

Living with Zing

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Meet Jim Stilson

VIP's Social Worker Extraordinaire



Our congratulations to Jim Stilson, who has received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the

Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. The award reflects Jim's long and distinguished career in social work and his expertise in ageing. After holding positions in many different places across the U.S. – and having retired three times – Jim now enjoys his work with VIP. "I do social work counseling with clients who have multiple physical problems and depression," he explains. "I guess you'd call it talk therapy. And I'm also involved in marketing for VIP – getting the name out in front of agencies and groups."

Jim was drafted during the Korean War, and after two years with the Marines served for eight years in the Air Force. "That was where I learned to set up an office, hire and fire people, buy furniture, create policies and procedures – all things that were useful in my career."

Continued on back.



Diane says... This issue honors VIP HomeCare's social worker Jim Stilson for his years of dedicated work with our clients. Work is important to everyone – it's where we make our friends, it's an opportunity to serve, and it's a source of life-long satisfaction.

Diane Johnson, RN, BSN, JD
President & CEO, VIP HomeCare, Inc.

It's All in a Day's Work

As a social worker for VIP HomeCare, one of Jim Stilson's tasks is to help people open up and talk about themselves and their lives. Frequently they end up talking about work. Why is that? Because work is what forms us, what makes us what we are.

People like to reflect on the work they have done – what they achieved, what they have done for others, and the skills they built over a lifetime of labor, paid or not. It was a point of pride to the founder of a dairy business that his company provided the livelihoods of three hundred families. In Katherine Anne Porter's short story, *Granny Weatherall*, at the end of her life, returns again and again to the fence that she built by herself to keep her farm animals safe. Another hardworking woman still recalls the phone number of her family's business – it was her job to answer those calls – and the square footage that a yard of topsoil would cover, to the depth of two inches.

Mothers of large families don't forget how to cook dinner for twelve, long after their children have left home. Even if they've spent most of their lives in a city, people who grew up on a farm recall the chores they did, from chopping wood to bringing the cows into the barn to be milked, morning and evening. In so many ways, our work remains part of who we are, even after we are living a life of well-earned rest, our active labors done.

Lime Cupcakes

A lunch pail treat with added zing!

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 box yellow cake mix | 3 large eggs |
| 2 small limes | 1 container white frosting |
| 1/3 cup vegetable oil | 1 box lime Jello |

Grate the zest from the limes. Squeeze the limes. Add enough water to the lime juice to make the total amount of water that the cake mix directions call for. Make the cake mix according to the directions, using the oil, eggs and the diluted lime juice. Fold in the lime zest. Bake as directed.

Let the cupcakes cool. Ice them with the white frosting. Sprinkle with Jello crystals. The crystals are white, but will soon turn green.

Meet Jim Stilson continued.

Jim claims to be 79 years old, though it's hard to believe that he could be over 60. He begins each day with a swim. "I'm in the pool at four o'clock every morning. And we walk – we walk the eleven flights up to our apartment." Jim and his wife, Helen, like to travel and have visited almost all fifty states as well as numerous foreign countries. "When I was 75 I went on safari, and last year I went to Antarctica. We've been on cruises in the Caribbean and the Greek Islands. One time we went on a four-masted clipper ship. That was fun! My only regret is that I didn't climb the ladder up to the eagle's nest. I'll do that next time!"

Music has been an important part of Jim's life, and everywhere that he, Helen and their two daughters have lived, he has been active in their church. "I play the piano and the organ, and in earlier days I was a singer. I like to improvise on the old hymns – I call it 'Name that tune!' As kids our church had radio and TV broadcasts, so we were doing music for radio and TV from an early age."

Looking back on his varied life, Jim says, "I have regrets, and I also have a sense of well-being. I can't believe the path we've gone and the unexpected positive things – or rather the things that have had positive outcomes." Jim brings his spirit of adventure to the future too. "Each day is new," he says. "We don't know what or whom we'll encounter. I don't dread that – I look forward to new experiences, negative or positive."

Crossword

Work Words

Across

- They found a work ____ solution
- Santa's elves are busy in his work ____
- It runs like ____ work!
- She has a ____ work of friends
- Everyday, mundane
- An old-fashioned sampler, for instance
- OSHA regulations make the work ____ safe

Down

- Hang the tools above the work ____
- Addicted to work
- The dog ate my ____
- ____ work: the wooden parts of a house

March-April puzzle answers

Across

- Fever
- Break
- Cleaning
- Springboard
- Beauty

Down

- Water
- Chicken
- Tide
- Springform
- Forward
- Flowers
- Peeper

Answers will be in next month's newsletter.