. She’s very thoughtful. And it’s really important to her to serve and help others. I remember one weekend when Brittany was going to come home to visit us, Keisha, one of the other residents, got very upset and started crying. She didn’t want Brittany to leave. Brittany felt so bad that she didn’t want to come home, because she wanted to be there for Keisha.”

Brittany’s desire to help others is deeply spiritual. She has been blessed with what those who are close to her often call “a gift from God”. It is often said that people with disabilities are more sensitive or tuned into other senses. By many accounts, this is true of Brittany.

“When Brittany came to Mountain Shadows, several people mentioned that she believes she has two guardian angels. They have always been with her and watch over her and guide her. I dismissed it at first,” said Tamara. “But then, just after she moved in, Brittany came up to me one day and said, ‘I have a message for you about the parents you don’t know.’ I was floored. I am adopted—but I had

never told *anyone* at Mountain Shadows about it. Brittany knew things about my birth parents that she couldn’t possibly have known.”

“Brittany’s angels often guide her through her dreams,” says Kelli. “Most people just laugh when they hear about her angels. They don’t believe it. But I believe it is her gift.” Tamara adds, “Brittany relays messages to people she’s close to from those who have passed on.”

“Brittany often knows things she couldn’t possibly know. When I was pregnant with one of my other children, my mother and father took care of Brittany,” said Kelli. “One morning, Brittany got up and said to her grandmother, ‘I saw your dad last night.’ My mother’s father died when she was just 21 years old—before I was even born. But Brittany told my mother, ‘Your father had the most beautiful sky blue eyes I’ve ever seen.’ There is no way that Brit would have ever even seen a *picture* of him.”

“As a mother, it’s a huge source of comfort to think that Brittany is constantly watched over and loved. Brittany had to undergo countless surgeries when she was growing up. Every surgery was a milestone, but I remember one in particular. Brittany’s spine was disintegrating and we thought we were going to lose her. She had been through so many painful surgeries that she became emotionally ill just at the thought of having yet another one. Jeff and I told Brittany it was her choice whether to have the surgery or not. We asked her to pray and decide for herself. Brittany did pray. And then she said quietly to me one day, ‘I saw the heavenly Father and Jesus last night. They said I would be OK.’ She had the surgery—and she was OK.”

“Brittany believes her purpose

on earth is to help others realize they can be happy under any circumstance, if they choose. She has changed and helped so many people. It’s amazing. She is severely disabled and needs help with almost everything. Most people would say she has a tough life, but Brittany thinks she has a great life! She’s incredibly happy and positive,” said Kelli.

Kelli and her husband, Jeff, a pilot, have been married for 21 years. They have three other daughters, Lauren, 18, Brianne, 12 and Taylor, 8.

“Brittany has been a blessing to our family. She has taught all of us to savor every moment as special and a gift, because that is exactly what she does. I am so blessed to be her mother,” says Kelli.

She adds, “Mountain Shadows is filled with wonderful people. They love the residents and I have a deep love and appreciation for all of them. When a parent of a disabled child feels that child is safe and well cared for, that’s as good as it gets.”

*I will not wish thee riches nor the
glow of
Greatness, but that wherever thou go
some
Weary heart shall gladden at thy
smile, or some shadowed
Life know sunshine for a while. And
so thy path shall
Be a track of light, like angels’ foot-
steps passing through the night.*

WORDS ON A CHURCH WALL IN
UPWALTHAM, ENGLAND

They say that sometimes angels take human form. As for me, I believe one resides in our very own Mountain Shadows Orange House, spreading smiles and sunshine, leaving footprints on our hearts, as she passes through our lives like a ray of light. ■

Dennis Mattson – Doing What’s Right

There’s a movie called Radio. It’s about a young, mentally challenged man. He spends most of his days pushing an empty shopping cart around town. The adults in town mostly just turn their eyes and pretend not to see him. The children are sometimes cruel to him, as children can sometimes be, like the time some pulled down his pants, held him down and painted his buttocks with paint thinner. He was burned pretty badly by that.

No one is quite sure of the name of his disorder. His mama will only say, “He’s the same as everybody else, just a little slower than most.” His given name is James Robert Kennedy, but most folks in the small southern town where he was born just call him “Radio”. You see, he always has a transistor radio held up to his ear. Always. Well, except when he pries the pieces apart to see who’s talking to him from inside the box.

