

Family Matters

The Newsletter for Sunnyvale Health Care Center

Summer 2010

Residents on the move with Happy Feet, Senior Prom



The Happy Feet program has long promoted mobility.

It's not just a movie featuring dancing penguins.

"Happy Feet" is the long-running program of promoting residents' mobility by having them walk – and in some cases, dance – throughout the facility each afternoon to the tune of upbeat jams like "YMCA"

and other disco classics.

In some cases, it helps residents who have undergone physical therapy to keep their progress going, but to a beat.

"We want to enhance their mobility and independence, so they're not stuck in a chair," said Activities Director Nelrose Ramirez.

Each afternoon at 1:30 p.m. sharp, the music plays throughout the halls of Sunnyvale Health Care Center and able residents, with the help of their CNA's, walk along, making conversation and getting around.

You can hear the announcement at the same time every day: "It's Happy Feet time ..."

"Sometimes the residents dance. They engage with the music," Nelrose said. "Even the nursing assistants are having fun."

It's become a popular event with residents, who often look forward to 1:30 p.m.

"Sometimes they're in line already before then," she said.

Continued to MOBILITY

Watson proves a nice fit for SHCC

Dr. Ronald Watson, medical director at Sunnyvale Health Care Center, has worked at other skilled nursing facilities and knows immediately what sets SHCC apart.

The company motto, "Family Caring for Families," sums it up pretty well.

"The fact that this family owns the facility, they have a vested interest in the place," Watson said. "They are a very dedicated group of people."

The accessibility of the



Chavez family, led by Executive Director Hermie Chavez, makes SHCC more flexible and nimble than its corpo-

rate-owned counterparts, he says.

"You don't have to go through a whole chain of command," he said. "When we want to make changes, we can make changes more rapidly. I think that stands out as a big difference."

Dr. Watson has worked with the company since

2006, traveling from his practice in Mountain View, which is part of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

He has practiced medicine for more than 30 years, ever since he graduated from the University of Sri Lanka medical school. From there he interned at McKeesport Hospital in Pennsylvania, studied pathology at Western Pennsylvania Hospital, and then practiced internal medicine and earned a fellowship studying infectious dis-

Continued to WATSON

INCENTIVE PROGRAM LAUNCHES

Point system aimed at rewarding day-to-day achievements

It started out as a way to recognize and motivate the facility's Certified Nursing Assistants.

With the right amount of energy, it could become a way to get the whole company to take even more pride in their work.

Spearheaded by Director of Staff Development Vanessa Chavez, an incentive program that began with CNA Appreciation Week at the facility is now evolving into a way to promote healthy competition and recognize the day-to-day accomplishments of Sunnyvale Health Care Center staff.

The week of June 10 to June 17 was CNA Appreciation Week, and supervisors set out to reward good work by the staff CNA's by giving them points for performing well at tasks such as answering call lights promptly and closely tending to residents' nourishment and room

organization.

"We wanted to motivate them to do better," Vanessa said.

The highest point-getter during that week won an iPod Shuffle. That's when staffers saw another incentive for paying closer attention to the care they were giving, she said.

But just because CNA Appreciation Week is over doesn't mean that there aren't still incentives for taking care of the small details.

"We're going to keep it going," Vanessa said.

Part of the reason for continuing the incentive program is to balance out the strict regulations that are required of the staff by reminding them that they are being noticed for doing a good job.

"We're so regulated. Most of the time, we're focused on things they're not doing versus things that are being done," Vanessa said. "With this program, we reward people who are doing well and encourage those who need to pick it up a bit."

Continued to INCENTIVE

UPCOMING EVENTS

*July birthday parties: July 16, 2010

*July BBQ: July 21, 2010

*Candlelight dinner: July 29, 2010

UPCOMING EVENT FIBROMYALGIA SYMPOSIUM

Speaker will be Dr. Michael Jadali, a Psychiatrist specializing in Fibromyalgia and Chronic Pain Syndrome

* This event will offer CEU credits to Nurses, Doctors, and Case Managers

* It is also a networking event that will also be sponsored by HomeWell Senior Care, Healthy Living Home Health and Eli Lilly

* Event open to the community in August; time and date TBA.

