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New Transportation Program Kicks into Gear

It's been a long and sometimes challenging ride, but thanks to the creative and persistent efforts of James Arp, QMRP at Oak, Elm and Spruce, Mountain Shadows residents are now cruisin' in style in a new \$65,000 El Dorado bus. Retrofitted by Creative Bus Sales, this six-passenger bus has a wheelchair lift, special tracking and other custom modifications that make it resident friendly and wheelchair accessible.



Frank Andrade and Mike with the new bus.

The acquisition of the bus was made possible via a California State Department of Transportation grant process. James first applied for the Caltrans grant more than two years ago. The first grant submission stalled, but James didn't give up. "The initial grant proposal for the Caltrans Section 5310 Program was about 95 pages long and took between 40 to 80 hours to complete," James said. His second submission succeeded, and on March 8th, 2004, the first phase of the Mountain Shadows Transportation Program was launched. Twelve excited residents were chauffeured to and from their United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Day Programs by bus driver Frank Andrade. First day operations went off without a hitch. "Everything ran very smoothly—steady as it goes," said James.

Frank has been a part-time driver for Mountain Shadows for about two years. "I really enjoy working with the residents," said Frank. As driver of the new bus, he will transport the same 12 residents to and from UCP daily. "We'll make two runs in the morning and two runs in the afternoon." The bus is top of the line and "very comfortable and very safe." Resident riders are from a cross-section of all MSSG houses. "Residents love riding in the new bus," said James.

With a goal of further enhancing transportation services to residents in mind, James has submitted two additional grant proposals for two buses each. "If all goes well, we'll receive two more buses in 2004 and two buses in 2005," said James. "The grants have already been approved by regional and federal committees. This increase in our fleet will allow us to transport more residents which furthers our ability to provide comprehensive care to our MSSG wards. Future services may be expanded to include rides to medical appointments, community outings and home visits to family and friends."

"The first bus was 80% funded by the Caltrans grant and 20% funded

Please see TRANSPORTATION on page 8



Notes from the Executive Director



The new year of 2004 brings with it challenges and exciting opportunities for MSSG.

With the passing of the Governor's two budget bills our industry appears to have escaped the reinroduction of possible cuts to our reimbursement rate, so we at a minimum will maintain our status quo. Compared to other health care provider classifications this is a good thing, as many are facing cuts to their rates. Unfortunately however, these cuts invariably ultimately trickle down and affect our residents. This is already evidenced by the current difficulty we are experiencing in finding dentists who will accept our Medical residents. We continue to labor under the burden of back-breaking workers' compensation costs, and hope that there will be legislative relief shortly.

MSSG management is focusing this year on improving the already top-notch quality of care services we provide to our residents. We are evaluating our current system of training our Direct Care Staff, the front-line caregivers, and are developing new methods of instruction in areas of dietary, program implementation, lifting techniques, resident hygiene, activities and several others. We are reviewing our Quality Assurance program and are designing new programs to assist us with employee retention. Also, we have increased the amount of time and varied the hours of when management is present in the houses to ensure quality care is being provided. This is a group effort by all members of the management team of QMRPs and Residential Coordinators. As dedicated MSSG is to offering the most and the best we can to those we serve, we are constantly searching for ways to improve.

We are proud to announce that MSSG has taken its first step in growing and expanding the continuum of care provided our residents by developing our own Transportation Program. While currently several quality transportation providers drive our residents to and from their day programs, school, work, etc., it is our conviction that MSSG can offer this (and any) service better to our own residents. To this end, we hope to expand this service in the future. Please

refer to the article on the front page of this newsletter for more details.

As you come to visit your loved ones here at MSSG, stop and take a look at some of the physical plant improvements we are working on. We have newly tiled bathrooms in Lemon, Tangelo, Maple and Palm. Jacaranda and Palm are undergoing a facelift with interior decor upgrades. Additionally, we are constantly replacing the carpeting in the houses (those wheelchairs are tough on the floors!) and have embarked on a program to have the kitchen tiles stripped and rewaxed.

