



VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 9 • SEPTEMBER 2010

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Jump Shows Stamina Across Storied Career



Roger Jump, the administrator of ABHOW's Judson Terrace Homes in San Luis Obispo, Calif., began his job there nearly 25 years ago and never gave a thought to doing anything else.

"It has been such a good match and so fulfilling to me I just lost all ambition of climbing up to a higher position," Jump says of managing the community of 107 apartments in the coastal town midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco.

While Jump is content to stay put in his work, he's much the opposite in his play: always moving, whether it's running, swimming or biking. In July, he completed the San Luis Obispo triathlon. He's twice run the Los Angeles marathon. At lunchtime every day, he runs three to four miles and takes a swim. On the weekend, he stretches his run to eight to 10 miles.

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Jump's daughters Kendra (left) and Courtney join him in a recent race.

Not bad for a man of 67.

"I am getting away with it so far," he says. "My knees have been pretty good."

Jump trains for fitness, not trophies, but when he enters a race he strives "to go out and do my darnedest."

Jump brings the same resolve to the run he's nearing completion at Judson Terrace Homes. He may retire in the next few years, but he doesn't like to think of it. His work at the affordable senior community has been a true vocation, a life of service befitting a man who started out as a Baptist minister and, despite a switch in job titles, remains one.

A native of South Dakota who grew up in a farm and ranching community, Jump moved to California to attend the American Baptist Seminary of the West in Covina. After graduation, he served for 15 years as a pastor in the San Francisco Bay Area and San Diego before joining ABHOW at Judson Terrace.

Jump, who still occasionally presides at weddings and funerals, says his life's work didn't change. He set

out to serve and he has.

"I was attracted to this because basically [ABHOW] is meeting a very basic human need for housing for seniors and also, in many cases, providing a lot of services for meals and transportation," he says.

Jump is married and has two grown daughters, one of whom is an avid triathlete. He never wanted great wealth, but he's learned to stretch what he has.

Ancel Romero, ABHOW's senior vice president for affordable housing, says a key to successfully managing a community like Judson Terrace Homes is to make the most of every dollar.

"The operating margins are very thin, so you have to be creative, and

Roger is," Romero says.

Despite the limitations, Judson Terrace Homes has won an above-average rating from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the last five years, and Jump is ABHOW's only two-time Affordable Housing Administrator of the Year.

"Stamina, perseverance and longevity are only some of the hallmarks of Roger's storied ABHOW career."

— Ancel Romero, senior vice president for affordable housing

"I'm not surprised that Roger is a successful triathlete," Romero says. "Stamina, perseverance and longevity are only some of the hallmarks of Roger's storied ABHOW career."

Part of Jump's creative approach is to encourage seniors to enhance their community through volunteering. Some serve coffee, others tend gardens, some teach computer skills.

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The real Elvis may have left the building in 1977, but the King was alive and well July 23 as Las Ventanas celebrated its sixth anniversary.

ABHOW's Las Vegas life care community welcomed one of the city's ubiquitous Elvis Presley tribute performers to "Celebrating the Stars," a gala performance that rounded out Las Ventanas' anniversary month.

Since the fifth anniversary, Executive Director June Connelly has made sure the entire month of July is a nearly nonstop festival of all things Las Ventanas — and this year was no different.

"It's a time for us to show our appreciation to all the residents," she says. "It is also a chance to say thank you to our incredible staff, because without them all this couldn't have been done."

This year's gala included performances by tribute artists posing as Cher, Marilyn Monroe, and the Blues Brothers. "One of the benefits of being in Las Vegas is having lots of entertainment," Connelly says, laughing.

But the party was just the culmination of a month's worth of activities that included team members and residents, she says. All the department heads and managers put on their own personal events. This year saw a pot luck dinner, a polka party, and a cooking demonstration. Connelly herself hosted a pancake breakfast.

"Every month we have birthday dinners and other things. But this month the staff just outdid themselves," says Sue Barnett, a Las Ventanas resident since 2008. "They spent the whole month planning various events."

The highlight for residents and team members is the end-of-the-month party that caps the annual celebration.

"This year's gala was even better than last year's," Barnett says. "The residents all take part. Everything is well

attended and it's exciting for them — even those who find it harder to get around. The staff and entertainers all do a little bit for everyone so they can take part."

The Marilyn Monroe performer proved to be a highlight of the evening, she says. "Her whole skit is built around going out into the audience and finding men to bring up," one of whom was resident Mickey Mastropietro. "He just ate it up and was almost an act unto himself."

For Connelly, the rewards of the anniversary month events can be seen in the faces of the residents themselves.

"It's a beautiful moment to see everyone so happy. It's a special event that makes it worthwhile to work here," she says. "I always say that it's not the marketing staff selling Las Ventanas, it's our residents, because they are true testaments to the happy life here."



"Marilyn Monroe" entertains resident Mickey Mastropietro at the Las Ventanas sixth anniversary celebration.

Survey Seeks Resident Feedback

As someone who has spent 18 years in retirement community administration, Lois Blakemore knows the importance of getting feedback from residents.

