

# Life Matters



**A Spark of Creativity:**

*National Assisted Living Week 2019*

PAGE 4

**A Legacy of Quality Care:**

*Cottesmore Celebrates 50th Anniversary*

PAGE 6

**Ready for Their Close-up**

PAGE 8

**Rehab Trains Superheroes**

PAGE 10

## A message from the president

On a wall in the office of a huge tree farm hangs a sign. It reads:

*The best time to plant a tree is 25 years ago. The second-best time is today.*

The wisdom of that sign shines forth. There is no time like the present to become an expert (isn't that your goal?) in our mission. It is a noble calling in which we are engaged in Life Care, and we should give it our best, reaching our full potential.

Maybe you wish you had started earlier. Or maybe you wish you had found a better teacher or mentor years ago. None of that matters. Looking back and lamenting will not help you move forward.

As an English major in college, one of my favorite poets was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807 – 1882), whose popular works included *Paul Revere's Ride*, *The Song of Hiawatha* and *Evangeline*.

A friend of Longfellow asked the secret of his continued interest in life. Pointing to a nearby apple tree, Longfellow said, "The purpose of that apple tree is to grow a little new wood each year. That is what I plan to do."

That sentiment was expressed in one of Longfellow's poems:

*Not enjoyment and not sorrow ... Is our destined end or way ... But to act that each tomorrow ... Find us further than today.*

John C. Maxwell, author and expert on leadership development, put it this way: "You may not be where you're supposed to be. You may not be what you want to be. You don't have to be what you used to be. And you don't have to ever arrive. You just need to learn to be the best you can be right now."

Napoleon Hill (1883 – 1970), American author best known for his book *Think and Grow Rich*, which is among the top 10 best-selling self-help books of all time, said: "You can't change where you started, but you can change the direction you are going. It's not what you are going to do, but it's what you are doing now that counts."

On Jan. 4, 1970, Forrest Preston opened the first nursing home in what was to become Life Care Centers of America. Every day since then, he has been driven to be better at what he does. Jan. 4, 2020, marks the 50th anniversary of that facility.

Are you growing a little new wood each year?

Sincerely,



Beecher Hunter



### OUR COVER MODELS:

Rehab teams from around the country showed off their superpowers in the weeks leading up to this year's Annual Rehab Meeting.

The meeting's power-packed theme was "We Train Superheroes."

See p. 10 for more details.

**LifeMatters**  
is published quarterly by  
Life Care Centers of America

P.O. Box 3480  
Cleveland, Tennessee 37320

**Forrest L. Preston**  
Founder and Chairman

**Beecher Hunter**  
President

**Rob Pauza**  
Director of Graphic Services  
and Art Director

**Leigh Atherton**  
Director of Public Relations  
and Editor

**Dara Carroll**  
Senior Publications Specialist  
and Associate Editor

**Jonathan Golden**  
Senior Designer

All correspondence should be  
addressed to the Associate Editor.

## Features

4 A Spark of Creativity: *National Assisted Living Week 2019*

6 A Legacy of Quality Care:  
*Cottesmore Celebrates 50th Anniversary*

8 Ready for Their Close-up

10 Rehab Trains Superheroes

## In*Every*Issue

2 Life Care Connections

11 Century Park Spotlight

12 *Whatever It Takes And Then Some* Highlights

13 Resident Voices: “*What major historical event affected you most? Why and what do you remember about it?*”

## Inside*Life*Care

9 Balanced Wellness: *Life Care Rolls Out the Fit For Life 2019 Contest with Big Changes*



A Spark of Creativity p. 4



A Legacy of Quality Care p. 6



Ready for Their Close Up p. 8



Rehab Trains Superheroes p. 10

## Beecher Hunter Wins United Way Volunteer Award



On May 16, 2019, Beecher Hunter, Life Care Centers of America president, received one of two

William F. Johnson Sr. Community Service Awards from the United Way of the Ocoee Region.

The award was presented during the United Way's annual banquet in Cleveland, Tennessee. Named after a well-known community philanthropist and United Way volunteer who consistently challenged the community to give, advocate and volunteer, the award is given to an active member of the community.

Currently a volunteer, Hunter has been involved with the local United Way organization for 56 years. He has held many positions with the organization, including vice president of the executive

committee and serving as a member of the board of directors. Life Care also hosts an annual drive for its corporate associates to give to the organization and makes corporate space available for United Way events.

## Life Care and Century Park Centers Win Best of North Idaho – Again



Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene and Life Care Center of Post Falls,

Idaho, were recently named Best Skilled Nursing Facility, and Garden Plaza of Post Falls was named Best Independent Senior Living and Best Assisted Living Community.