A very important employee, Stacy Kendall, celebrated her 10th anniversary with Mountain Shadows in February. Stacy began her career here at MSCH as the QMRP for Birch, Crepe Myrtle and Spruce. Three years later she was promoted to Director, overseeing all facets of resident care, and has served in that capacity since. She has been the guiding light for absolute commitment to quality care and resident advocacy. We are all lucky to have Stacy with us here at MSSG, and I am looking forward to another 10 years (at least).

Finally, don't forget **CIRCUS DAY**, our big party of the year, which will be held on June 12th. Come one, come all and enjoy the festivities!

Wade



Stacy Kendall accepts her 10-year award from Human Resources Director Toni Albright.

Ken Van Hook *Really* Cooks at Birch

“I love serving dinner to the residents,” says Ken Van Hook. “We all gather around the dinner table like a family to eat and just talk about our day. Each resident has something to say and share. It’s definitely my favorite time of the day.”

As a member of the Mountain Shadows direct care staff, Ken’s days are normally brimming with activity. Ken works the 3-11 p.m. shift at Birch. Besides preparing and serving meals, he assists residents with daily grooming and hygiene, physical exercise programs, behavioral and social skills development, laundry and “just about anything else that needs to be done.”

According to Dan Myer, Birch’s QMRP, “Ken is like a rock. I can tell him to do something and I know it will get done. Ken knows his job.” MSCH Director of Residential Services Stacy Kendall adds, “Ken’s care giving skills come naturally to him. He consistently provides the best of care even under challenging circumstances. He’s patient, calm and doesn’t make mistakes.”

Ken is a very modest fellow who is much more at ease talking about *his* residents and co-workers than himself. He rattles off details about Birch residents like a proud father:

Harry

“Harry is amazing! Tell him your birthday and, in an instant, he’ll tell you the day of the week you were born. He’s right every time. Harry also loves telling stories. Next time you see him, be sure and ask him to tell you the *Deck of Cards* story. He loves to tell it!”

Tara

“Tara is an ‘Alabama freak’. She’s



Ken Van Hook and two of his friends.

a member of the Alabama fan club and has been to several of their concerts. Her boyfriend’s name is Eric and she talks on the phone to him all the time.”

Dana

“Dana really enjoys people. And she’s so excited. She’ll be an aunt for the first time very soon. Her sister is due to have a baby any day now.”

Kenny

“Kenny is the adventurer of the group. He collects keys and loves to chase girls—and he claims to catch them, too!”

Frank

“Frank loves to help out and be a part of the group. He often helps out by setting the table, mopping and sweeping. He’s a terrific person.”

Travis

“Travis has been selected as the 2004 Easter Seals Walk With Me Ambassador. His job as Ambassador is to encourage participation in this major fund raiser. Travis also works three days a week at Barnes and

Noble. He dusts shelves, etc. He’s very proud of himself when he gets his weekly paycheck.”

Ken also has words of praise for the Birch staff. “Over the past thirteen years, I’ve seen a lot of employees come and go. I can honestly say that our current direct care staff (Martha, Brookes, David, Adrianna, Cinnamon, Dan and Rachel) is the best I’ve ever worked with. The whole Mountain Shadows team is tops in my book.”

Ken was born and raised in Tennessee. He met his wife, Mary Jane, in New York while they were both working on the filming of an independent movie. “It was a low budget

flick called ‘Meadow Lake on Mulberry Street.’ I was the cameraman and Mary Jane was a script girl and actress.” Ken and Mary Jane celebrated 31 years of marriage on March 6! They have two children, Jonathan, 29, and Kristina, 26.

Ken also has a passion for photography (he studied at the New York Institute of Photography) and videography. He takes pictures and videos of each Circus Day and hopes to someday combine all of the footage he’s taken over the years in tribute to Mountain Shadows and its residents.

