

ABHOW Words

SHARING OUR STORIES

News of the American
Baptist Homes of the West



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INSIDE

Page 3 California association honors Plymouth Village resident.

Page 6 Pilgrim Haven residents get an intellectual workout with Neurobics.

Page 8 ABHOW president reflects on how technology improves residents' lives.

Annual Survey Measures Resident Satisfaction



The friendliness and courtesy of staff, the variety and availability of suitable resident activities, and the cleanliness of common areas in ABHOW's continuing care retirement communities received high marks in this year's Resident Satisfaction Survey.

Overall, residential living and assisted living showed a steady increase in positive ratings, according to the annual survey administered by the highly respected Holleran Consulting Company. Two California communities scored above the national average in all three levels of care: Plymouth Village in Redlands and The Terraces of Los Gatos.

"The survey demonstrates the impact of our heightened focus in certain areas. The bottom line is that residents notice and appreciate

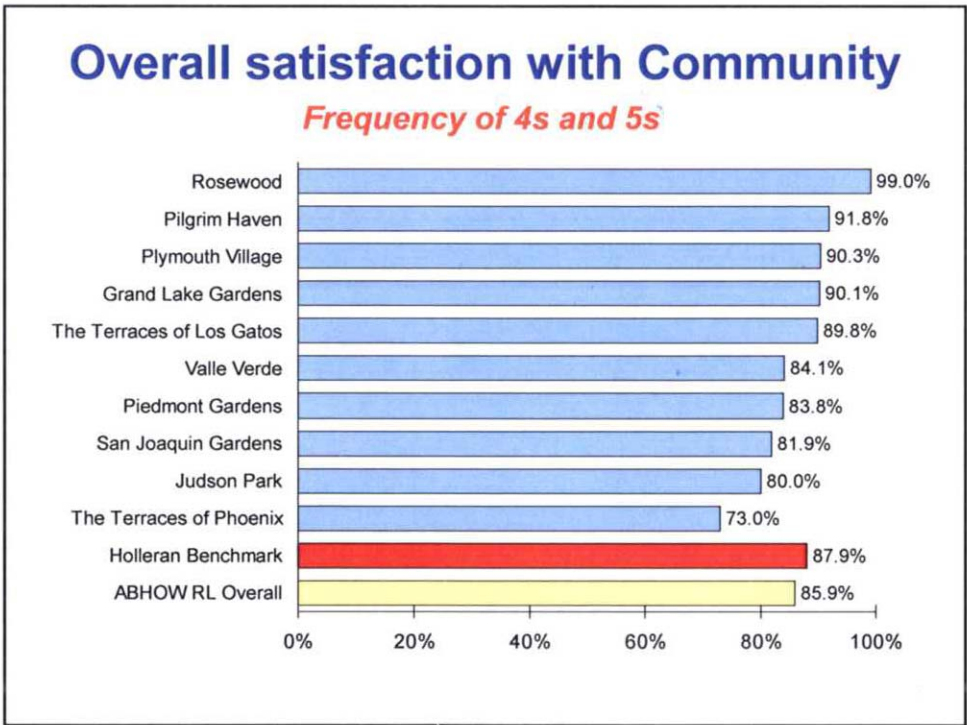
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Photo above: Residents of Pilgrim Haven in Los Altos, Calif., give high marks to their community.



ABHOW

Mature Living Since 1949



However, she says, residents also signaled those areas in need of improvement – three areas in particular: administration’s responsiveness to inquiries and complaints, effectiveness of residents’ associations, and quality of service in the Health Center.

A detailed survey summary is provided for each community and is an important tool for planning, Kallander says. Executive directors will now work with residents, staff and board members to determine areas for recognition as well as opportunities for growth.

“Every year the results are instrumental in assisting with the continuous improvement program for each community,” Kallander says. “Priorities for the strategic plan and budget are impacted by the results.”

the extra effort,” says Kay Kallander, senior vice president for strategic planning. “Through this survey residents also tell us where we still have work to do. That’s feedback we want. We’re grateful that residents take the time to participate in this annual process.”