The awards were presented on March 28, 2019, during the "North Idaho Business Journal" annual release party for its Best of North Idaho Awards. Readers vote on their favorites in multiple categories, including health care providers.

Both Life Care centers have won their award for the last six years in a row, and Garden Plaza has won for independent living six years in a row as well.

"This speaks loudly to the community and is a testimony to our continued success," said Connie Willis, admissions and marketing director at Life Care Center of Coeur d'Alene. "It shows that our community not only supports us but also believes in us and the care we give to vote us No. 1 for so many years."

## 13 Life Care Facilities Achieve 2019 Women's Choice Award



Thirteen Life Care Centers of America facilities recently received a 2019 Women's Choice Award for Extended Care.

The award recognizes skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities around the United States that have high ratings from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, as well as no recent history of penalties or fines. This year, only about six percent of facilities received the award.

Women's Choice Awards are designed to help women make informed decisions as consumers – in health care as well as in other areas such as cars and brands.

Life Care's winning facilities are:

- Life Care Center of Sierra Vista, Arizona
- Garden Terrace Alzheimer's Center of Excellence in Aurora, Colorado
- Life Care Center of Greeley, Colorado
- Life Care Center of Littleton, Colorado
- Life Care Center of Stonegate in Parker, Colorado
- Life Care Center at Inverrary in Lauderhill, Florida
- Life Care Center of Sarasota, Florida
- Hale Anuenu Restorative Care Center in Hilo, Hawaii
- Life Care Center of Idaho Falls, Idaho
- Life Care Center of Lewiston, Idaho
- Life Care Center of Treasure Valley in Boise, Idaho
- Cottessmore of Life Care in Gig Harbor, Washington
- Westview Health Care Center in Sheridan, Wyoming



## Solomon Named Vice President of Life Care’s Eastern Division



Life Care Centers of America recently named Jennifer Solomon as vice president of its Eastern Division.

In this role, Solomon will oversee operations at the company’s 39 skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities in Georgia, Kentucky, the Carolinas, Tennessee and Virginia.

“I am humbled and blessed to work with the compassionate associates in the Eastern Division,” said Solomon. “I love Life Care’s passion and perseverance to provide quality care to our residents and patients. It has been our culture from the very beginning, and it can be seen every day through the kindness and dedication of our frontline associates.”

Solomon most recently served for more than eight years as vice president of the Appalachian Region within Life Care’s Eastern Division. Before that, she was executive director at Life Care Center of Greeneville, Tennessee, for five years. She has been with Life Care for 22 years.

Originally from Greeneville, Solomon has a master’s degree in counseling and a bachelor’s degree in psychology.

“Jennifer is an experienced and caring leader who has her priorities in the right place,” said Cathy Murray, Life Care’s chief operating officer. “Residents come first, and her teams look up to her and respect her. We are pleased to have her leading the Eastern Division.”

## Gonzalez Celebrated for 45 Years of Service

In 1974, Ernie Gonzalez started his career at Villa Manor Care Center in Lakewood, Colorado. At the time, he could have never imagined the 45 years of memories he would make at the facility and the thousands of lives he would touch, from residents to associates.

Villa Manor threw a party in Gonzalez’ honor on May 23, 2019, with about 120 people in attendance, including residents, associates and his family members.

Cathy Murray, chief operating officer for parent company Life Care Centers of America, and Derek Schmidt, vice president of Life Care’s Mountain States Division, both attended the fête, and Beecher Hunter, Life Care president, sent a special video thanking Gonzalez for his many years of dedicated service.

“He is the best housekeeping supervisor I have seen in 25 years,” said Sara Dent, executive director. “Everyone loves him. He takes pride in everything he does and really puts the needs of others in front of his own.”



When Gonzalez was asked what has kept him at Villa Manor so long, he said, “The people I work with. Everybody has been so nice to me. I’ve never had a problem with anybody. I’m very happy every morning that I go in to work.”

Fellow associates noted that Gonzalez makes it a habit to stop and talk to every person he meets. He has helped grill

hamburgers and hot dogs for fundraisers and donated some of his vacation days to an associate in need. He has served as a good leader for his department, leading his team to achieve no deficiencies on many state surveys. Once, he even got a tag for making the floors too shiny. He earned a President’s Award from Life Care in 1992.

“Your co-workers talk of your kindness, integrity, honesty, love, compassion and genuineness – all qualities that are imperative in health care,” said Hunter. “You may never know how much difference you make in someone’s life. Thank you, Ernie, for 45 incredible years of service!”

Gonzalez plans to work for several more years before retiring.



