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***VOLUNTEERS***

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**Three Cheers for Volunteers!**

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**2012**  
**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS**

Presented by  
California Association of Health Facilities

*In an era when time passes so rapidly, we often lose sight of the unseen individual who quietly makes this country the envy of the globe. These individuals are the volunteers of America, and their dedication to those around them should not go unheralded.*

## ADULT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

**Richard Brown**

*Edgemoor Hospital DP-SNF, Santee*

When people ask Richard Brown what prompted him to become such a dedicated long-term care volunteer, he explains that he lost a teen-aged daughter years ago in a fatal automobile accident. Since then he has wanted to help other children, other parents and other people in general.

Called the “founding father” of the volunteer program by another Edgemoor volunteer, Richard certainly has the right stuff. He organized a classic-car show that was such a success that he has been asked to repeat it twice a year every year. Noting that it is often the little things that matter, he schedules the car shows from 10:30 a.m. to noon to minimize disruption of regular facility operations.

The success of the car shows gave him the idea that residents might enjoy remote-controlled model cars, so he bought several to share with residents. The activity is particularly helpful for those who need to enhance their small motor skills. One enthusiastic resident had the use of only one hand, so Richard rigged the controls so that she could operate forward and back, while he helped out with left and right.

Realizing that the residents might enjoy more music, he recruited a musician – his “honorary daughter” – to play piano. Because residents in the locked unit sometimes have fewer activity options, he made a point of scheduling music for them. He invested in an electronic keyboard that was easy to move around the facility, and soon the pianist brought in a small band to join her in making music.



Edgemoor didn't have an adequate sound system, so Richard found a bargain and bought one. Now students from three nearby high schools come in in the evening to use the system and even get course credit.

He hopes some of his ideas will be of use to other facilities.

Richard's mere presence is a unique contribution because of his outgoing, friendly, kind and giving nature.

In 2011 he was honored as a San Diego County Volunteer of the Year.

*Volunteer  
of the Year*

## **GROUP VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR**

### **Dale and Linda Langrehr**

#### *Seneca Healthcare District, Chester*

Dale and Linda Langrehr share their time and positive spirit with the residents and staff at Seneca Healthcare District SNF/LTC in the northern California town of Chester.

They began volunteering at Seneca when Dale's mother was a resident there. After she passed away, they simply continued their service. "We love the people, love to help them," says Dale.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it's bingo. And the Langrehrs have discovered that elderly residents often have definite preferences when it comes to lucky numbers on their cards and even lucky colors for their chips, as well as favorite places to sit. The Langrehrs make sure everyone gets what they need – and that players with special needs are not in danger of having their breathing apparatus disrupted.

On Saturdays they help with church services at the facility, making sure everyone has a hymnbook, in some cases with large print. One resident wrote, "Dale and Linda make me feel comfortable when they are around. . . They always help us find the correct page, and they sing with us for the services."

On Sundays, they push residents in wheelchairs to the nearby Methodist Church to hear the choir.

They also make sure residents get to the local Frosty stand or out to see the Fourth of July parade. When it's someone's birthday, the Langrehrs make sure the room is decorated.

The Langrehrs take the time to know the residents one on one, and they are always available when there is a shortage of helpers.

They always have a positive attitude and they share that with the residents.

"My main thing is to go in there and make them laugh," Dale said.

*Volunteer  
of the Year*