Residents rated a total of 33 subjects on a scale of 1 (very poor) to 5 (excellent) and provided written comments on administration, daily living, health services, facilities/environment, dining services and overall satisfaction. The survey results include all of the CCRCs.

This year’s survey is the last of a four-year study by Holleran, which averages nationwide results to establish benchmarks. ABHOW used the 2004 results to set its goals.

The overarching question ABHOW measures for this final report is “Overall Satisfaction with Community: Frequency of 4s and 5s.” “The frequency of 4s and 5s on the survey shows that in most areas residents rate their communities at good to excellent,” Kallander says.

“Significant changes have been made over the last four years based on the outcomes of the Resident Satisfaction Survey.”

–Kay Kallander, senior vice president for strategic planning

Residents influence decisions about their own community as well as the entire organization by participating in the survey, Kallander says. “Significant changes have been made over the last four years based on the outcomes of the Resident Satisfaction Survey,” she says. “For example, we’ve seen an overall improvement in Residential Living because of the survey feedback that prompted action plans. So we are grateful that residents take the time to respond to this survey.”

Editor's note: The following story appeared in a recent edition of Plymouth Village News, the newsletter of ABHOW's Redlands, Calif., CCRC. Keith Kasin is the community's executive director.

I am fairly certain that Dr. Lloyd Howard is not someone who needs an introduction in our community; though Lloyd is an amazingly modest and humble man committed to serving and helping others and rarely draws attention to himself.

Lloyd received honors this past month at the annual meeting of Aging Services of California, formerly known as CAHSA. Of all the continuing care retirement community residents in California, Lloyd was recognized as Resident of the Year for his commitment and service to others and our industry. I would like to share just a bit about Lloyd that some might not know.

Dr. Lloyd Howard joined Plymouth Village as chaplain July 19, 1993, and immediately began serving residents; not only in their spiritual needs, but in any way they had a need. He provided the same attention to staff. During his tenure as chaplain, he lived in the dual world of staff member as well as resident within Plymouth Village. As he became more involved in the world of senior care, he had a personal life experience with his wonderful wife, Mary, who had developed Alzheimer's disease. He worked diligently with Kay Kallander as they worked together to create The Grove of Plymouth Village to care for residents with dementias. He was willing to speak to groups throughout California on the importance of dementia and its impact on the lives of those closely involved as

well as at a state and national level. He made a commitment that he would go anywhere and do anything he could to further the country's understanding of dementia care.

In March 2006, Lloyd retired as chaplain and became a full-time resident of Plymouth Village. While now in his "second retirement," he continues to volunteer as needed to support the field of aging services. His experience as a resident was very helpful when Aging Services of California was looking for a resident to come to Sacramento to speak at a legislative committee meeting. I have been told that Lloyd not only did an excellent job but that many people in

Continued on next page



Howard



the room had tears in their eyes as a result of his presentation. Again, the moment Lloyd was asked if “he might be willing...” he came back with, “When do you want me and where?”

Lloyd has also been very supportive of ABHOW and serves on the ABHOW Board Development Committee as the resident member. He is able to bring the perspective of residents to the governing body of the organization.

Lloyd has been involved in the field of aging services as a community chaplain, as a resident, as a caregiver for his beloved wife, as a spokesperson on the topic of Alzheimer’s disease, and other areas as requested. He simply always says, “Yes, how can I help?”

Lloyd has never been one for seeking recognition for his involvement or contributions with an organization. Through his entire tenure as chaplain, he maintained a calm, persistently caring demeanor. Lloyd brought a keen sense of awareness and perception that allowed him to know just the right time to speak and when to simply listen and somehow, intuitively, knew the right time to approach. What makes Lloyd so special is his sense of community and family. Lloyd knows no boundaries of age or role. As chaplain, he was available for our entire community, residents, staff, and families. Lloyd, no matter how busy, was always available and

exemplified what it means to serve others. In a nutshell, Lloyd, through his actions and words, shared the love and peace of God with all in our community.