# *A Spark of Creativity*

National Assisted  
Living Week 2019

*Century Park*  
ASSOCIATES

*At Century Park, we are proud of the people we serve every day. Our residents exemplify A Spark of Creativity by living life to the fullest and embracing creative outlets, including art, volunteerism, writing and other hobbies. We celebrate their influence on our lives during National Assisted Living Week, Sept. 8 – 14.*

## **James “Jim” Birdwell, Quail Ridge in Pocatello, Idaho**



James “Jim” Birdwell, who first became a clown in 1996, is a source of fun and creativity at Quail Ridge Assisted Living. He ties

20 to 30 balloon animals each week, and his clowning talents and charming personality never fail to brighten the lives of fellow residents, associates and visitors.

“I just love to tie these balloons,” Birdwell said with a smile. “I make puppy dogs, bumblebees and other animals, and I give them to the people in here. If kids come in, I like giving one to them and watching them smile.”

Birdwell, who is also known as Nickel the Clown, is loved and appreciated by the people around him.

“Jim is a ray of sunshine and a true joy to us,” said Kelsie Hansen, executive director.

Before he began lifting spirits at Quail Ridge, Birdwell, who began clowning at 69 years old, used his skills to make an impact on countless people.

Birdwell was a hospital clown, visiting hospitals to make the children there happy. His costume, balloon animals and infectious energetic personality always lifted spirits.

“My favorite trick was making them laugh and making them happy,” Birdwell said.

Birdwell also collected used wheelchairs, walkers and other adaptive equipment and donated them to hospitals. He did this for 11 years, donating more than 100 pieces of equipment to help the hospitals and their patients save money.

Birdwell’s clowning career changed his life and countless other lives. He’s been a clown for 23 years, and he still loves it.

“My purpose is to make people smile,” said Birdwell. “I won’t stop doing it until I’m not alive anymore.”

Quail Ridge is thankful that Birdwell is there to keep everyone smiling!

## Hope Cresswell, Harbor Place at Cottesmore in Gig Harbor, Wash.



Hope Cresswell showcases her spark of creativity through her beautiful artwork.

Cresswell's love for the arts began at a young age.

She remembers staying home sick from school as a child and drawing families to pass the time. Today, Cresswell laughs thinking about it because she knows that even as a child, she wanted a family someday.

Cresswell always loved the paintings her grandmother did before she was born, and this helped spark Cresswell's interest in oil painting when she was in high school.

"My grandmother was so talented and never had one lesson," brags Cresswell. "I still have her only surviving painting."

In 1949, Cresswell married and eventually had three children. Being a full-time wife and mother was her career, but painting remained her hobby. One of her daughters enjoys painting, just like Cresswell.

"She does fantastic work, and I'm so proud of her," says Cresswell.

Cresswell loves painting with oils. She says it's easier to alter, but she has attempted acrylic painting, too. She enjoys painting lighthouses and has recently started painting flowers.

Cresswell paints for others and herself, not for competition. In her hometown in Maine, she would take her paintings to the historical societies and her church for show. Although she has sold some of her artwork in the past, her main goal is to share her art, not make a profit.

"It's hard to sell them after you have worked on them for so long," says Cresswell. "I recently painted ballerina shoes, and I don't want to let go of that one."

Cresswell now lives at Harbor Place at Cottesmore, where she is still painting. For her, art is more than just an outlet to be creative; it is a way to connect with family and people. It brings a smile to her face knowing that the love of art has been passed down from generation to generation in her family. She is proud to know that the spark of creativity her grandmother started years ago continues to flicker.

## Janie Gass, Garden Plaza at Cleveland, Tenn.



In the eyes of Janie Gass, writing is more than just a creative outlet. It is a way of sharing her heart with the world in hopes of making it a better place.

"If my ability to write makes it easier for someone to understand topics such as education and faith in a more creative way, I believe that makes it important," said Gass.

Gass developed her love of writing from a young age. But as time went on, her love of writing grew as she began her teaching career.

After graduating from college, Gass held several teaching jobs as a physical education instructor, kindergarten teacher and assistant professor of algebra.

During this time, Gass began writing study guides and other written materials to help her students who were having trouble in class.

"I love the students and their desire to learn," said Gass. "We just had fun together!"

In addition, Gass wrote and illustrated her own books in dedication to her grandchildren titled "The Vowel Sounds," "The Consonant Sounds," "The Breathless Boy" and "Don't Cry, Mary Anne." She even wrote a book called "God's Beautiful World" as a gift for her friend's first grandchild.

After that, Gass became inspired to share her personal testimony about salvation by writing her book "The Secret I Never Told."

