THE Rainbow Report

Maleom "Stentson" Carpenter)

JANUARY 25, 1946 - NOVEMBER 7, 2021

Caring Servant. Tenacious Dreamer. A Man Who Loved God and People.

By Jeff Helms, Board Member



Stentson Carpenter

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and fault-less is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress." (James 1:27a) This verse accurately describes

Stentson's daily walk with God. He spent a lifetime looking after those who are often overlooked.

At Rainbow Omega, he provided—as the name conveys—hope to the end for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. What began in 1991 as 81 acres and a dream blossomed into a safe, loving community where 88 residents live and over 100 staff work. It's a place that celebrates the truth of Genesis 1:27; we are all created in God's image, and we all have value.

Stentson had a dream for Rainbow Omega, but he had more than that. Stentson had boldness. He had determination to pursue his dream and conviction to recruit others for the mission.

Stentson's boldness is reminiscent of Nehemiah. While in exile in Babylon,

Nehemiah learned the walls and gates of Jerusalem had been destroyed. Nehemiah was afraid of King Artaxerxes, but he boldly approached the throne anyway. When the king agreed to let him visit Jerusalem, Nehemiah asked for more. He requested letters for safe passage and wood for construction. Doesn't this sound like Stentson Carpenter? He had confidence in what God was doing at Rainbow Omega, so he was unashamed. He boldly asked for what was needed.

In those early years, Stentson and Dianne raised chickens to help fund the dream for Rainbow Omega. After a day of working on the farm, Stentson would make calls to churches and elders at night. He was passionate and his love for the developmentally disabled was contagious. And God provided. He rose up workers, donors, and advocates.

Stentson's boldness didn't begin with Rainbow Omega. He fought for the disabled since his son, Chris, was born. When the school system refused to provide free, appropriate education for disabled students, Stentson made daily visits to the superintendent. Ultimately, the state sided with Stentson, but the superintendent said

he didn't have anyone to teach the class. So Stentson found a teacher, Deloris Frazier, for Chris and other students. Deloris would later become head of special education for the entire system.

Stentson's service, though, was never just about meeting physical needs. He wanted people to know the Lord. Before establishing Rainbow Omega, the Carpenters worked in the Virgin Islands as missionaries and, later, he served as a preacher in Tallassee, Ala.

Chris was the inspiration for Rainbow Omega, but it was built for many others. For residents who are no longer with us, and for those who will need it one day. It was built because each resident is a child of God, a person uniquely gifted with the ability to bless others in wonderful ways. Stentson understood this. He loved the Rainbow Omega residents, and he insisted on hiring staff who love them, too. His son, Mike Carpenter, is one who continues to live Stentson's vision as a leader at Rainbow Omega.

Stentson didn't build Rainbow Omega of his own might. Rather, it was the power of God at work within him. He was just bold enough to ask. Ω

Mission

To glorify God by ensuring that adults with developmental disabilities have a permanent and safe home where their abilities and potentials are respected and nurtured in a Christian environment.

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Stentson and Dianne Carpenter

Legacy.

By Tim Hodge, CEO, Rainbow Omega



A small word that carries a lot of weight. It can be the difference between a life lived, and a life lived well, full of accomplishments and with one's best given for the benefit of others.

As a long-time admirer of the amazing work of Rainbow Omega and Stentson and Dianne Carpenter, I was honored to be chosen this past July to succeed him as Chief Executive Officer of the organization

upon his retirement. Although the sudden decline in his health did not allow for us to spend as much time together as we would have liked during the transition, I was humbled to listen to his "history lessons" and vision for this mission work that the Carpenters and others worked so hard to create.

Rainbow Omega has created opportunities in a loving, safe, and faith-based environment for so many individuals and families who were faced with tough decisions to make: "Where can I find the best opportunities for my family member? How can I give them the best quality of life possible?" Most importantly and the origin of our name: "Who will provide Hope for my loved one until the End?"

Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter wanted to provide the answers to those questions and alleviate other concerns, and they had the foresight to create this haven in Eastaboga, Ala., that has served so many individuals and families for over 25 years. And Rainbow Omega will continue to provide that hope for the future, beyond the life lived well of Stentson Carpenter. His walk on this Earth may be completed, but he is now enjoying his well-earned reward in Heaven, and it is our hope that Dianne, Mike, Chris, and family will be comforted in that knowledge, and by our prayers.