Since his retirement as chaplain, Lloyd has not slowed down. While his role has changed, his attitude of “What can I do to help?” has certainly not. Lloyd continues to provide leadership and support in family care groups, pulling from his personal experiences, research, and exceptional pastoral skills. As time has permitted, Lloyd has pursued his love of travel and always returns home with photos and stories that would support a semester of history classes. Residents clamor and have filled our Assembly Hall to live vicariously through his stories.

I do not know that words can truly capture all that Lloyd is. As a chaplain and resident, he taught us all and supported our community. As a retired chaplain and resident, he continues to teach and mentor and is a friend and inspiration to many. This is a man who embraces “It is better to give than receive.” Lloyd gives to all and our community and the field of senior living are better because of him.

Thirteen residents traveled to San Diego on May 7 to be present and support Lloyd during the presentation and acceptance of the Resident of the Year Award. There truly was not a person better suited for such an honor.

ASC Honors ABHOW

ABHOW received six Quality First awards at the annual meeting of Aging Services of California in May. Look for coverage on the awards in the July edition of ABHOW Words.

From earthquakes to wildfires, the threat of community emergencies is ever present for ABHOW's California communities. That's why residents of Piedmont Gardens are learning more about what they can do to help each other should disaster strike.

Residents of Oakland's Piedmont Gardens are looking to their neighbors at The Terraces of Los Gatos for advice on starting their own Citizen's Emergency Response Team (CERT). CERT teams throughout the United States are educated about disaster preparedness and trained in basic response skills through the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Members of the Piedmont Gardens safety committee, made of residents interested in helping their neighbors in the event of an emergency, visited their sister community to see how the CERT program at Los Gatos could be applied to the requirements of Piedmont Gardens.

Both communities, by virtue of their geographic locations, could potentially be affected by significant safety emergencies – earthquakes and wildfires being the most likely, says Pamela Bancroft, director of sales, marketing and community relations at the community.

"We've been pretty well educated in California to know that we may be 48 to 72 hours without any help at all" after a major fire or earthquake, Bancroft says. "So it behooves us to have a plan to help each other."

It's that looming threat, plus the challenge of Piedmont Gardens being a high-rise community, that prompted Akio "Joe" Shimizu, the head of Piedmont Gardens' safety committee, to consider forming a CERT team.

Shimizu, a retired airline marketing executive, was part of the group that visited the Terraces of Los Gatos to see how its team worked and to explore ways residents of the Oakland community could apply the same practices.

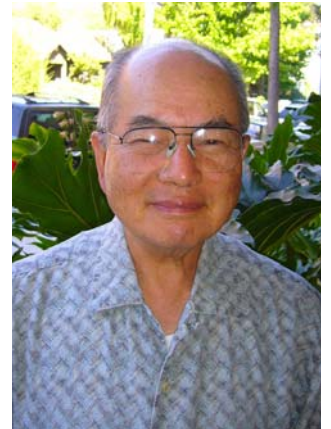
Los Gatos' CERT program boasts more than 60 members and is divided into five sub-committees, frequently staffed along the lines of residents' former professions, says John Langford, director of facilities for The Terraces of Los Gatos.

For instance, retired nurses and physicians staff the first aid team and former engineers lean toward the damage assessment team. Other teams include search and rescue, companionship and communications.

Shimizu notes that Piedmont Gardens also has a large repository of knowledge among its residents, but it also has additional challenges, such as being a high-rise building and having a larger number of residents who are considered medically frail.

The Piedmont Gardens safety committee has planned a meeting with an emergency consultant who helps the Oakland Fire Department handle high-rise emergencies to gain some perspective on what would be required from residents.

Still, the help he and the other committee members have received from The Terraces of Los Gatos CERT team is invaluable. "They have had it up and running for several years now," he says. "They are very experienced."



Shimizu

In 30 seconds, how many cities and rivers can you name starting with the letter “D”? The clock is ticking. Yes, there are Denver and the Danube, Detroit, Dallas, and ... Time’s up!