For the past eight years, Ken has also worked as a Life Skills Coach at the Easter Seals Adult Day Program. He works there five days a week from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Prior to coming to Mountain Shadows, Ken served in the U.S. Air Force for 22 years. After he retired from the military, he saw a help wanted ad for Mountain Shadows. “Once I visited the campus and met the residents, I knew Mountain Shadows was where I belonged—and I’ve been here ever since.” ■



MOUNTAIN SHADOWS FOUNDATION

MSF Newsletter debuts later this month

Sneak Preview!! Look for the inaugural edition of the *Mountain Shadows Foundation Newsletter* in your mailbox mid to late April . . . Be sure to check out these articles:

- **It's Definitely Your Fault . . . Every One of You is Responsible.**
Find out who is at fault, what they are responsible for and what they are guilty of!!! (Are you guilty? You'll have to wait and see.)
- **Time to Kick It Up Another Notch—Bam!**
Is this something written by Emerril or a quote from his cooking show? What exactly are we putting in high gear . . . you are involved in this one, so read it carefully—there just might be a test!
- **The Best Christmas Ever . . . “Hope Restored” to MSCH Residents**
One of the best stories of Christmas Joy and pure love you have heard in a long time.
- **Mountain Shadows Club 100**
So, you think you're a golfer? See if you can measure up to this challenge.

- **The 2004 Mountain Shadows Family of Support**
You are part of this one by default. Just make sure you check it out to see if your name is listed.

- **Local Community Support Builds**
Exciting developments in the Escondido Business Community. After many years of marginal support, local merchants jump in with both feet . . . worth a read.

- **Web Site**
The address for the new interactive MSF web site, which is “too hip for the room!”

Also in the upcoming MSF Newsletter you will find brand new information: The first MSF Benefactor is interviewed . . . plus photos of her luncheon with some residents at MSCH. You don't want to miss this one!!!

And MUCH, MUCH more . . .

In this issue of the MSSG Newsletter check out the article about the Mountain Shadows Foundation 2003 Golf Classic . . . a couple of familiar names go on a road trip. See pages 6-7.



It was a musical Christmas for residents of Mountain Shadows.



Randy Haskin, right, poses with the BMW motorcycle that was one of the prizes for sinking a hole in one at the MSF Golf Classic.

Where the Heart Is

Stroll by the Mountain Shadows Office on any given Sunday and you may hear loud music, sudden outbursts and even shouting. Get closer and you may hear bells ringing, rattles shaking, singing and clapping. Step inside and you will be warmly welcomed by Dr. Jamie Miller to the Mountain Shadows Divinity Hour.

Jamie, Wayne Miller's (Tangelo) sister, began leading worship services in July of 2003. "Ministering at Mountain Shadows is a service I feel I am called to do. Leading the residents in worship brings me great joy. It's where my heart is," says Jamie.

During weekly services, which, as the name implies, last about an hour, residents are encouraged to pray, share experiences from their daily lives, participate in bible study and "worship in whatever way their heart moves them. Each resident has a different level of mobility," says Jamie. "Some lift their hands in praise, others shake wrist bands adorned with bells (donated by Activities Director Donna Ponomarenko last Christmas) and still others follow along by performing hand movements to songs. Chris (Tangelo) recites the Lord's Prayer, from memory, each Sunday."

"I've received a warm welcome from the residents." On average, eight to nine residents attend services. "We've had up to thirteen!" Regular attendees include Harry and Frank from Birch, Larry and Billy from Ash, Wayne, Chris and Maki from Tangelo, Donny from Crepe Myrtle and Shawna from Orange.

Jamie, a psychologist, has been counseling and teaching others for most of her life. She was in private practice for many years. Currently, she leads youth ministries at Broadway Baptist Church in Escondido and, as an adjunct faculty member, she teaches college-level classes on life and vocational skills at the Miramar military base.

Jamie and Wayne have always been very close. They grew up in the San Fernando Valley area. One of their favorite things to do when they were growing up was to have family dance parties in the house. "We'd turn up the music *real* loud and dance to R&B and old school tunes by Prince, the Temptations, and Stevie Wonder." They also enjoyed swimming and often went to Zuma Beach near Malibu. "Growing up with Wayne was such fun. He's such a loving fellow. I love him to death!"