The movie, inspired by the true life story of James Kennedy, tells the tale of a high school football coach who, at great personal cost, takes Radio under his wing and into his heart. Against strong opposition from family members, students and townspeople alike, the coach and Radio develop a remarkable friendship. Slowly, thanks to the coach’s unwavering commitment to Radio, an evolution of attitudes begins to take place in the town. Radio’s genuine enthusiasm for life starts to rub off on the football team and the town and they all become a part of something very special. When the coach, the man who against all odds taught a small town to open up their hearts and embrace someone a little different, was asked why he did it, he thought for a while and then he said, “Well, I just figure it was the right thing to do.”

The right thing to do.

If you watch the TV news or read the daily newspaper, you may begin to wonder if anyone these days even knows what the “right thing to do” is, much less thinks about actually doing it. While you may not see it in the headlines or on the evening news, there *are* people who are still committed to doing what’s right. Dennis Mattson, founder and CEO of Independent Options, Inc. and MSSG Board Member, is one of these people.

Dennis established Independent Options, Inc., in 1984, when he opened a 6-bed home called Brockton House. Today, Independent Options is a multi-million dollar company that operates 48 ICF/DD-H and ICF/DD-N facilities, employing 425 people, and serving more than 300 developmentally disabled consumers throughout California. During these years of exponential growth, Dennis has remained true to a simple mantra that he shares with each and every employee, “Do what’s right.”

Says Rebecca Helgeson, Director of Operations of Independent Options and wife of Dennis, “Though the company has grown rapidly over the years, Independent Options still maintains a small business atmosphere.” To this day, Dennis talks personally with all new employees on their first day. “No one starts work until they’ve had the 1½ hour ‘Papa Dennis’ talk,” continues Rebecca. “Dennis is an extremely paternal and giving person, so he’s earned the nickname ‘Papa Dennis’. During this talk, one of the things he tells all new employees is to just ‘do what’s right’ when making decisions. As Dennis says, ‘If you use this as a guide, you will never make a bad choice.’”

Independent Options also offers



Dennis Mattson

adult day programs, crisis response and respite services. All of these services were spawned by the needs of those the company serves. “Dennis is always on the cutting-edge,” says Rebecca. “If he sees a need of our consumers that is not being met, he finds a way to meet it.”

Dennis’ goals include meeting the needs not only of his consumers, but of industry providers and direct care staff as well. “Dennis is ‘the man’ in our business,” says Doug Cook, Executive Director, Mountain Shadows Foundation. “He is a true crusader for our people, both providers and clients/residents.”

“Within California, Dennis has been *the* voice and representative for ICF/MR providers,” says Rebecca. In 2001, he spearheaded the creation of Developmental Services Network. Serving as President of this 100+ member, statewide organization, Dennis, working in concert with the Department of Health Services and other industry leaders, directed a successful effort to

Please see MATTSON on page 8

■ MATTSON *(continued from page 7)*

win critical rate increases for California providers last year. “Dennis was able to win this increase at a time when the state government was fiscally poor,” said Gary Macomber of Ramey, Macomber and Associates, LLC, an industry consulting firm in Sacramento.

Gary continues, “There are many highly skilled and committed people operating developmental services programs today. If you were to ask the leaders in our industry for the quintessential ICF provider, 99% of them would respond, ‘Dennis Mattson’. When you have asked the best and the brightest and still don’t have an answer, the go to guy is always Dennis. He has tremendous credibility in Sacramento, be it with Medi-Cal or the Department of Health Services, and can always be relied on for accurate and practical information. He is always willing to share information he has with others for the betterment of all programs. And besides all this, he is a great guy!”

Dennis has also served as Southwest Regional Representative and member of the Board of Directors for the American Network of Community Opportunities and Resources (ANCOR), a national network that represents and advocates on behalf of more than 850 providers of support for 385,000 Americans with disabilities. ANCOR is currently leading efforts to ensure passage of H.R. 5197, key legislation that will offer hope to hundreds of thousands of Direct Support Professionals and the millions who rely on their support day in and day out. H.R. 5197 constructively addresses the issues of direct support staff wages, recruitment and retention.

“The Department of Health Services, Department of Developmental Services and Regional

Centers all come to Dennis with questions, for brainstorming and to discuss options and solutions for existing issues,” says Rebecca. Adds Doug, “Dennis is extremely well connected in Sacramento and has made the difference in the fiscal solvency of all ICF/DD-H & N providers in California. He has improved the lives of every person with developmental disabilities in California and kept most providers in business!”