If you were stumped, don’t fret. It takes regular exercise to keep the mind sharp. That’s what 10 Pilgrim Haven residents learned through Neurobics, a six-week course that’s part of the Los Alton, Calif., community’s Masterpiece Living program, which engages residents in strengthening their physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual health.

All Neurobics participants are graduates of the Posit Science Brain Fitness Program, Pilgrim Haven’s computer-based course that improves memory and brain-processing speed. Neurobics takes a different tack to strengthen the mind.

Through lectures, the class explores the latest research in memory – how memory works, its relationship to nutrition and stress, and how it can be improved. Through group activities – puzzles, teasers, and other memory-jogging games – class members stretch their capacity to retain and recall information.

The class was fun and informative, says instructor Lisa Bartlit, Pilgrim Haven’s lifestyle coordinator and manager of Masterpiece Living. “I got a lot of positive feedback,” she adds.

June Nielson-Cademartori said the class is already benefiting her. She notices, for example, it’s easier to remember phone numbers now. The 83-year-old resident sometimes hears her peers complain that they can’t remember things. “Well, that’s ridiculous,” she says. “You can if you work at it.”

The latest research supports her claim.

Neuroscientists have discovered that, with training, the brain can retain, even regain, cognitive abilities.

A recent study by the Posit Science Company shows that those who have completed the Brain Fitness Program made remarkable gains in memory and other cognitive abilities – equivalent, on average, to 10-plus years of improvement.

Also, the National Institutes of Health recently determined that mental exercise sessions could have lasting benefits for older adults.

NIH’s large, carefully controlled ACTIVE

study, the first of

its kind, found such exercises can delay a decline in thinking skills and possibly help retain the ability to perform everyday activities.

Memory strategies, like the ones shared in the Neurobics class, help as well. Class participants discussed techniques for remembering, such as acronyms (NATO), acrostics (My Very Early Morning Jam Sandwich Usually Nauseates People, the first letters of each word triggering recall of the order of the planets), and rhymes (In 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue). External aids, like appointment books, to-do lists, and pillboxes, also help people remember.

Nielson-Cademartori reminds her peers that forgetfulness is not an inevitable result of aging. “You do remember a lot,” she says. “You have to be sure you’re not downgrading yourself.”

This article originally appeared in the Spring 2008 edition of Pilgrim Haven Insight.



Lisa Bartlit, Pilgrim Haven’s lifestyle coordinator, chats with Neurobics participant June Nielson-Cademartori.

ABHOW's continuing care retirement communities are busily preparing for reaccreditation, a process completed every five years to ensure the communities meet the highest national standards. The accrediting body, CARF-CCAC, has raised the bar in several areas, and ABHOW is responding with new policies and procedures, including a newly created Code of Ethical Conduct.

The code provides guidelines for practices and decision-making in ABHOW to ensure the highest moral and ethical principles are followed in the company's business dealings and in its services to residents. The code instructs all involved with ABHOW to simply "Do the Right Thing."

Throughout its history, ABHOW has emphasized ethical decision-making. The Ethics Committee, a longtime ABHOW board committee, has provided a forum for discussion and resolution of ethical issues as they arise in the company.

The new code connects related efforts in ABHOW, including social

responsibility and corporate compliance. The latter, the ABHOW Corporate Compliance Program, ensures that services are delivered in a proper, ethical and legal manner. ABHOW's standards for conducting business include statements specific to conflict of interest, fraud, gifts, and contracting. Standards for service delivery address confidentiality, privacy, and reporting, among other issues.

The ABHOW Board of Directors adopted the Code of Ethical Conduct in May. New employees will be introduced to the code in New Leader Orientation. ABHOW is also producing a brochure to be distributed to the communities later this summer.

EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENT

The May edition of ABHOW Words discussed residents rights – to orient new residents and remind current residents. Among those rights is the right of residents to refuse to participate in any experimental medical research. Federal and state law protects this right.

Whether in residential living, assisted living or skilled nursing, a resident has the right to know if medical treatment is for purposes of experimental research, according to David Grant, ABHOW's senior vice president and general counsel.