"I was looking toward the pulpit [at church] one day, and there behind it was a picture that reminded me about my salvation at Mill Springs," said Gass. "It was a secret I hadn't told for 50 years."

Gass is currently putting the finishing touches on the epilogue of her book and intends to complete it soon.

"I hope that the books I have written stir emotions and feelings that open doors for people they never thought would open and help people of all ages learn and understand," said Gass.

For Gass, the stories have always been a part of her, as if written on her heart. But it's how she's shared them with the world that has made all the difference.

"If there's an angel on earth, it's my mom," said Gass' son, Dennis. "She's just above and beyond." 📖



# *A Legacy of Quality Care:*

## Cottesmore Celebrates 50th Anniversary

*By Bri Bentley*

For 50 years, Cottesmore of Life Care has served as a pillar of the community in Gig Harbor, Washington. Today, it continues to echo the legacy of founder Inez Glass through a spirit of caring.

A nurse by trade, Glass joined the United States Army Nurse Corps in 1943 and served in several locations of the United States, as well as a base in Scotland and Cottesmore Royal Air Force Base in England. It was there that she met her husband, Eugene Glass. She went on to serve in the military for two more years, eventually winning the prestigious Air Medal.

After her military service, Glass and her husband settled in the Tacoma, Washington, area with their three children. She went back to working as a nurse to help supplement her family's income. When her husband passed away, she began working for a Tacoma nursing facility and realized that there was great need in the Gig Harbor community for a quality nursing home.

With some land she owned and money that her husband had left her – along with the help and prayers of many supporters – Glass opened a new nursing facility and named it Cottesmore, after the charming town

in England where she had served and met her husband. The facility opened in 1969 and became not only a place for health care services but a popular community gathering place.

Glass was highly motivated to make Cottesmore a success – inspired by her strong belief in Christian ethics, her desire to provide quality care and a confidence she had in knowing that her dream to open the facility was God's ultimate call on her life.

"We did it for the Lord," Glass said. "It's His work, and it's going to go on."

Years later, when Glass was ready to sell the building, she chose to sell it to





Life Care because of Life Care's close connection to the mission and values upon which Cottesmore had been built. Life Care purchased the building in 1996, but Glass continued to be involved with the facility by heading up its volunteer program.

Todd Fletcher, vice president of Western Operations for Life Care, recalled: "When we first moved to Gig Harbor and started the transition of Cottesmore to Life Care, I soon found out that it was going to be difficult for one of the associates in the facility. So many of them called her Mom or Mom Glass. She was a true mother and friend to so many people. Residents' families would visit the facility even after their loved one had been discharged just to see Inez. So, we asked her to be our volunteer coordinator after she sold to Life Care, and she was happy to do so."

At Life Care's Annual Management Meeting in 2009, Glass was presented with Life Care's highest honor, the Carl W. Campbell Wind Beneath My Wings Award, given to the company-wide volunteer of the year.

Glass passed away in 2015, but her spirit of caring and heart for

volunteerism continues to live on at Cottesmore.

"Volunteers are so important in the long-term care setting," said Pamela Shelton, activities director at the facility. "We have volunteers [who consider] this is as important to themselves as it is to us. One volunteer came daily to feed his wife and would sit with her and talk to the other residents. Even after his wife passed away, he continued to come and talk to the residents and play music for them. Our residents really enjoy the time they spend with volunteers!"

Glass made the world a better place because of her love for people and commitment to serve the Lord by caring for others. She chose to allow the Lord to use her in a mighty way by obediently opening the Cottesmore facility and providing her community with the quality care it needed. It is this legacy that lives on through the Cottesmore family and continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of others for the kingdom of God. 🙏

On Aug. 7, 2019, Cottesmore of Life Care celebrated its golden anniversary with a party for the community. The celebration included a ribbon-cutting ceremony, refreshments and tours of the facility and its affiliate community, Harbor Place at Cottesmore, which opened in 2006. Cottesmore provides skilled nursing and rehabilitation services, while Harbor Place is an independent and assisted living retirement community.

Tours of Cottesmore showcased recently completed construction, featuring a new rehab unit with 13 private suites, six spacious shared rooms, a spa, an activity room and a rehab dining area.



# READY FOR THEIR *Close-up*

*By Ryan Faricelli*

Christmas arrived early and with Hollywood style at Life Care Center of Auburn, Massachusetts, when a production crew filming a television movie asked the facility for assistance in early May 2019.

Lifetime Channel and Lifetime Movie Network produces its own films and was filming its newest Christmas movie, “A Sweet Romance,” at Robbie’s Place Ice Cream and More. The local ice cream parlor is located across the street from Life Care Center of Auburn, and the production needed space for meetings, wardrobe and makeup.