Jamie's involvement with Mountain Shadows isn't limited to conducting church services. She enjoys helping out at Tangelo whenever and however she can, attends events like Circus Day and Christmas programs and goes to Friends of Mountain Shadows (FOMS) meetings. Last year, she invited all of the "Tangelo guys" to Oceanside Beach for Wayne's birthday bash. They played nerf basketball, frisbee and barbecued. Jamie also likes to check in on residents in other houses. "I'm at Mountain Shadows so often," she says, "that sometimes the staff thinks I work there!"

Jamie lives her life with great passion. She enjoys working out (step aerobics, weight lifting, BOSU), reading and writing poetry.

To say that Wayne is an active resident is an understatement. His on-campus interests include bingo, car races, movies, flower arranging and Karaoke. Eden Steuer, QMRP of Tangelo, notes, "Wayne loves the Animal Planet channel. His best friends are Maki (fellow Tangelo resident) and house Team Leader, Latifa."

Wayne's star performance in off-campus sports should earn him a place in the Mountain Shadows



Jamie and Wayne Miller

Hall of Fame. "Wayne was VIP and won the gold ribbon in the Special Olympics T-Ball competition. He also placed in the top two in bowling and came in third in bocci ball." GO-O-O Wayne!

One of Wayne's all-time favorite pastimes is Karaoke. "He's quite the performer," says Donna. He loves to sing and dance to *La Bamba*. When Wayne takes the stage at Acapulco's on Karaoke night, the audience yells, "Who's in the house?" and Wayne shouts, "Wayne's in the house!" He loves to shake his bootie.

"Wayne is a whole lotta fun and he always wants to help out." He started assisting Donna in the first part of March. He helps her by putting paperwork in a box, setting up games, etc. "He loves it!"

Jamie raves, "The Mountain Shadows staff is fabulous!" She remembers the first time she visited the campus. "One of the residents from Orange came up and greeted me. At that moment and every day since, I felt totally at home. Mountain Shadows is where my heart is." ■

The Great Links “Road Trip” with R. Haskin

BY BRIAN WIERSEMA

Sometimes, I just luck into opportunity. It started at the Marshmallow Drive venue at the first hole of the Rancho Bernardo CC course during MSSG’s annual charity golf tournament.

“Mom” Portia Bibb and Tara Decker—she’s the Account and Trust Manager with Chakarian & Associates—were setting up the contest and I offered to fetch them a couple of boxes to use for trash.

So I walked 100 yards back toward the club house, got the boxes, and commandeered one of the golf carts available to golf tourney coordinators and made my delivery. On the way back, Randy Haskin hopped aboard and we set sail on a hair-raising tour (I drove) of the entire lush, water-featured course, doing the back nine first.

Randy is Carol Haskin’s husband, and has been for 35 years. I’ll warn you now: Carol comes from a large family; there are five boys and three girls—and it soon seemed like most of them or their kin were on the links this day.

Randy is a former teacher with 12 years experience. Today he operates Ellkin Investments, a real estate development firm in Murrietta (where Carol once served as his office manager). Carol is president of Friends of Mountain Shadows (FOMS) and is a member of the MSSG Board of Directors. The two form a dynamic duo.

Our golf-path tour had two missions: I wanted to chart the names of the prize-hole monitors. On the line were three new vehicles (if you made a hole in one) and a round trip flight

to Germany for two. Randy wanted to check on “his boys,” meaning the trio of foursomes he personally sponsored. That’s \$2,700 (\$900 x 3) worth of Haskin contribution. Plus Carol’s on the MSSG Golf Committee too.

We passed a group teeing off at hole 10—Bob LaCoss, Pete Rathman, Tom Damico, and John Morrisette. Randy said a quick hello and we jetted off to the 12th hole, which fea-

some there. I missed seeing SDSU cheerleader/hole monitor Eric Rubio, but later heard that on this short par 3 he kept busy ducking errant shots. Four near misses!

Randy’s foursome here included son-in-law Steve Gray, who came up through the New York Yankees farm system, made the big leagues with the Yanks, threw his arm out, and took a very early retirement from baseball. Steve is with Shea Homes.