The individuals and families whom we are blessed to serve will continue to benefit from Stentson's good works here at Rainbow Omega. And what about the staff and employees? I think our charge is to follow the inspired words from 2 Thessalonians 2:17: "Comfort your hearts and establish them in every good word and work." We have the joy of taking solace in the fact that as we provide care for the individuals we serve, we are honoring his legacy.

American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well." Stentson Carpenter was a Christian man who lived his life well. Rainbow Omega—its' past, present, and future—will be his amazing Christian legacy. Please keep the Carpenter family in your prayers. Ω

Tributes to Stentson Carpenter

One time, Stentson let me drive a fourspeed truck up the hill to pick up food for everyone, and then back down the hill. I didn't have a driver's license, but he said it was okay. He knew I knew everything about trucks and engines.

One time, someone couldn't get their truck hood open, and Stentson told that he knew one man that could figure it out because I was so smart about trucks! I used a real long screwdriver and popped it open! He knew that I liked trucks and working on engines with my dad.

Allen, one of the first residents when Rainbow Omega opened 27 years ago

My best memory of Mr. Carpenter is him bringing Christmas presents into the house every Christmas! And, when my grandmother died, he said that I was NOT going to go back to my house, and they took me out to eat that night so I wouldn't be alone.

Bevely, resident for 20 years

My grandparents and I were part of Sojourners and every year my Mamaw and Papaw would come here. I started working around here and noticed how everyone was doing things. I told my grandparents that this might be the place for me right here.

I've been here 21 years now. Stentson and me would get together sometimes and go to Starbucks. Every now and then I'd get an itch to get out and do stuff, and he'd come get me and take me out. He let me have his phone number and told me that if I ever had something on my mind, I could call him.

Daniel, resident for 21 years

What I will remember most about Mr. Carpenter is his genuine care for us residents, his love for all of us, how much he was dedicated to his job, and how he tried to make Rainbow the best living experience for all of us. He'd always treat me on my birthday by taking me out to Starbucks. He made you feel like one of his own!

John, resident for 10 years

Mr. Carpenter often told the story of asking a gentleman to support Rainbow Omega and he asked, "How long will you need the support?" Mr. Carpenter's response was, "Til Jesus comes."

Our privilege is to take care of the individuals entrusted to us and, in my case, to ensure they have meaningful work and earn a paycheck the same as you or I. Mr. Carpenter was tough and meticulous about details because he wanted to ensure everyone received the best possible care in a Christian atmosphere. Until we meet again, we will all do our best to "just do the right thing" like you always told us.

Gail Tillman, Vocational Programs Director, employee for nearly 20 years

It is difficult to describe someone's profound impact on your life. Mr. Carpenter was a kind and courageous man. He was a storyteller and a friend. Though his life was sometimes arduous, he never wavered in strength and faith. He would often be heard saying, "God has been so good to me."

Sandy Branson, Residential Staffing Coordinator, employee for 13 years

Stentson was a pioneer in the development of a place like Rainbow Omega. Over the years, he faced many challenges and fought many battles, not only for those we serve, but also for the developmentally and intellectually disabled across the U.S.

When I first came to Rainbow Omega, I honestly was not sure that the dreams and plans he shared would ever come to fruition. Boy, was I mistaken! I have often said that Stentson Carpenter was a force to be reckoned with and his legacy proves that. I am honored to have been here to support him along the way and see so many amazing things take place. I told him that I would keep fighting the fight for him and Dianne. Stentson touched so many lives and he will be missed greatly!

Carol Paris, Chief Financial Officer, employee for 25 years

Breaks my heart. He and Dianne were so good to our Darren in the 20 years that he lived at Rainbow Omega.

Prayers and thoughts for the family and all of Rainbow Omega.

Wayne and Peggy J. Williams, parents of a former resident

This news breaks my heart. Mr. Stentson was a great man of God and no better advocate for the residents of Rainbow Omega. Prayers for the family.

Mike Fortner, friend

I worked as a nurse at Rainbow for almost 17 years and it was a pleasure to work with Dianne and Stentson and the great thing that they did to start it from the ground up and kept it going for so many years and made sure the residents were taken good care of. So rest in God's hands now and, Dianne, know how much you meant to me and my prayers are with you and the family.

