



# Profiles OF CARING

The care you need, the comfort you deserve.

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VOLUME 4

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NUMBER 1



When former Kansas City Royals First Baseman, John Mayberry came to visit Hazel Windsor, one of the Royals oldest living fans, he showed her how a knuckle ball is thrown.

## Sunflower hits home run with 108-year-old patient

The staff at Sunflower Health Care knew that sports had been an integral part of Hazel Windsor's life. So, for her 108th birthday, they launched an all-out effort to bring baseball and basketball to her.

Hazel Windsor, a Sunflower Health Care patient, is a pretty amazing woman. For starters, she was 108 on November 14. And, in spite of the infirmities that come with age, she maintains a love of life that's worth emulating.

A lifelong fan of baseball, she played the game as a kid and followed the Kansas City Royals, maintaining a personal record of player and team statistics. She also became enamored with University of Kansas basketball and keeps tabs on its players long after they leave the halls of academia.

Now almost deaf, Hazel watches games on television. She stays alert and engaged by keeping a daily journal, which includes those player statistics—as well as many comments and memories she cherishes from friends and visitors.

To her surprise, three of those visitors recently were from the Royals and KU's Athletic Department.

(continued, page 2)

## Recent study reveals benefits of hospice

A letter from the president

When reading professional literature recently, I was struck by the results of a study on hospice care conducted by the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. Here are a few of the highlights of the study, which compared terminal cancer patients on hospice care with those who had chosen to leave hospice.

- Patients who left hospice had a 33.9% rate of emergency admissions, compared to 3.1% among hospice patients
- An even larger percentage—39.8%—was admitted to the hospital, in contrast with 1.6% of hospice patients
- Non-hospice patients averaged 19.3 days in the hospital; hospice patients averaged 6.7 days
- 9.6% of non-hospice patients died in the hospital, compared to only 0.2% of hospice patients
- Care costs for the non-hospice patients were nearly five times higher than those who remained with hospice

The study reveals the tangible benefits hospice provides: The ability to die at home, surrounded by family, offers emotional benefits, to be sure. It also lessens the physical and financial burden on patients and family. For more information about how hospice care can improve quality of life, call us at **1-877-275-7086**.

## Hazel, continued...

Knowing Hazel's love of sports—and that she is likely the oldest living Royals and KU sports fan—her hospice provider, Sunflower Health Care, arranged the visits. Retired Royals First Baseman John Mayberry and Royals Senior Director of Community Relations, Ben Aken, came to her home shortly before her 108th birthday.

While there, Mayberry not only signed her journal, but also showed her how to throw a knuckle ball. They also gave Hazel a Royals cap, a baseball from a winning game and other Royals memorabilia. Hazel was so engaging that they stayed almost

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*“They handle medications and help her bathe and wash her hair. Sunflower has been such a blessing. I don't know what I would have done without them.”*

— Shirley Williamson, daughter of Sunflower Health Care patient

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about a year.

A few weeks after that, Adam Miller, KU Director of Student Athletic Development, brought her a KU basketball program, as well as an autographed photo of Coach Bill Self and the 2008 National Championship team. KU now has a story and photo of Hazel posted on its web site.

Hazel was born in 1902, just 11 years after physical education instructor James Naismith introduced the game of basketball at KU. She was 20 when KU won its first national championship in 1922.

The idea to bring sports to Hazel came up during one of Sunflower and Omega Health Care's interdisciplinary team meetings, where they discuss each patient's care plan. Corporate Volunteer Coordinator

Christine Langford suggested the idea; Jamie took the ball and ran with it (no pun intended).

But making it happen proved more difficult than Jamie anticipated, especially since it was still baseball season, and classes had already started at KU. But, she didn't give up.

“I didn't know how long it was going to take, but I was determined to do it,” she said. “I contacted everyone I could think of at the Royals, KU Athletics and TV and radio stations—plus anyone I knew who might know someone there.”

Once she got “in the door,” both the Royals and KU wanted to bring Hazel to a game, let her meet the players and present her to the crowd. But, Hazel's Sunflower care team believed the trips might compromise her frail condition. So, when the Royals suggested John Mayberry visit Hazel, Jamie thought it was the perfect solution.

“He's retired, but he's probably a name Hazel would identify with more than some of the current players,” she explained.

Besides sports, Hazel has always enjoyed reading and writing. She doesn't have a computer, a microwave or a cell phone, but she reads the newspaper every day, writes in her journal and exchanges letters with her daughter, Edna, in Brazil. And, she has made memory books and quilts for her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her appetite extends beyond words, though. Her daughter, Shirley Williamson, laughingly says she's still enjoys eating—especially “anything with fat in it”—so much so that when the grandchildren don't like a



Sunflower staff members were on hand to help Hazel Windsor celebrate her 108th birthday on November 14. Front row, right: Erica Coffey, Home Health Aide. Back row, left to right: JoAnn Gannon, RN; Shirley Williamson, Hazel's daughter; and Kimberly Berry, RN.

particular food, they say “Give it to granny, she'll eat anything.”

Hazel lives with Shirley in Overland Park. She does not suffer from a specific illness, but Hazel's general health and mobility have declined such that she qualifies for hospice care. Sunflower works with her physician to provide nursing, social work and chaplaincy services, as well as assistance with daily living activities. It improves quality of life for Hazel and peace of mind for Shirley.

“They handle medications and help her bathe and wash her hair,” Shirley said. “Sunflower has been such a blessing. I don't know what I would have done without them.”

## What our Clients are saying...

Dear friends at Omega Health Care,

Words cannot fully express the deep gratitude my family feels for the competent and compassionate care given to our mom, by the Omega Team. We truly feel God sent us a team of angels, just at the time when we were at the doors of desperation. You guided us through it all with loving care. May God continue to bless you.

Lovingly,  
The Akins family

Read more about what our clients are saying at [www.omega-healthcare.com](http://www.omega-healthcare.com)

## Free Flu Shots and AlphaTouch for Omega and Sunflower patients

Flu season. Yes, it's that time of year again ... and will be for the next few months.

To stave off the potential problem of flu, Omega and Sunflower Health Care offer flu shots to all their patients, at NO cost to the patients, their insurance or Medicare.

“Many of our patients' immune systems are weakened by other illnesses,” said Dr. Jeff Lawhead, Sunflower Medical Director. “So, we want to make sure they are protected from other opportunistic infections. Our free flu shot program helps us do that. Plus, it reduces the need for patients to make a trip to the doctor's office.”

Another “extra” Omega and Sunflower offer is AlphaTouch, a personal emergency response system (PERS) that allows people to summon help whenever an emergency arises. Users wear or carry a small radio transmitter that “talks to” a console connected to their telephones. The system enables them to call for help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

While PERS is not covered by Medicare, Omega and Sunflower provide the AlphaTouch service free to their hospice patients.

Visit [www.alphatouch.us](http://www.alphatouch.us) to learn more about AlphaTouch, which is also available to non-hospice patients through Omega and Sunflower for about \$1/day.

For more information about the many benefits Omega and Sunflower Health Care provide, call us at **1-877-688-2820**.