Also: son-in-law Dr. Steve Beal, a dentist with two practices (in San Marcos and Murrietta) who proved a big spender at the evening’s dinner auction. He bought the “Tommy Golden Dinner Package” and for the bargain price of \$125 got an original work of art entitled “Two Trees” done by Kristin in Willow House. Good genes. Kristen’s mom Susan is a professional artist in Laguna Beach.

Rounding out the quartet: Ben Chandler, in land acquisition with Ellkin Investments, and Matt Haskin, one of Carol and Randy’s five children. (Michael in Jacaranda

House is the youngest.)

A hole later we spoke with Randy’s third foursome. Get this: first-time player David Haskell (the son of Randy’s business partner Henry Haskell, in New Jersey) was getting the tips of a lifetime from two professional golfers in the foursome: Chip Wesley and Roger Harrison. (David, a recent grad from Boston U. in business is doing a one-year apprenticeship with Ellkin.) Brother Gary Har-

Please see ROAD TRIP on page 7

This is the first edition of the MSSG Newsletter that has gone to press without the benefit of our longtime editor, **Brian Wiersema**. Brian has been the Mountain Shadows Newsletter Editor for over 10 years, until now.

He is dealing with some personal medical issues that require his full attention. We ask for your thoughts and prayers on his behalf.

If you have enjoyed Brian’s writings and appreciate his most generous gifts of time and energy on behalf of the Mountain Shadows cause, please send him a “we miss you” greeting or a “get well soon” wish to:

gnarlym@aol.com

Brian is a “gnarly” surfer who survived the Korean War as a navigator and bombardier in a B-52 to write for the *San Diego Union Tribune*, *The North County Times*, and a variety of magazines. **He has always taken care of Mountain Shadows and we appreciate all he has done.**



to Germany for two. Randy wanted to check on “his boys,” meaning the trio of foursomes he personally sponsored. That’s \$2,700 (\$900 x 3) worth of Haskin contribution. Plus Carol’s on the MSSG Golf Committee too.

Hole 16 started a note-taking marathon, because of the complexity of Haskin friend-kinships in the four-

ROAD TRIP *(continued from page 6)*

risson in the group is a partner in a shopping mall with Ellkin.

If you're getting the concept that this tourney is great for business association and networking, you've got the correct idea. It's a bonanza vacation day from the office that gets more accomplished in one afternoon than days on the telephone.

Finally, Randy and I encountered his third foursome: John and Brian Kendrick (both brothers to Carol Haskin; each works for Innovation Sports in Orange County). Also, Doug Lester (with PMPT Co.) and Kevin Hansen, a CPA.

I throw in some titles and company names because each year the tourney seems to draw a golfing corps of *higher* net worth folks—a major index of Golf Classic growth and development and potential.

Back at the first hole, Dave Chalon was holding first place with a marshmallow drive paced off at 120 feet by Randy. The contest itself was a steal: one hit cost \$10 but everyone got a consolation prize of a Mountain Shadows golf tourney sweatshirt worth more than twice the fee.

This time, Portia Bibb, Carol Haskin, and Mary Lou Swarner were monitoring the mallow slugging. I'm not an emotional guy, but in a burst of affection I embraced all three in one big hug and said, "You guys are the mothers of support for Mountain Shadows." Portia got parent involvement rolling in the 1980s, Mary Lou kept the momentum going as president of the FOMS to the mid 1990s, and Carol—some years ago—stepped up as FOMS president with inspired enthusiasm and savvy executive know-how.

Hint: I checked in Portia's contest ice chest. It contained a cooled down package of Albertson's Light and Fluffy marshmallows and a chilled bag of Craft Jet-Puffed marshmallows. Chalon's 120 foot blast used the Albertson's brand—and it wasn't long before my discovery was on the cell phone circuit among golfers yet to play the 1st hole and smack a mallow.

Second hint: Don't smash the marshmallow with a driver. Use an easy-swing iron and loft the mallow into the prevailing tailwind.

Randy plunked down \$50 in cash to sponsor a hit by Matt Haskin, Steve Ray, Steve Beal, Ben Chandler, and David Haskell. Then we zoomed on, carting a lost six iron and unsuccessfully looking for its owner among four-somes we passed.