Peggy Stephens Kirby, former employee for 17 years

Stentson was a beloved figure in the Developmental Disability services community. He will be sorely missed. Our hearts go out to the entire Rainbow Omega family.

Kate McSweeny, incoming President and CEO, ACCSES

What a legacy he has left for precious ones with developmental disabilities!
There will be many jewels in his crown.
Praying for Dianne, Mike, Chris, the staff and residents of Rainbow Omega!

Martha Bain Boling, former employee for 3 years

I'm so sorry for the loss of such a wonderful person. His hard work and devotion to Rainbow Omega will live on through all the residents. May God be with his family and friends.

Sonya Rich Wells, parent of a resident



Daniel, John, and Gene care for the poinsettias in our greenhouses

Growing Joy in the Greenhouse)



Questions?

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Kathi Aja, Garden Center manager, at 256-831-0919, ext. 260 or kaja@rainbowomega.org.

The time is almost here for Poinsettia season! It is always breathtaking to go inside the greenhouses to see the thousands of poinsettias grown each year. We are already receiving orders, so go to our website (www.rainbowomega.org) to order online and get yours before your favorite variety is gone!

Please come visit us in person, too! The Garden Center is open:

Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. -4 p.m. Saturday, from 8 a.m. -2 p.m.

The Garden Center will close on Christmas Eve and won't reopen until March 1 as we get ready for the spring season.

Our residents take such pride working in the greenhouses. The quality of our plants is backed by the horticulture expertise of our staff who coach the residents in their plant-growing skill development. The residents compare our plant quality to other retailers on shopping trips and always claim ours are the best!

The Rainbow Garden Center has been open for two-and-a-half years now. Although Covid has been a challenge, we have developed a strong customer base. The Garden Center offers more than just the plants grown in our greenhouses. We have a wide range of products to keep your plants healthy and insect-free. We also have bagged soil and pine straw. Additionally, we sell a variety of merchandise to accent your garden and home, along with unique gift items. A couple of our top sellers are the Corinthian Bell wind chimes and a variety of goat's milk soaps. We hope to see you here soon! Ω

Construction of Fitness & Activity Center Underway

If you have driven by the Rainbow Omega campus recently, you have probably noticed construction activity taking place next to the Garden Center. This addition to our campus will be home to services and opportunities for our residents and community. The new building will comprise over 11,000 sq. ft., and will offer:

- A fitness center and locker rooms for the individuals we serve and staff;
- New location for the Rainbow Omega day habilitation program, doubling the space we currently have available;
- A new Sensory Room, which will be a therapeutic space used to calm individuals
 with agitation or anxiety, and to engage those who are more withdrawn from their
 environment;
- Arts Center that will allow individuals to express and develop their creative talents through painting, ceramics, and other crafts with the assistance of dedicated staff and volunteers; and
- A 4,000 sq. ft. multi-use activity room with an attached warming kitchen.

The location of the new building will allow us to develop the surrounding natural area for walking trails, outdoor activities, and will be a great companion property to the adjacent Garden Center and greenhouses. This exciting opportunity for Rainbow Omega is being made possible through several generous donations from our supporters, and we are continuing to raise funds for its completion. We will have more coverage of this project in our next issue of *The Rainbow Report*.





Sojourners Bring Spirit-filled Work

A group of hardworking Sojourners visited us for two weeks in September, and they were such a blessing to Rainbow Omega. These wonderful Christians come each year with a true servant's heart. They are always eager to perform whatever duties are needed. This year's group worked in the greenhouse, performed minor maintenance, and painted bedrooms in the residential homes. They began each morning with songs of praise, prayers, and a Bible lesson, and then started their work day.

Unfortunately, due to our Covid protocols, the group could not interact with our residents, but they know that their presence will be felt by all of us long after their visit. We appreciate the Sojourners program, and we look forward to hosting them again in 2022!