“I know from experience that you can’t fix what you don’t know about, and you can’t make people happy until you know what they want,” she says.

As the time for the October distribution of ABHOW’s annual Resident Opinion Survey nears, Blakemore, a resident since 2002 at her former workplace, Rosewood in Bakersfield, Calif., now has an even greater perspective on how valuable her responses can be.

“Our input is very important in helping the staff get things done,” she says.

In 2009 ABHOW overhauled the survey from top to bottom, part of a regular four-year cycle that allows questions to be more closely targeted to residents’ lifestyles and interests.

“Although we have many ways of receiving informal feedback from our residents, families, and guests throughout the year, the Resident Opinion Survey is a formal way to hear from them annually,” says Jeff Glaze, senior vice president and chief operations manager.

As part of the revisions, residents helped craft 34 questions themselves, which provided more insight into what residents want to be asked, says Glaze.

“The beauty of the survey is that it was designed last year by residents and frontline members of our CCRC Operations Team, so we are getting feedback on what is important to them,” he says.

This will be the second year of the revised survey, with questions grouped into categories of administration, medical, individual fulfillment, daily living, and facilities/environment.

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Residents at The Terraces of Los Gatos in Los Gatos, Calif., will join their peers across ABHOW in rating the company’s services.



It might be appropriate to call Lois Blakemore a fixture at Rosewood Senior Living Community. After all, she's had a connection to the Bakersfield, Calif., community for 26 of the 36 years of Rosewood's existence.

Blakemore knows Rosewood inside and out. For 18 years she was a member of the community's staff, retiring in 1996. In 2002 she moved to Rosewood as a resident.

"I loved Rosewood so much, I asked them if I could start making payments on an apartment while I worked here," says Blakemore. "They said they couldn't let me reserve a spot until I was 65. This community has evolved a lot over the years, but the concept is still the same of providing a good life for those of us who are older."

Blakemore's career at Rosewood started shortly after it opened as Bakersfield's first continuing care retirement community.

"When I first moved to Bakersfield, I met the administrator through my church," Blakemore says. "He called me one day and said they were in need of a sales counselor. So I became the first staff sales counselor. Before that, they had used part-time realtors for that role."

The sales counselor position Blakemore took in 1978 was just the start of serving the community for nearly

two decades. She moved up from her initial job, becoming the administrative secretary, the office manager, the director of resident services, the assistant to the sales and marketing director and, finally, the director of administrative services.

"One of the things that always impressed me was the quality of people who work here. They have a dedication toward the people who live here," Blakemore says. "I always felt that being on staff at Rosewood was a calling, not just a job. When I worked here, I loved coming to work and I loved the job. No two days were alike."

Now, as a Rosewood resident, Blakemore remains involved in community leadership, both in terms of its operation and its social activities. She is a former president of the resident council and currently serves as its treasurer. She routinely attends community governance meetings to keep abreast of community developments. When Rosewood launched its Masterpiece Living lifestyle initiative, Blakemore was, once again, front and center. She jumped in as a resident leader, helping to train staff members on

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Blakemore retired from Rosewood in 1996.

Photo used with permission of The Bakersfield Californian.

intellectual involvement components.

“When we had our launch day for Masterpiece Living, I played Mae West on the stage, dressing up and writing my own script,” Blakemore says. “I think Masterpiece Living is a great concept. I’m really looking forward to setting my goals and doing more exercise.”

“One of the things that always impressed me was the quality of people who work here. They have a dedication toward the people who live here.”

– Lois Blakemore, Rosewood resident

One of the elements Blakemore likes best about Rosewood is that the community allows her and other residents to actively pursue all their interests, both on and off the Rosewood campus.

“I enjoy participating in some of the activities at Rosewood, but I don’t go to everything, because I’m so independent,” she says. “I have signed up to be in the drama group we are starting. That’s what I like, being able to do what I want to do, but not having to do things I don’t want to do.”

Two elements Blakemore didn’t mind giving up when moving to Rosewood were preparing dinner each night and keeping up her household.

“I enjoy having meals ready for me. It’s just nice not to have to cook,” she says. “And the housekeeping is done for me. That had become a chore, even when I wasn’t doing it, because I had to find someone good to take care of it and manage that person.”

After 26 years connected to Rosewood, Blakemore still loves the community that has been there for her in good times as well as bad.

“When my husband had Parkinson’s disease, a home just became too much to care for,” she says. “I had always wanted to move to Rosewood, but that was the deciding factor. It was very beneficial to have help when I needed to care for him. When he could no longer live in our apartment, he moved into a skilled nursing suite here at Rosewood. It was close, easy to visit, and I knew he was cared for when I needed to be away. I feel safe here at Rosewood, and my kids don’t have to worry about me.”

This article originally appeared on Rosewood’s website at <http://www.rosewoodretirement.org>.

Register Now for Tourney

The 14th Annual ABHOW Foundation Golf Classic is just around the corner, but there’s still time to register and take advantage of some great offers.

Every golfer at the Oct. 11 event will receive a voucher good for Titleist products at the Golf Classic merchandise tent. And anyone who donates a car to the Foundation gets a free golf or spa registration.



