

A publication of Palm Village Retirement Community

# PALM VILLAGER

November 2024 | [palmvillage.com](http://palmvillage.com)



**PALM VILLAGE**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

## SPECIAL FEATURES

Resident Spotlight – Jeanette Byl

Employee Letty Hernandez -  
A Life of Dedication & Compassion

What's Happening on Campus



703 W. Herbert Avenue  
Reedley, CA 93654

Please call for more information  
or to schedule a tour  
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[palmvillage.com](http://palmvillage.com)

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We do Business in Accordance with  
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## Palm Village Chapel Services



Enjoy Chapel every Thursday night.

Service begins at 6:00 pm with Old-Fashioned Hymns  
with our speaker beginning at 6:35 pm.

## Donations Living Legacy Fund



Many of our residents outlive their resources. To  
prepare for the future of all residents, your donation  
to our Living Legacy Fund will be greatly appreciated.

### Secure Online Donations

Visit our **DONATIONS** page on our website to setup  
your one time or better still, recurring donations.

**[www.palmvillage.com](http://www.palmvillage.com)**

**or Mail your check to:**

Palm Village Retirement Community  
703 West Herbert Avenue  
Reedley, CA 93654

# Abundance

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the beautiful days of autumn. As I reflect on our community, the word that comes to mind is "abundance." We are truly blessed with an abundance of wonderful residents, dedicated staff, and exciting developments.

First and foremost, I am thrilled to share that our community continues to grow. We have waiting lists for some of our homes, a testament to the vibrant and welcoming environment we have cultivated together. This demand speaks volumes about the quality of life here and the strong sense of community that we all cherish.

In addition to the familiar faces that make our community feel like home, we are delighted to welcome many new residents. These new faces bring fresh energy and perspectives, enriching our daily interactions and activities. I encourage everyone to extend a warm welcome to our new neighbors and help them feel at home. In this issue you'll meet Jeanette Byl, one of our cherished residents. With her friendly and kind-hearted nature, she effortlessly welcomes new friends into our community. You'll be delighted to discover her exceptional talent in porcelain painting.

We are also actively working on updating our patio homes, assisted living units, and health care center rooms as they become available to ensure they meet the highest standards of comfort and modern living. These updates are part of our ongoing commitment to providing the best possible living experience for all of our residents.

Our community is flourishing, and it is thanks to the abundance of care, kindness, and cooperation that our staff and the Board of Directors bring each day to this community. Together, we create a place where everyone can enjoy a fulfilling and joyful life.

I wish you all a joyous and healthy holiday season.

Warm regards,

Jim Higbee  
President & CEO

**Philippians 4:19:**

*"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."*

## A Letter from our President



**PALM VILLAGE**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

## Palm Village Living Legacy

Palm Village Retirement Community honors its commitment to care for seniors in their retirement and advancing age, even if they have lived beyond their assets. To assist in our mission, we receive tax-deductible donations through our Palm Village Living Legacy fund.

The Living Legacy fund helps residents continue to live in our community with all resources available to them. A promise that we made to never discharge any resident for a lack of funds. It is made good on the biblical commandment in James 1:27 "...true and pure religion...is to

## Our Mission Promise

take care of orphans and widows in their affliction." The "widows" have been joined by plenty of people whose affliction is simply a lack of funds.

Would you please join us in helping to keep our promise to provide continuing care for our senior residents? Our Living Legacy donation envelope is enclosed with each magazine, or you can visit [www.palmvillage.com](http://www.palmvillage.com) and click on the secure DONATIONS button at the top of our website. Thank you to all who continue to donate towards our mission.



## Resident Spotlight

by Laurie Diamant

*"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares."*  
— Hebrews 13:2



# Jeanette Byl

Jeanette moved to Palm Village Retirement Community 12 years ago, bringing with her a lifetime of cherished memories and a heart full of warmth. She and her husband Dirk began their retirement in the serene surroundings of Bass Lake, California. Alongside their dear friends, Dwight and Verna Roberts, they embarked on a journey to find the perfect senior living community in the Central Valley. After touring many options, Palm Village stood out as the ideal place to call home. Dwight and Verna made the move first, settling into their cozy patio home, while Jeanette and Dirk waited to sell their house before joining them.