Golf Cart Gift Request

Rainbow Omega is in need of a couple of previously owned, gently used, "never been driven uphill or against the wind" golf carts. If you or someone you know may be ready to upgrade a cart (or two), instead of trading in at a dealer or selling, please consider donating to Rainbow Omega. As a 501(c)(3) corporation, your donation of golf carts would be tax-deductible! Please feel free to contact Tim with any questions or ideas. Thanks! Ω



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Serving adults with developmental disabilities since 1995 | 5



Agee, Carl

GIFTS RECEIVED FEB. 1—OCT. 31, 2021

Memorials)

Jeff & Cindy Lawrence Alexander, Gloria Kelley & Debbie Mossburg Alford, Butch Ted & Nancy Hughes Andrews, Jack Nancy F. Hughes Andrews, Joe Paul & Debbie Kudelko Ayres, Herman & Mavis Brenda Carr Bedinafield, Shirley Decatur Hwy. Church of Christ Bell, Bertha Reagan Cory & Christine Hutchinson Al Gabriel Becky Keith West Orange Church of Christ Vulcan Industries Employees John & Patricia Bearden Stephen Patterson Pulp Mill Riverdale The Miles Family Russell Harris Eva Lyn Frieden Garner, Rob Prattville Church of Christ William & Amv Hodges Gayle & Lisa Crowe Laurie Smyly Craig & Wynne Callis & Family

Brooks, Jonathan Suzanne H. Tyson Brown, Charles (Chuck) Heritage Place Church of Christ

J. Mark & Barbara Tucker

Hendersonville Church of Christ

Brown, Terry J. Alice W. Brown Brumley, Jamey, John & Jerry

Billy Roy & Deborah Box Burton, Weyland

Carolyn J. Burton Butts, Cynthia Bobby & Patsy Owens

Byrd, Bill Phil & Pat Duke Clark, Jack

Steve Rice Clayton, Ray Bill & Nell Turner

Ruby Lona Coker, Libby

Barrow M. Coker

Cole. Vickie Donnie & Debbie Cash & Family

Crotwell, Steve Elsie Phifer

Currey, John R. Lt. Col./Ret Glenda Currey

Dasher, Ronald Becky Wallin

Dees, Jean Bill & Nell Turner Ruby Long

Derrick, Mathew Katherine M. Jones Dupree, Roma Ed & Annette Prince Dykes, James (Jimmy)

Lt. Col. & Mrs. Clifford Dykes Edwards, Benny Don & Gail Maddox

Edwards, Laura Annabelle Chabert

Emmerson, Raymond H.

Doris Emmerson Rebecca Hill

Evans, Billly Jeff & Cindy Lawrence

Frye, Louise Annabelle Chabert

Fulmer, Chase

Dr. Vance & Mrs. Laura Moore Gallagher, Freida

Betty Shikle Ancel & Ruby Norris

Ganey, Faye Albert & Vivian Windham Family

Morgan & Karen Silvers

Gibbs. Dr. Wavne Chadwick Roger & Elaine Nelson

Giddens, John David

George & Margaret Fritsma Robin & Georgia Baird, Gwen Giddens John & Katherine Stack

Tim & Jana Schultz Bill & Connie Logan

Don & Bonnie McGriff Elaine Benoit

Lonnie & Shannon Brown Beverly Smit

Philip & Teresa Capra Gladden, Roston & Reba

Gale Melton Greer, Rita Rebecca Wallin

Griffith, Mickey Flsie Phifer

Grobmyer, Megan John & Reba Brockway

Grubb, Mitch Martha M. Grubb Guin. Dorace

Jerry & Ann Lawson

Haile, Virginia Dale & Joyce Baker Harkins, James

Raymond G. & Linda Gail Cantrell Hayman, Harold

Ruby Long Bill & Nell Turner

Haynes, Jewel Dean Cooper Jeff Stinger

Dr. Vance & Mrs. Laura Moore Ironaton Church of Christ Hill, Junior

Gayle K. Hicks

Lincoln Church of Christ

Hinton, Tammy Bill & Nell Turner

Holladay, Jerry (Potsy) Bobby & Patsy Owens

Holliday, Jerry Eloise B. Shirley

Holt, "Big D" Kenneth Holt

Houl, Betty Annabelle Chabert Huckeba, Henry

Kathryn H. De Lay Hunt. George Benny

Billy & Sherry Atkinson Ingram, William (Billy) Annabelle Chabert

Debra Turner Wayde & Sally Dominick Laura Grills

Rebecca Hill Lucynda Smith

Jackson, Addie Lee Annabelle Chabert Rebecca Hill

Jackson, Grover D. Annabelle Chabert Jackson, Robert

Bill & Marv Ann Gann James, John Michael Bobby & Patsy Owens

James, Tommy Ruby Long Jamieson, Leo

Ted & Nancy Hughes Jenkins, Dr. Jerry A.