Grant says residents may refuse to participate in experimental research unless they give their consent in writing prior to participation.

THE ABHOW WAY

How do things work
around here?

ABHOW follows a set
of policies and prac-
tices that shape life in
all of its communities.

These policies and
practices constitute
The ABHOW Way.

By David B. Ferguson

At ABHOW's annual meeting in February, our theme was technology. We talked about how new tools can enhance the quality of life and quality of care in our communities.

And we took a close look at some of the innovations our residents already enjoy, including Posit Science, the computer-based brain fitness class, and Family Virtual Visits, which links residents and their families through videoconferencing. Cutting-edge emergency call systems and point-of-sale technologies for dining services were also on display.

In recent years, our communities have embraced quite a few innovations. A clinical recordkeeping and billing system called PointClickCare lets caregivers in skilled nursing and assisted living track vital statistics and other medical information on wireless computers from a resident's room. Video surveillance and anti-wandering systems help keep residents with memory challenges safe. And behind-the-scenes technologies streamline our financial, human resources and legal functions. The operational efficiencies that result help us keep costs well contained.

ABHOW has led the senior care industry in adopting technology that betters the lives of older adults. To give just one example, our Piedmont Gardens community was one of the first in the nation to implement the mentally stimulating Posit Science program. And we listen when our residents ask us to accommodate their personal technological needs, for instance with high-speed, wireless Internet access.

I'm struck, though, that even as we set an example of innovation, we're guided by the same mission we've



Ferguson

adhered to since the company began almost 60 years ago. And that is to enhance the independence, well-being and security of older adults.

In other words, we embrace new technologies not for their own sake but for how they can help us bring seniors the care and services they desire. That means we look critically at new systems and devices. Is a shiny new item just a fad, or will it help us do a better job? Will a new system distract staff members from residents' needs, or will it fit seamlessly into our commitment to service? Above all, are we adopting technologies that facilitate communication, lifelong learning and our residents' ability to continue living independently?

As the population of older adults increases, we're committed to providing consistently high-quality service while controlling operating costs. ABHOW has been

"... we embrace new technologies not for their own sake but for how they can help us bring seniors the care and services they desire."

—David B. Ferguson, ABHOW president

ahead of the curve in recognizing the advantages of bringing appropriate technologies to senior communities. Carefully chosen tools help us "work smart" and keep our focus where it belongs—on residents.

David B. Ferguson is president and CEO of ABHOW. This article originally appeared in the June 2008 edition of ABHOW E-News. To sign up for ABHOW E-News, go to www.abhow.com/home.php and click on the E-News graphic in the lower right-hand corner.

Thanks to the creativity of a young music therapist, the sound of happy feet now echoes through Garden Terrace at Piedmont Gardens.

As the assisted living portion of the Oakland, Calif., community, Garden Terrace is home to residents with a variety of abilities. With the arrival of programs manager Shelley Tsao, a recent graduate of the Berklee College of Music in Boston, Mass., tap dancing became one of them.

Though Garden Terrace already had a music and movement class, it was Tsao's idea to introduce something extra to residents as part of the routine.

"She's young and energetic and she had this great idea to put these Velcro taps on people's shoes," says Elizabeth Chamish, community services director at Piedmont Gardens. "We then have these

boards that they use, and now the residents are exercising more because it's not just exercise, it's tap dancing."

The addition of taps is just one of Tsao's ideas. She also has begun adding more musical instruments, such as rain sticks, to the program, and the resident-run This 'N' That sundries shop has committed a portion of its earnings to helping her do that, Chamish says.

"She's got great ideas and it's just fun," Chamish says. "The residents are definitely responding. They love her."



Shelley Tsao, programs manager at Piedmont Gardens, encourages Helen Paoli and other residents to tap in a music and movement class.

**ABHOW
Words**

American Baptist Homes of the West

6120 Stoneridge Mall Rd. 3rd Floor Pleasanton, CA 94588
phone: 1-925-924-7150 or toll-free: 1-800-222-2469
fax: 1-925-924-7232

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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."