Jeanette quickly fell in love with Palm Village, finding it a true blessing to live in a place where she felt safe and cared for. She immersed herself in the community, joining the Chapel committee and assisting her husband with ushering in the Chapel and is currently lending a hand in the library with Judy Brown. Dirk, her beloved husband passed away in 2015, but Jeanette's spirit remained unbroken. Known for her friendly and caring nature, Jeanette is the unofficial greeting ambassador of Palm Village.

Her kind heart and ease at making friends made her a beloved figure in the community. I often see Jeanette walking around the campus, offering warm greetings to her neighbors and assisting friends during lunch and events. Her helpful spirit, a gift she was born with, has carried her throughout life.

Jeanette's story began in Artesia, California, where she was raised. At the age of 15, while walking home from school with a friend, she met Dirk, a 17-year-old new immigrant from Friesland, The Netherlands. Despite his broken English and the fact that Jeanette wasn't allowed to date at the time, they found ways to see each other at Church and high school events.

***In 1950, Dirk enlisted in the Air Force and in 1952 at Jeanette's high school graduation, Dirk asked her to marry him and gave her an engagement ring.***

After high school, Jeanette started working for Security Bank, which later merged with Bank of America. She and Dirk married in 1954, while Dirk was still serving in the Air Force. After his service, they moved back to Artesia and six years later they

adopted their daughter Renee. Along with some friends, they decided to purchase a business together in Hayward, California. During this time, they adopted their son Roger. When the business was sold to Carnation Company, Dirk was offered a position with the company. Jeanette and Dirk moved to Fullerton, California, where Dirk worked for Carnation another 27 years. Jeanette was able to be a stay-at-home mom.

Family vacations were spent at Bass Lake, where Jeanette and her family enjoyed camping, boating and waterskiing. As their children grew, Jeanette returned to work at Bank of America. Recognizing her potential, the bank encouraged her to take management and accounting classes at Fullerton College. Jeanette excelled in her career, training many employees and opening the first in-store bank in Orange County. She was also awarded for her contributions to real estate lending documentation used throughout the bank.

They eventually bought a home in Bass Lake and after Dirk's full retirement, expanded it to include a studio for Jeanette's painting. Jeanette took on a management position at Bank of America in Oakhurst before officially retiring.

Jeanette's artistic journey began in Anaheim when she was introduced to porcelain painting by a bank client. Her talent quickly became evident, and she pursued it as a hobby starting in 1982. As an active member and multiple-time President of the Fresno Porcelain Association, Jeanette's fine brushstrokes and attention to detail earned her numerous awards. Dirk moved her kiln to Palm Village, where she continues to create beautiful pieces, adding gold touches that enhance their beauty.



*Jeanette and Dirk Byl  
with kids, Renee and Roger*

Jeanette feels truly blessed by her children, Renee and Roger, along with their families, which include six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She expresses heartfelt gratitude for the loving and caring staff at Palm Village, who make her life as wonderful as possible. To Jeanette, Palm Village is a "Little Bit of Heaven on Earth," and she finds comfort in knowing that she will spend eternity with her loved ones in Heaven with our Lord.

Jeanette's life is a testament to her resilience, kindness, and artistic talent. Her presence at Palm Village enriches the community, making it a brighter place for everyone.



*Bass Lake - California*

# Leticia Hernandez

*A Life of Dedication  
and Compassion*



*Letty Hernandez and Family - Circa 1976*

*For 41 years, Leticia "Letty" Hernandez has been a pillar of the Palm Village Retirement Community, serving as the Skilled Nursing Activities Aide. Her journey to this role is a testament to her resilience, faith, compassion, and unwavering commitment to the well-being of others.*

## **Early Life and Family**

Born into an itinerant farm-working family in Reedley, California, Letty's early years were marked by constant movement. Each summer, her family would leave their home to follow the harvest season, traveling north to Portland, Oregon, to pick strawberries and cherries. They worked for the same farm each year, which provided housing in a small community of 60 units arranged in a circle. For the children, this was an adventure! The younger ones often accompanied their parents to the work sites, riding in the back of a trailer until they were old enough to attend summer school. Letty longed to join them in summer school but was needed to help pick fruit.

After the strawberry and cherry season, the family would head south to Santa Rosa, California, to harvest plums and pears. Despite the challenges of this nomadic lifestyle, Letty's family found joy and support in the kindness of an elderly couple they worked for in Santa Rosa. This couple not only provided employment but also celebrated the siblings'

birthdays, creating cherished memories amidst the hard work. Their kindness inspired Letty's desire to eventually work in the care of seniors.