Dennis currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Children’s Center of the Inland Counties. He also served for multiple years as President of the California Association of ICF/MR Providers (CAIP) and as Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors for the California Association of Health Facilities (CAHF).

“Dennis runs a multi-million dollar corporation,” says Doug, “He also advocates on behalf of all providers and direct care staff in California – and still makes time to go out to dinner with some of his closest friends, who just happen to live in his homes. He is the perfect combination of business acumen and compassion for those we serve.”

“Dennis becomes very involved with those he serves,” says Rebecca. “We serve 300 people and they all know they can call Dennis day or night. Several call him ‘dad,’ he goes to the gambling casino with one, he regularly emails or talks to others, and one young man, Anthony, spent this Thanksgiving with our family because Dennis didn’t want him to be alone on the holiday.” Dennis adds, “I’ve known some of these children for more than 20 years. I’ve seen them grow up, go on their first date, and go to their first prom. I’ve become very close to them.”

“Dennis is a caretaker, like his father,” says Rebecca. Dennis explains, “I often think of what a wonderful childhood I had. I was so fortunate. My father was a physician. Mid-career, he got an MD in Psychiatry and went into private practice. He is a wonderful man. He’s always been a giver not a taker. I think I got my compassion for other human beings from him and my mother.”

“I think his father shaped the field that Dennis went into. His dad lived in physician’s housing at the university, so Dennis was exposed early to the developmentally disabled. Dennis’ brother Todd also lives in a group home. They are extremely close and I think, in his heart, Dennis is serving Todd through Independent Options and all that he does in the industry,” says Rebecca.

Dennis and Rebecca, his wife and best friend, have five children. Dennis received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Riverside.

A coach believed that befriending a young, mentally challenged man called Radio was the right thing to do. When he made that choice, the lives of the people in one small southern town were changed forever. More than 20 years ago, Dennis Mattson believed that opening a small, 6-bed home for the developmentally disabled was the right thing to do. Since then, the lives of countless developmentally disabled people in California and an entire industry have been transformed.

The right thing to do.

At Mountain Shadows, we will continue to stand by Dennis in using this mantra as a guide in making all decisions affecting our residents, our staff, and our families. We figure it’s just the right thing to do. ■

Mountain Shadows Activities Spring into Full Bloom

Special Olympics Floor Hockey

The Mountain Shadows hockey team took home the Gold in this year's Special Olympics games. More than 100 teams participated in the event, which was held at the Sports Arena in San Diego. Teammates Brian Stafford of Willow, Travis Groff of Birch, Doug Devereaux of Crepe Myrtle, and Cynthia Amador of Orange scored big, winning three out of three games. A celebratory dinner was held at Acapulco's for all GO-O-O-O-O team!

Big Bear Ski Trip

Residents Cynthia Amador and Brittany Barnson of Orange, Stephen Ruff of Tangelo, Richard Dunagan of Olive, and Michael Haskin of Jacaranda, plowed down

the slopes of Big Bear Mountain on the annual ski trip. Says Activities Director Donna Ponomarenko, "Everyone had a great time. The residents were hootin' and hollerin' all the way down the slopes. It was a blast!"

Challenger Baseball

The new Challenger Baseball season had its Opening Day March 27th. Team members include Chris Groves, Travis Groff, Frank Sullivan, Brian Stafford, Karen Trogdon, Mike Wilson, Bob Curcio, Sherry McKinney, Craig Kleeberger, and Charles Merritt.



MSSG Awarded Two New Caltrans Grant Buses

Mountain Shadows launched a transportation program in March of 2004 when it received a new \$65,000 El Dorado bus through a Caltrans grant. "The program has been very successful," says James Arp, QMRP of Oak, Elm and

Spruce. "The first bus has allowed us to transport twelve residents to and from their United Cerebral Palsy programs daily. Now, in March of 2005 with the addition of two more buses, we will be able to transport 36 residents to their off-

campus activities each day."

The buses are custom designed to accommodate six passengers in wheelchairs each. "The buses are 80% funded through the Caltrans Section 5310 Program," says James. "We have already submitted grant proposals for two more buses. The grants have been approved at the regional and federal levels, so if all goes well, we should receive two more buses in 2006. This will allow us to greatly enhance services to our clients."

Says Wade Wilde, Executive Director, "James has led the effort to secure the Caltrans grants for Mountain Shadows. Due to our non-profit status, we are able to benefit from programs such as this, which will allow us to improve resident services and quality of care."



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