

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in recognition and appreciation for Sandra Ludescher, for her gracious kindness bestowed upon our family during my father's recent hospitalization and subsequent death.

In September, 2008, my father, Junior Mitchell, was admitted to the Palliative Care Unit of the VA Hospital in Albuquerque, NM. He was diagnosed with end-stage Parkinson's disease, and given a very short time to live. Knowing that he had already made his wishes known concerning heroic efforts to maintain his life, we knew that the following days and weeks would be very difficult to say the least. Little did we know exactly how difficult. We were at the hospital day and night for over two and a half weeks, watching him slowly pass through that last phase of life. Several people helped ease the struggle and pain: the staff at the VA, our family and friends, and one very special lady, Sandi Ludescher.

Sandi is a Professional Harpist, playing for special events, weddings, and at different functions and on various occasions throughout the Albuquerque and surrounding areas. She also plays for terminally ill patients, through several Hospice organizations. I met her through a mutual friend, and when she was told about my dad, she soon called, offering to come and play for dad at the hospital. What a wonderful blessing that music proved to be! Not only did dad enjoy the music, to which he at one point began to pat his hand, tap his foot, and try to say the words, we all, including the nursing staff and other patients found the music to be uplifting and calming for the spirit and soul. I believe at one time, the nurses asked her if she would come and play for another gentleman who was having a very difficult time; she played for him before she left that day. I understand the music helped the gentleman a great deal.

As dad's condition gradually deteriorated over the weeks we were there, Sandi came and played for us on six different occasions, bringing so many kinds of music, playing whatever we would like. Her quiet presence there was a great help in our time of trouble. The evening that my dad passed away, she was there in the room with me, playing a gentle little melody, providing a very soothing, comforting, and reassuring atmosphere in what could otherwise have been more heartbreaking than it was.

I am very pleased to offer this letter of recognition, appreciation and recommendation for this very fine lady. She is such a genuine and gentle spirit. I hope other patients and their families will be able to have the same wonderful experience and opportunity of Sandi's music during such difficult times.

Janice Hutchens