* Those who will be sitting in during the 1 hour lecture are to reserve seating for CEU credits.

* RSVP to Maggie Guizar @ (408) 598-9947 or email @ margarita_guizar@svhcc.com

Continued from WATSON

eases at William Beaumont Hospital in Michigan.

The motivation to practice medicine in California was a simple one for him.

"It was too cold in Michigan," he said. "I grew up in the tropics!"

Now a board-certified internist, Dr. Watson is awaiting certification as a medical director this summer. He transitioned into focusing on long-term care and medicine about nine years ago, partly because he wanted to follow patients he had been treating for years.

"It allowed me to keep caring for my patients," he said.

Over the years, Dr. Watson has witnessed an evolution in nursing home facilities, particularly toward the facility as a true home.

"We want to create as

best as possible the home environment," he said. "We want to accommodate as much as possible what the resident needs. A lot has changed and it is still evolving rapidly."

Dr. Watson lives with his wife and has an adult son who is a gastroenterologist and adult daughter who is an attorney. When he is not at work, he runs on the treadmill, tends a garden with fruit trees and Japanese maple trees, and spends time with his grandchildren.

He said his work at SHCC is rewarding and that he works well with the administration.

"I work extremely well with Mrs. Chavez," he said. "We talk about any issues in the facility and put our heads together. I think they run an excellent facility."

Topaz program introduced

Sunnyvale Health Care Center is proud to introduce a new program initiated by our contracted rehabilitation department, Hallmark Rehabilitation, hallmarkrehabinc.com.

The Topaz program will include a a Pain Management Program, Dysphagia Program, Fall Prevention Program, Urinary Incontinence Program, Wound Therapy, Neuromuscular Therapy, and Edema Therapy.

TOPAZ stands for
Therapeutic

Options
Promoting
Ability and
Zest for life

These modalities enable our therapists to treat the medical, neurological and musculoskeletal conditions that are most common in our skilled nursing facility population today.

The program also includes a graduate program, where success stories are posted in the rehabilitation department and sent

to residents' doctors to keep them informed of their progress.

With Topaz on our team, we have state-of-the-art therapy tools and treatment protocols that are unavailable in most facilities.

Protocols have been established for acute, sub-acute and chronic problems.

Topaz has brought us a unique program that includes new equipment, trained staff and ongoing clinical support to our rehabilitation team.

Continued from MOBILITY

On the evening of Wednesday, June 30, there was music in the air at Sunnyvale Health Care Center.

That's when the Social Dining Room became more than just a place to have dinner. It was time for the facility's first-ever Senior Prom, coordinated by Activities Director Nelrose Ramirez.

It was an idea she implemented at previous places where she worked, and had been kicking around at SHCC until now, when it finally became reality.

"This is for some of the residents who never attended their prom," Nelrose said.

On hand in the Social Dining Room were decorations and a hired entertainer playing live music to keep the evening upbeat and lively.

It featured hor d'oeuvres and finger foods on hand, a prize raffle, and a King and Queen of the prom were named. More than a dozen residents took part in the festivities.



The first SHCC Senior Prom was a smiling success.

Continued from INCENTIVE

The break room now has a chart with a running tally of the points the CNA's earn each day. It has promoted healthy competition that helps everyone involved.

"The nursing assistants are enjoying it," Vanessa said. "They're raising each other's performances."

The program is still evolving, and now the administration is exploring the possibility of expanding it to other de-

partments. That also involves tying the point system to the Helping Hands program, which helps determine the employee of the month.

"We have another way of selecting an employee, instead of just nominating and rotating departments," she said.

What that ultimately creates is a way to recognize employees even if they don't win the monthly honor.

"It shows we recognize the good things, even if they don't win."