On the 3rd hole, a 165-yard one-stroke cup plunk won you a BMW GS motorcycle with a speedometer up to 150 mph and a design straight out of space-age Star Wars. Monitors were Amber Giacalone and SDSU cheerleader Jason Wells, a junior majoring in biology. At the halfway point of the tourney, closest ball to the pin was six feet, Wells said. "It was right on line; they thought it was

going in."

The neatest surprise was coming up a rise onto the 9th hole, where one tee shot sunk put you behind the wheel of a Ford 150 pickup. Here, supervised by volunteer monitor Hal Karlin (president of tourney co-sponsor Mountain View Services Inc.), golfers powered their shots 191 yards into a brisk headwind. One foursome later, Karlin networked with co-sponsor Dick Marrs of Marrs Maddocks and Associates. Last time they met was 10 years ago.

And then Randy and Carol went south in one cart, chasing down a task, and I took "my" cart and parked it by the clubhouse and thought about what Randy had said to me:

"My whole family," he began, "has been involved with Mike (a Jacaranda resident) all his life. He's 22 now, and we can truly enjoy supporting him at events like this golf tourney. In the early years, it was more difficult, with all the therapy needs and the medical struggles. Now, it's really a pleasure to do this and be here with family. ■

Sharing the Love

Heartfelt thanks go out to the Deacons and congregation of Solana Beach Presbyterian Church for their donation of \$1,000. The blockbuster gift was used to purchase DVD players and DVDs for all Mountain Shadows houses.

"The church is involved with many local and overseas ministries," said three-year Deacon (and famed Sewing Lady) Betty Kadar. "The Deacon's Board was delighted with the selection of Mountain Shadows to receive its "Love Gift" and was happy that all houses and residents benefitted from and will continue to enjoy the use of the DVD players and DVDs."

In all, 11 DVD players, 37 DVDs and 1 box set were purchased. Says Denise Kadar, QMRP of Ash, Cedar, Pine and daughter of Betty, "The residents are very excited. Henry of Birch drags all house staff and visitors to see the new DVD player." QMRPs in all houses were consulted to ensure the most appropriate DVDs were chosen for each resident. Favorite DVDs include "Pirates of the Caribbean" and "Finding Nemo". Romantic comedies and superhero action stories are also popular.

Appreciation also goes to Circuit City for a 10% discount on all DVD players and \$1 off on all DVDs. And to Dan Myer, QMRP, movie enthusiast and muscle, who helped with the shopping and "lugged the DVD players from store to car to resident houses."

■ TRANSPORTATION *(continued from page 1)*

through a County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging and Independent Services grant program. The County funding was provided through a one-time grant, so Mountain Shadows will have to locate funding for the 20% of the cost of any additional buses. In the current difficult economic climate in which we operate, this will be challenging.”

James grew up in South Dakota. He wheeled into Mountain Shadows four years ago and hasn't put on the brakes since. In addition to being the QMRP at Oak, Elm and Spruce, he's currently in charge of the Transportation Program and is the lead QMRP for coordination of the software systems that the QMRPs use. “I like to keep busy and learn all the different aspects of the company.” He attended graduate school in Sacramento and holds a degree in psychology and speech therapy.

“James has spearheaded this grant process from beginning to end. Without his hard work, innovative thinking and commitment, Mountain Shadows residents would not have this bus,” said Executive Director Wade Wilde. “Our non-profit status allows us to take full advantage of key programs like this and enhances our ability to provide improved services to our residents.” ■

Donations Accepted Here

Mountain Shadows Support Group, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. We are authorized to accept donations of cash, boats, furniture, computers, cars—you name it. And you can write-off your gifts as an IRS tax deduction. We win. You win. Think about us and give what you can.

Note: Free publicity in the *North County Times* recently generated several donations of clothing and furniture to Mountain Shadows. These gifts help us out substantially. Keep us in mind when that apartment suddenly empties or the garage runs out of storage space.

Visit us on the web at
www.MountainShadows.ws



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