“Their location is small, so the owner came over with the film’s director and asked if they could use a room in our facility for wardrobe,” said Carrie Cross, admissions director. “We let the movie’s producers use the conference room, and the actors and actresses used rooms for wardrobe and makeup.”

The film crew did not cause any disruptions, but Life Care associates

and residents were excited to see actors wearing winter coats in May and producers discussing their newest project. One associate was particularly excited when she was asked to be an extra in the film; she walked across the street in the background of a scene.

The movie, which is expected to come out this December, is written and directed by John Stimpson, a local to the Auburn area who has been directing film, television and commercial projects for 25 years. The film stars Katie Leclerc, who is best known for her lead role in “Switched at Birth” and appearances on TV shows such as “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation,” “Community” and “The Big Bang Theory.” Starring alongside Leclerc is Ryan Cooper, who has appeared on “One Life to Live,” “Eye Candy” and “Day 5.”

Cooper and Leclerc each had their own spaces in the facility, as well.

“They didn’t ask for a single thing,” Cross noted. “They showed up at 6 a.m.

and stayed until 8 p.m. Nobody even knew they were here. They couldn’t have been kinder. One of the extras, who was from New York, even went out of his way to tell us this was a really nice facility!”

Life Care Center of Auburn was glad to help with the movie, and Lifetime associates appreciated the four days they spent at the facility.

“I want to thank you very much for the use of your beautiful rehab center,” said Jennifer Chisolm, executive assistant for the film. “We appreciated all your hospitality during our week of filming in Auburn. We enjoyed meeting everyone and are grateful for the opportunity we had to use your terrific facility.”

Lifetime expressed their appreciation for the space with a donation to the resident’s activity fund, an invitation to a local premier of the movie later this year and the inclusion of Life Care in the movie’s credits. 🍷



# BALANCED WELLNESS

## Life Care Rolls Out the Fit For Life 2019 Contest with Big Changes

*By Heidi Pino*

Life Care and Century Park associates around the country have been tracking their steps and physical activities for years now for a chance to win prizes.

This year, the Wellness Committee felt it was time to expand the contest with a broader emphasis on overall wellness. Now, associates can earn points for activities beyond exercise.

It all started when Kelley Falcon, vice president of Human Resources, attended a benefits conference and heard people from other organizations talking about rewarding a variety of aspects of wellness.

“It made me realize, listening to the different things that people were doing, that we had been so focused on the physical aspects related to steps, that there was so much more we could be doing,” said Falcon. “I came back with that information and passed it out to the Wellness Committee and said, ‘Let’s broaden our scope here,’ and the committee took it and ran.”

Now, the Wellness site on the Village Square (click the **Fit For**

**Life** icon on the home page) offers four categories in which associates can earn points – Health, Financial, Community and Exercise. The steps portion, under Exercise, now earns associates 25 points for every 10,000 steps. And they can add up other positive choices under the other categories, such as contributing to a 401(k), getting their annual physical, starting a diet program, having their teeth cleaned and being a non-smoker.

Those points add up for chances to win money. The Bronze level, from 2,000-4,999 points, makes associates eligible for a quarterly prize of a \$100 American Express gift card and the annual prize of \$1,000 plus one vacation day. The Silver level (5,000-9,999 points) qualifies associates for a \$200 quarterly prize and an annual prize of \$2,000 plus two vacation days. The highest level, Gold, qualifies associates for a \$300 quarterly prize and an annual prize of \$3,000 plus three vacation days.

“It would be very easy, just from some very basic things, to get into the

Bronze category without even getting up from your desk,” said Falcon. “Before you know it, you’re in the Bronze category and eligible for an award.”

Participation has increased since the changes went into effect, which was one of the main goals this year, along with increasing awareness of different avenues to wellness.

Kathi Christensen, executive secretary of HR, added, “The new program gives people some ideas. Someone who may not have thought about giving blood before might look at it and go, ‘Oh, I can get points for that. I’m going to donate blood.’”

The Wellness Committee encourages everyone, from corporate associates to staff at facilities around the country, to visit the Fit For Life site and participate.

“We’re seeking to create positive change,” said Falcon. “Not just for Life Care but for individuals.” 🍏

# REHAB TRAINS SUPERHEROES



*By Jenna Mathis*

Life Care Centers of America’s Annual Rehab Meeting took place at the company’s headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee, April 29 – May 1, 2019. This year’s theme was “We Train Superheroes.”

The meeting brings together Life Care’s rehab leadership from across the nation for a three-day educational conference to discuss resources from the corporate interdisciplinary team and division teams. Associates share best practices and celebrate rehab accomplishments from the previous year.

