

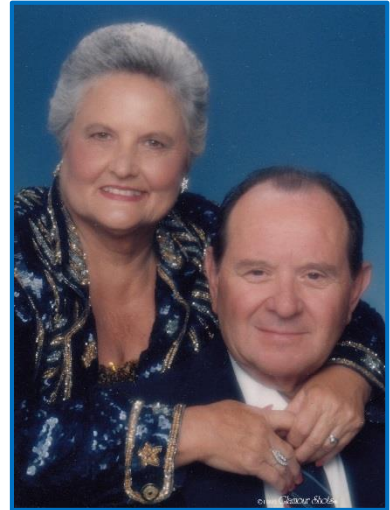
# A Story of Enduring Love

What is enduring love – a marriage that lasts seven decades – really like? Far past the honeymoon, how do husband and wife still relate personally?

Ralph and Betty Kline provide the answer.

Jennifer Lindley, executive director at Life Care Center Pensacola, Florida, brought their love affair to our attention.

“Mrs. Kline has been a patient here since August of 2009,” she said. “She had actually had two other admissions prior to coming in 2009 and staying with us. Her husband, Ralph, is here daily with her. He normally comes in around 10 a.m., would go get his wife, put on her lipstick (we were not allowed to do this), and take her down to the café for coffee.”



Lindley said Mr. Klein would dissolve a Hershey’s kiss in Mrs. Klein’s coffee, “and she would smile and pat his hand.”

Throughout this past year, Mrs. Kline stopped communicating with her husband and the staff. “Every day, however, Mr. Kline would tell us stories of how his wife would communicate with him while he was putting on her makeup and how she would tell him what a handsome man he was,” Lindley said.

The funny thing, she added, is that while she no longer identified her needs, she still reacted to three things:

1. When he put the lipstick to her lips, she would move her mouth to smooth it out.
2. She knew when her coffee was not made by her husband, and would not drink it.
3. When she looked at her husband, she would smile and laugh.

Mrs. Kline passed away on Sunday, April 13, at 1:12 a.m. “We will absolutely miss this family,” Lindley said. “The family sent me a video made of the Klines in 2010. Such a beautiful love story, and something that I will forever cherish.”



(more)



Lindley paused to add: “While we look at all the issues we have to deal with, such as regulatory environment, financial, customer service, associate and plant issues, we really need to remember the stories of our patients’ lives. These are the little gifts God gives us for what we do. It just makes one smile and say thank You.”

Jennifer Lindley is exactly right. The people we have the privilege to serve brighten our lives – and validate our mission – in so many ways. Their story is a beautiful reminder during National Nursing Home Week of why we do what we do.

– Beecher Hunter