Growing up, Letty, the eldest daughter among seven siblings—six brothers and one sister—was granted a special allowance to start school three weeks late each year. This arrangement allowed them to complete the harvest season with their family before returning to their studies. This unique upbringing instilled in Letty a strong work ethic and a deep appreciation for family and community.

Today, Letty lives in Selma with her partner Nick. She has two grown daughters, Marissa and Angelica, and beams with pride when talking about her 15-month-old grandson, Achilles.

## **Education and Career**

After high school, Letty began her higher education journey at a community college. However, she soon discovered a program with Proteus that offered



*Letty with her family - Front Row - Marissa, Letty, grandson Achilles, Angelica Back Row - Nick and son-in-law Raul*

training to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). This opportunity aligned perfectly with her desire to help others, and she eagerly embraced the training.

Letty's career at Palm Village Retirement Community began at Pleasant View shortly after she completed her CNA training. She fondly recalls the early days of her career when colleagues felt more like family, supporting each other in their careers and lives. Each day, they clocked in with a paper timecard, and every morning before work, they were provided breakfast. The belief was that employees who started the day with a good meal were more efficient in feeding and caring for residents. During breakfast, the charge nurse would share the day's information and any special needs of the residents. "It was a very caring environment, and because we worked so closely with each other over many years, we got to know the families of the people we worked with and offered support for each other," says Letty.

In those days, if a resident wanted to see a movie at the theater, Letty and her colleagues would show up on their days off, pick them up, and take them in their own cars to the movies or the store for personal needs.



*Letty Hernandez and CoWorkers - 60's days*

Although laws have changed over the years, preventing such outings, Letty and her team still find ways to make residents' lives more comfortable and joyful. For instance, when a resident asked for hairspray, Letty went to the store on her way home to pick it up, along with other requested items. One resident loves ripe persimmon in his breakfast cereal, so Letty brings them in when they are in season. The residents always appreciate these small acts of kindness. Letty says she's worked long enough to have cared for parents and now their children. "They are the family we create in this environment where we work. We care for them, help them with meals, daily needs, and spend more time with them than our families at home," says Letty. On Thursdays, Letty drives home for a few hours and then returns to assist residents in skilled nursing to the evening Chapel.

Over the years, she has advanced through various roles, ultimately becoming an Activities Aide. In this position, Letty has been instrumental with her team in creating and implementing programs that enhance the quality of life for the residents. Her dedication to their well-being is evident in every activity she plans and every helpful interaction she has.

### **Legacy of Compassion**

Letty's deep Christian faith has provided her with a life story of compassion, dedication, and a deep-seated commitment to serving others. Her early experiences in the fields of California and Oregon shaped her into a person who values hard work, family, and community. At Palm Village, she has created a second family among the residents and staff, touching countless lives with her kindness and care.

As Letty continues her journey, she remains a shining example of what it means to live a life of purpose and compassion. Her story is a reminder that no matter where we start, it is our dedication to others that truly defines our legacy.

Residents & Staff

# What's Happening



Lorie and Jim Higbee

## Fiesta Parade



Ron Sharp at the BBQ



Tiffany Crotts

## CRICKET HOLLOW BBQ



Nomad's Car Club



Richie Blue Band




Employees Dress for Halloween -  
Elizabeth Herrera and Letty Hernandez



Marissa Sapp





May 1, 2024  
through  
October 31, 2024

# Palm Village Donors

## Living Legacy Fund Donors

Carshow Donations  
Pacific District Conference  
"New Life Community  
Dinuba Mennonite Brethren Church"  
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Richard and Patricia Unruh  
Helena Voss  
Joyce Warkentin  
Delbert Wiest

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Leo Balakian



## Chapel Fund

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Grace Reimer  
Verna Roberts  
Rhoda Stoltenberg  
Helena Voss

Michael and Michelle Ward  
Joyce Warkentin  
Lily Willems  
Carl Wohlgemuth

The Gift of  
*Love*

Palm Village Retirement Community  
P.O. Box 1028  
Reedley, CA 93654

# 5 Levels of Living



**PALM VILLAGE**  
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY



- Independent Living • Assisted Living
  - Assisted Living Memory Care
- Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation
  - Skilled Nursing Memory Care

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