One of the meeting’s highlights was the presentation of Life Care’s Rehab Servant Heart Award. The honor recognizes a rehab associate who selflessly contributes his or her professional expertise and time in providing rehab services and who also gives personally beyond his or her job description.

This year, the award went to Pamela Cole, director of rehabilitation services

at Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley in Littleton, Massachusetts.

Cole, an occupational therapist for 34 years, has been a Life Care associate since 2008. She was praised for her calm demeanor, listening ear and willingness to take whatever time needed to serve her patients and fellow associates. She uses her love of sewing and crafts to support community events, and she is known to share handmade clothing items and warm meals with those in need.

The unique theme of this year’s meeting was embraced by attendees and served as a great tie-in for the week’s activities and the power-packed agenda.

“We selected this theme to illustrate the men and women who serve in rehab and because we are all superheroes deep down,” said Clemente Aquino, vice president of rehab practice standards.

The Corporate Rehab team also organized a photo contest leading up to the annual meeting in which

each facility’s rehab team submitted a superhero-themed photo of themselves with their building’s Life Care sign. The contest was a great teambuilding exercise for local rehab teams, and it gave them a chance to show off their facility’s character, as well as their own personalities.

The contest was won by the rehab team at Life Care Center of Cleveland, Tennessee. Life Care of Coos Bay, Oregon, came in second, and Garden Terrace at Fort Worth, Texas, came in third.

The 2019 Annual Rehab Meeting was a super opportunity for associates to learn new techniques, network with peers and discuss strategies for making this coming year even better than the last. 🦄



# CENTURY PARK SPOTLIGHT

## Century Park Honors Outstanding Communities and Individuals at Annual Meeting

By Dara Carroll

Century Park Associates recently honored several outstanding communities and individuals at its Annual Management Meeting in Cleveland, Tennessee.

During an awards banquet on May 23, Community of the Year honors were awarded to Garden Plaza of Post Falls, Idaho.

Garden Plaza of Post Falls, an independent living and assisted living community, was praised for its high occupancy rate, its fiscal responsibility and its high customer satisfaction scores. The community has been named a Best of North Idaho winner for retirement and assisted living for the past five years.

Two Chairman's Awards were also presented during the meeting: to Garden Plaza at Greenbriar Cove in Ooltewah, Tennessee, and Lake Pointe Landing in Hendersonville, North Carolina. The award recognizes communities that demonstrate outstanding commitment to excellence so exceptional that it commands attention.

Both Chairman's Award communities were recognized for their consistent high occupancy, fiscal responsibility and high customer satisfaction.

"The award is to the credit of a wonderful team that works tirelessly to make our campus the best place possible for our residents," said Rita Hood, executive director at Lake Pointe Landing. "Our associates are totally dedicated to the quality care and compassion that have been the hallmark of Lake Pointe Landing for the last 20 years."

Several individual awards were also given out during the meeting. Century Park's *Going The Extra Mile* customer service program recognizes outstanding associates who have gone above and beyond their job descriptions to serve residents, families, co-workers and guests.


An overall GEM winner was announced at the awards banquet, as well as five regional winners:

- **GEM Annual Winner**  
Janet Garcia, *certified nursing assistant at Pointe Frontier in Cheyenne, Wyoming*
- **GEM Regional Winners**
  - Pam Alexander, *conciierge at The Abbewood in Elyria, Ohio*
  - Sean Lovern, *maintenance assistance at Lake Pointe Landing in Hendersonville, North Carolina*

- Eileen Smith, *lifestyles director at The Bridge at Greeley, Colorado*
- Kate Knupp, *lifestyles director at Cascade Park in Woodburn, Oregon*
- Linda Silver, *resident assistant at Garden Plaza at Cleveland, Tennessee*

After receiving her award and a cash prize, Garcia tried to put the recognition into words: "It's an awesome feeling to win. It felt like I was in Disneyland, like I was a princess or something. I truly love my job. I love my elders. This is my calling."

It is a calling that thousands of Century Park associates around the country rededicate themselves to each day.

"I am proud of the commitment our amazing associates have made to their residents, families and communities," said Dan Swiatkiewicz, Century Park's national director of sales. "They do their jobs with energy and passion and are dedicated to their mission of providing superior care and services in senior living. They are the true definition of success." 