The annual fundraiser, which includes silent and live auctions to benefit ABHOW affordable housing, has an international twist this year, starting with a trip to Paris donated by ABHOW partner Sodexo. Other auction items include travel packages to Lake Tahoe and Morro Bay, Calif., and Red Mountain Resort & Spa in Utah.

Since 1997 the Golf Classic has raised more than \$1 million to improve the quality of life in ABHOW’s affordable housing retirement communities. The scramble-format tournament is held at Round Hill Country Club in Alamo, Calif. For those who choose not to play, a special spa package is available at the Claremont Resort & Spa in Berkeley.

The tournament will be followed by cocktails and hors d’oeuvres, silent and live auctions, dinner and an awards ceremony.

Online registration is now open here: http://www.abhow.com/foundation/online_sponsorship_order. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities, contact Suzette Luer, the Foundation’s development coordinator, at 800-222-2469 ext. 7151 or send e-mail to sluer@abhow.com.

As we approach the new fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, I would like to update our stakeholders on ABHOW's financial position.

Through the third quarter, the operating performance of the corporation continued to generate the margin necessary to sustain our mission. Two significant measures of financial performance are debt coverage ratio and working capital. Bank loan covenants and bond instruments dictate minimum targets for each of these measures and, as of June 30, ABHOW was well above the mandatory targets.

Each year we approach budgeting guided by our primary objective: to keep rates at reasonable levels while maintaining high quality services and overall solid financial performance. As always, we strive to make our budget process inclusive and transparent. With advice from residents and local team members, our community executive directors have developed budgets for the coming year. This month our board will review a consolidated budget for the entire enterprise.

As we plan for our financial future, residents and the corporation face several challenges this year. The biggest is the likely expansion of California's provider tax on skilled nursing facilities to include continuing care retirement communities, which have been exempt so far. When the tax was first put in place, the state used revenues to increase Medicaid (MediCal) reimbursement rates, and ABHOW's financial performance was greatly enhanced by the higher rates. In return, the state required CCRCs to hire additional staff and invest in systems to improve care, all of which ABHOW has done.

Now California's governor has proposed eliminating the exemption effective July 1, 2011, a move that

would cost our eight California CCRCs around \$13 per skilled nursing bed per day. This translates to about \$2.5 million a year. That would place enormous pressure on rates at all levels of operation and demand additional savings be identified to offset at least some of the expense.



Ferguson

We also continue to keep a close watch on occupancy, which affects both our operating revenue and the flow of entrance fees that fund most capital expenditures. Although new sales and move-ins have been strong, occupancy in all levels of care at our CCRCs remains below budget because a high number of residents have passed away or transferred to higher levels of care. Consequently, we are increasing our marketing efforts and offering incentives to new residents in select markets. Using funds set aside some time ago for this purpose, we also continue to make progress on campus redevelopments, an effort that will ultimately attract additional residents.

As we move forward with our financial planning, we aim to demonstrate to rating agencies and lenders that ABHOW intends to stay financially strong while being sensitive to how our actions — and the general economy — affect our residents.

David B. Ferguson is president and CEO of ABHOW.

“It’s important to give seniors the respect that they are due,” he says. “They often have a lot of wisdom, a lot of abilities, and it’s important to be able to put those abilities to use.”

Jump also stretches another resource — himself. He gets out of the office, he responds to complaints, he visits with residents each evening.

Lorreta Fairbrother, who served as president of the resident council in 2009, appreciates Jump’s effort. She managed a large apartment complex in San Diego for 15 years and knows how demanding people can be.

“He tries to please everyone and that’s impossible, but he certainly makes a good stab at it,” she says. “He does everything with a cheerful attitude.”

Fairbrother says Jump’s background in the ministry comes through in his work.

“He eats and breathes his faith. He keeps his spirits so high, and he’s so genuine with everyone. I’m hoping he plans to stay on,” she says. “We do really need him here.”

“We really try to get to the heart of the resident experience through this survey and find out what people really think about the services they are receiving from their communities,” says Kay Kallander, senior vice president for strategic planning. “The residents’ comments are critical to ABHOW and are key to the strategic planning process throughout the organization, both locally and at the corporate level.”

Holleran, a nationally recognized research firm, administers the survey and analyzes the results using its proprietary database with information from 309 communities in 35 states.

The response rate for last year’s survey was 78 percent, with more than 1,300 surveys returned. Although that number was respectable, Glaze emphasizes that more responses provide a more accurate gauge of residents’ opinions and needs, which in turn allows ABHOW to serve them better.

“The more folks who complete the survey, the more valuable the survey results will be. We know we can always improve, and the residents’ input helps us target our resources to the areas most important to them,” he says. “I want to encourage every resident to complete this survey to let us know how well we are serving them.”



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Published by the Strategic Planning and Communications Department Kay Kallander, Senior Vice President e-mail kkallander@abhow.com
ABHOW Communications Box: http://www.abhow.com/about/communications_box (username: communications; password: box2010)

ABHOW, National and State Websites:

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“American Baptist Homes of the West, as an expression of Christian mission, seeks to enhance the independence, well-being and security of older people through the provision of housing, health care and supportive services.”

