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POET'S WALK MEMORY CARE COMMUNITY IN SAN ANTONIO WILL INTRODUCE "CARE FLOWERS"

A Unique Approach for Memory Care When It Opens in August 2016

San Antonio, Texas (June 13, 2016) – “Care Flowers” is an innovative program that brings a positive approach to caring for people with memory loss and the new Poet’s Walk Memory Care Community opening in San Antonio at 5438 Presidio Parkway (near the Loop 1604 and I-10 West Interchange) will incorporate it when it opens in early August 2016. While this stand-alone memory care community will be new to San Antonio, it was developed by a team of experts from Spring Hills Senior Communities and Silver Companies and has the advantage of incorporating successful programs that have been used in Spring Hills communities throughout the country. The “Care Flowers” program is a successful communication tool for care partners and family members and can be helpful to anyone caring for a loved one with memory loss.

“We created the ‘Care Flowers’ approach to help everyone appreciate the abilities the individual possesses and to consciously avoid negative language or overtones,” explained Lesa Scott RN, BS, CALA, CDP, who designed Spring Hills’ Memory Care program for several Spring Hills Senior Communities nationwide. “In our communities, we always focus on abilities, emotions and cognitive capacities, not the disease. ‘Care Flowers’ helps everyone view behaviors in a positive way, so we can have the best possible interactions with the person as he or she is, right now. It is an especially helpful tool for family members to help them understand when their loved one is acting in unfamiliar ways.”

According to the Alzheimer’s Association, in the United States there are nearly 15 million Alzheimer’s and dementia caregivers. “We encourage family members to join us and use the positive language we employ,” Scott continued. “For example, a person may be described ‘an explorer’ and *never* as ‘a wanderer.’ Some individuals are ‘energetic’ but should never be labeled as ‘unmanageable.’ We salute those who support loved ones, whether in their homes or those who visit loved ones in memory care communities. We share our vision with the hope they also will be comforted, as they grow to understand the changing ways their loved ones are attempting to communicate their needs.”

Here are sample descriptions using the Memory Care Flower philosophy:

Iris: Like the long stemmed flower, the iris person will always walk in a straight line or lean to one side. They may be unable to coordinate speech but can sing almost anything with rhythm.

Fine motor skills are usually missing as well and they may have difficulty with tasks that require these skills. The care team should always have a familiar song with rhythm up their sleeve!

Daisy: Caught in the moment of time, for the daisy it's all about sensation. The person may have sensory needs and/or sensory tolerances. When experiencing low sensory needs, the person may display behaviors such as humming, rubbing of hands, waving, wiping furniture or picking lint from clothing. When the person is experiencing high sensory needs, some may display behaviors such as clenching of their teeth. This is often mistaken for aggression. The person may also be observed pushing chairs, moving things around, or stomping feet, which often times expresses an unmet need. The care team should determine the unmet need.

Violet: Violets are people on the go, and something is always brewing. They will constantly need to do things. They are known to say things like "Where do I go now?" "I need to go home," "What do I do?" This person needs concrete choices, usually verbal but sometimes visual. Just keep them busy.

Rose: Roses don't like change and they are strong willed and like routine. They will use old habits to get through the day. They can "talk a good game" and always want to know who is in charge. They are also very territorial. Provide routine, choice and keep them informed.

Morning Glory: Like the flower, morning glories are fully open in the morning, but curl up and close during the warm parts of the day. This person's environment is limited and often trapped inside a shell that is the mind, in a moment in time. The morning glory flower signifies love, affection and mortality. We must use sincerity in our voice, a soft sweet tone, and touch when communicating with this person. Always approach from the front and always smile.

One family member, who is a school counselor and trained to use positive language with children, shared her response to this approach to memory care. "My mother is exactly like a 'rose,'" explained Mary Summers. "My mom's father died when she was young and she was forced to take on a lot of responsibility at a young age. That made her the way she still is, fiercely independent, unbending and spirited. I like that when she lets anyone know what she wants, she's not being classified as 'difficult.' Maybe a rose has thorns, but we can still see the beauty and work around those thorns."

Poet's Walk Memory Care Communities have been developed to provide comprehensive Alzheimer's and dementia care in a beautiful, luxurious setting. Poet's Walk San Antonio will provide structured care programs that combine the stability of a routine with independence and autonomy for a healthy lifestyle. The Spring Cottage Memory Care Program, a nationwide program for Spring Hills, is distinctively designed for persons in all stages of Alzheimer's disease and Dementia. Spring Hills' holistic approach to senior living through their *Signature Touch* programs, engages the mind, body, and spirit of the people they care for.

Silver Companies has been in the real estate business since the 1960's, with a focus on the senior living space for eight years and over 15 memory care projects in development nationwide. Spring Hills Senior Communities has been caring and serving seniors, as well as other individuals in need of quality healthcare, since 1999. They have award-winning communities in New Jersey, Virginia, Florida and Ohio.

For more information about Poet's Walk San Antonio, please contact Amber Turner, Regional Executive Director at 210-465-1386 and visit www.poetswalksanantonio.com.

About Spring Hills Senior Communities & Memory Care Communities:

All Spring Hills Senior Communities', Home Care Services, Assisted Living Communities and Poet's Walk Memory Care Communities offer a distinctive and innovative approach to home care services, assisted living, and Alzheimer's care. Signature Touches is the company's holistic approach to offering individualized care and services that are designed to meet the needs and preferences of residents and clients. Personal choice is top priority in one of the company's eight Spring Hills assisted living communities or in client's homes with Spring Hills home care services located in NJ, VA, OH and FL, or in one of the company's Poet's Walk memory care communities located in TX and soon-to-be NV. For more information about their Caring with a Commitment to Quality dedication to senior living, visit www.spring-hills.com or www.poetswalk-springhills.com.

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