**Janet Garcia**  
*GEM Annual Winner*



**Garden Plaza at Post Falls**  
*Community of the Year Winner*



**Garden Plaza at Greenbriar Cove**  
*Chairman's Award*



**Lake Pointe Landing**  
*Chairman's Award*



# Whatever It Takes And Then Some Highlights

## **Anna LaRoche, registered nurse, University Park Care Center in Pueblo, Colorado**

When LaRoche noticed that a resident wasn't sleeping well, she talked to the resident about it and found out that she slept in a recliner at home to help with breathing and comfort. LaRoche immediately called her husband and had him bring a recliner from their home for the resident. The resident was brought to tears at her kindness.

## **Debbie Arnold, business office manager, Life Care Center of Carrollton, Missouri**

Morel mushrooms are a delicacy in rural Missouri, selling at \$50 per gallon. Knowing the residents would enjoy some, Arnold bought enough with her own money for all the residents. She then helped clean and fry them up for the residents.

## **Christina Villatoro, certified nursing assistant, Life Care Center of Auburn, Massachusetts**

When a resident moved to Florida to be near her son, Villatoro paid her own way to and from Florida to travel with the resident and make sure she had a safe, secure and stress-free journey.

## **Tammy Seals, MDS coordinator, Life Care Center of Tullahoma, Tennessee**

As part of an interdepartmental team discussion about alternatives to restraint use, Seals suggested trying weighted blankets to help reduce anxiety and restlessness. She sought out and bought one that was large enough to be made into several lap-sized blankets that have helped provide comfort for residents.

## **Nichole Smith, certified dietary manager, Bridgeview Estates in Twin Falls, Idaho**

Smith had very little notice to organize a facility team for the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life walk. She took the chance and ran with it, creating such a fantastic booth that the facility won the award for best campsite for the event.

## **Stella De Los Reyes, cook, Alameda Oaks Nursing Center in Corpus Christi, Texas**

De Los Reyes has made a special friend with a blind resident. She stops at his table and talks with him, then walks with him down the hall to his room to make sure he has a pleasant and safe trip back.

## **Tarsha Clinton, case manager, Life Care Center of Winter Haven, Florida**

A resident was moving out of her assisted living apartment and into the facility for long-term care. Clinton went to the resident's apartment and helped her gather as many belongings as she could fit into her vehicle. She then helped the resident sort through her things and settle in to her new home.

# Resident Voices

## WHAT MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENT AFFECTED YOU MOST? WHY AND WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT IT?"

"I remember WWII, and I remember my brother Gus, who was killed at 19 years old in service. I still miss him to this very day."

**Lucy Guadagnoli**

*Cherry Hill Manor in Johnston, RI*

"Pearl Harbor. ... I had two uncles who joined the military during the war: Herman and Art. Herman was my favorite uncle, but, unfortunately, he didn't survive the war. Art was a survivor, and he would tell me stories about the war."

**Betty Boyker**

*La Habra Convalescent Hospital in La Habra, CA*

"When the German air ship Hindenburg went over Boston, I watched it out of my school window."

**Marion Thunell**

*Life Care Center of the South Shore in Scituate, MA*

"Vietnam War. I was in college. My mom kept me there, so I couldn't be drafted. I was glad."

**Michael Thompson**

*Life Care Center of Puyallup, WA*

"World War II. In the little town where I lived, they dropped a flour sack with rose petals falling [from a plane], just to show what a bomb would cover."

**Lois Williams**

*Rensselaer Care Center in Rensselaer, IN*

"During the Depression, we moved to Atlanta. Being jobless, it was hard to get things. We used coupons. We never had much, so it didn't seem so bad, but looking back on it, compared to today, it was bad."

**Erma Wallace**

*Life Care Center of Red Bank in Chattanooga, TN*

"Ronald Reagan's presidency. He made good financial decisions. His decisions were what affected my life during that time. He was a great man."

**Mark Schioppi**

*Life Care Center of Escondido, CA*

"In 1971, there was an earthquake in Inglewood, California. Bridges were torn down, large loss of life and a lot of damage. It was my first time in California. I was going to the store with my mom, and everything started shaking."

**Janet Cordell**

*Life Care Center of Ooltewah, TN*

"The end of WWII. I remember the boat ride back from Italy to the U.S. was a hard ride: bumpy, hard and cold."

**John Carberry**

*Life Care Center of Wilbraham, MA*

"1969. The first man on the moon. I was at home with my father and grandmother, and we watched it on TV. I was 21 years old. We were all very proud. It was a great time to be an American."

**Earl Peterkin**

*Life Care Center of Sandpoint, ID*

"When President Kennedy was assassinated, it broke my heart. ... I was at school [6 years old], and they announced it on the intercom. Everyone broke down crying. I remember images of Jackie with blood on her dress. I'll never forget that."

**Robert LaDue**

*Life Care Center of Salt Lake City, UT*

"The assassination of President John F. Kennedy because I learned how much hate is in the world, and I remember the confusion."

**Juanita Navarro**

*Rimrock Villa Convalescent Hospital in Barstow, CA*

"During segregation, I remember that no one wanted to go to school together. I thought it was wrong because we are all equal [in God's eyes]."

**Manda Thompson**

*Life Care Center of Hendersonville, NC*

"Hurricane Katrina: Watching the flooding and stranded people being evacuated from their homes."

**Vicky Upchurch**

*Life Care Center of Crossville, TN*

"The passing of the Social Security and Medicare Act: it helps the elderly and retired citizens who need extra income. I thought Franklin Roosevelt was one of our best presidents!"

**Florence Mioduszewski**

*Heatherwood Retirement Community in Honey Brook, PA*

"When WWII was going on, they came around and told everyone in the neighborhood to turn out their lights at night when they heard planes going by. If WWII was not frightening enough, it was frightening to be in the dark all of the time!"

**Victoria D.**

*Life Care Center of Punta Gorda, FL*

"My husband was a marine during the Korean War. It was a sad situation for the people there. My husband was mentally conflicted after the war. So many men were, and they didn't talk about it."

**Deloris Lane**

*Life Care Center of Rhea County in Dayton, TN*

"When President Kennedy was shot. It was upsetting. It makes you realize how short life is and how it can be taken away in a second."

**Jean Smith**

*The Bridge at Ooltewah, TN*

"WWII. The small availability of things. Whatever supplies were offered always went away fast. We could not buy a car; we were put on stamp books for gas, 1 lb. of bacon a week. My family would gather around the radio to listen to Churchill and Roosevelt about what was going on in the war."

**Mary Sisk**

*Life Care Center of Las Vegas, NV*

"I remember my Girl Scout Troop celebrating the USA Bicentennial. We marched in a parade and wore historically accurate clothing from 1876."

**Coral Sode**

*Life Care Center of Waynesville, MO*

"The Cuban Missile Crisis. My family was coming into Key West. ... We could hear the planes going over, and my husband said that he would take care of us."

**Gwen Houk**

*Life Care Center of Pueblo, CO*

"When the Zeppelin Hindenburg went down in flames. ... The radio announcer was so upset, he started crying."

**Jack Burrell**

*Harbor Place at Cottesmore in Gig Harbor, WA*

"WWII because two of my brothers served in the war. A lot of men and boys died. It scared me. Every time somebody knocked on the door, you expected it to be bad news that your family had died. It was terrible. We lived in much fear."

**Norma Baker**

*Lynchburg Nursing Center in Lynchburg, TN*

"On Sept. 11, 2001, the United States of America incurred a serious wound. ... However, because of that event, a sense of unity, patriotism and solidarity abounded throughout our country. It's sorrowful to realize it takes something that horrific to bring us together as a nation."

**Marian Joppa**

*Life Care Center of Farmington, NM*

"JFK's assassination. It was a scary time. It was one event after another: Martin Luther King's assassination, RFK's assassination."

**Anna Gilmore**

*Life Care Center of Estero, FL*

"My brother worked for NASA when John Glenn went to the moon!"

**Hazel Hall**

*Life Care Center of Athens, TN*

"1980 Mount St. Helens eruption. I was a patrol officer for the Cowlitz County Humane Society. We were directly involved with rescuing many animals and providing care and shelter for them. Many pets were abandoned by their owners and didn't survive. It was a heartbreaking time for us officers!"

**Della Wright**

*Life Care Center of Federal Way, WA*

"Big parade after World War II ended. Everybody was in it. I felt proud to be a part of it."

**Dorothy Proietti**

*Life Care Center of Leominster, MA*

# Congratulations

The following Life Care facilities were recently awarded the Silver or Bronze National Quality Award from the American Health Care Association and National Center of Assisted Living.



Cherry Hill Manor in Johnston, Rhode Island

Evergreen Nursing Home  
in Alamosa, Colorado

Heritage Health Care Center in Globe, Arizona

Life Care Center of Attleboro, Massachusetts

Life Care Center of Auburn, Massachusetts

Life Care Center of Columbia, Tennessee

Life Care Center of Nashoba Valley  
in Littleton, Massachusetts

Life Care Center of Plymouth, Massachusetts

Life Care Center of Raynham, Massachusetts

Life Care Center of Jefferson City, Tennessee

*These awards honor facilities across that nation that have demonstrated their commitment to improving quality of care for seniors and persons with disabilities. Applicants develop an organizational profile with essential performance elements such as vision and mission statements and an assessment of customers' expectations. They must also demonstrate their ability to implement a performance improvement system.*