Ancel & Ruby Norris Darnell & Sharon Self

Jernigan, Roy Edward

Diane Cordar Roger Brown Drew Dorrance

Johnson, Stephen C. Melissa Fausz

Katherine Cofer Kathy Burch Elena Roberts

Sarah Emily Sheffield Gary & Sandra Moore

Somer Chandler Jennifer Cobb

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Jennifer Craig & Andrew McKnight William & Barbara Edwards Garry & Ruth Church

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Keaten, Mark Affie L. Martin

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Kvker. Chris Neal & Jan Bryan

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Bobby Lackey, Jr.

Leger, Gary Bobby & Patsy Owens

Lewis, Elbert Dr. Vance & Mrs. Laura Moore Ligon, Charles

Lincoln Church of Christ Martin, George

Alice R. Falkner Martin, Rebecca Helms Gloria Tavlor

Alan & Carol Fonville Lincoln Church of Christ Phenix City Church of Christ

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Moore, Ella Virginia Walter & Rita Ward

Moore, Russell Tom & Sue Collins Jack White

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Newsome, Daniel Katherine M. Newsome

Norman, Donald D. Peggy G. Norman Osbourn, Donald Joe

Daniel & Anne Ridinger Ethan & Sarah Kershaw Chase & Mary Emily Davis

Pate, Jack Affie L. Martin Pate, Roy Ruby Long

Phillips, Judy Darlene Sheila M. Carter Phillips, Walter A.

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Pruitt. Emma Mae Owens Jeff & Cindy Lawrence

Raburn, Larry Shirley Raburn Reddy, Col. John A. Don & Kim Cluck

Renaud. Jennifer Drs. James & Robin Marbourg Lee & Sandy Crapet

Renaud, Dr. Leon Russell & Company, LLC

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Dr. Clifford & Mrs. Diane Black Sanchez, Wavne

Bill & Nell Turner Ruby Long Beattie Rd. Church of Christ

Scales, Nelda Pam McKenzie J. D. Bishop

Senn, Doug Bobby & Patsy Owens Shropshire, Carolyn Ashworth

Scott & Ginny Cooper Shropshire, Christine Lincoln Church of Christ

Smith. Frank Brenda Cantrell Smith, JoAnn

Brenda Cantrell

Smith. Thomas Westala Electrical Contractors Dr. Vance & Mrs. Laura Moore

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Stuckey, Jimmy Daniel Martin Tarnow, Jewel

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Barbara Barnes

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Jerry & Ann Lawson

Branson, Sandy

Mary Hester Hale

Jennifer S. Maddox

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Sidney O. Roebuck, Jr.

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Carpenter, Stentson

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Copeland, Amy

Cupp, Laura

Mary Sue Knight

Crump, Mary Ann

Glenda Currev

Davis. Remelle

DeRoberts, Phillip

Velma L. Hawkins

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Bill & Ginny Whitaker

Bill & Ginny Whitaker

Kirk & Alicia Cuevas

Rosemary Hollingsworth

Michael & Elizabeth Jackson

Bill & Mary Ann Gann

Evans, James Bruce

Dillard, Tabitha

Kenneth Holt

Dolan, Bruce

Dye, Bryan

Farley, Katie

French, Joy

French, Joyce

Harris, Matthew

"Happy Birthday"

Helms. Annie

Helms Family

Eva Lyn Frieden

Henry, Steve Mark

Matthew Henry

Higginbotham, Lenn

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Helms, Patricia

Larry & Janet Dyer

Jim & Jean Coleman

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Patricia, Deborah & Marvin Helms

Harris, Jeff

Hearn, Jill

The Sherman Group

Davis, Dr. Megan Benson

Dr. & Mrs. Joe Benson

Kyle & Suzanne DeLoach

George & Janet Crawford

Carpenter, Dianne

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> Rebecca Hill King, Jared J. P. King & Christie King Ray

Lake Hills Church of Christ Cub Scout Pack 82

Girl Scout Troup 40138 McMillan, William Daniel & Julie Autrey

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Stewart, Charlie & Susie

Vinsant, Lindsay Billy Joe & Patricia Watson

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www.amazon.com is also available on smile.amazon.com at the same price. Simply select Rainbow Omega get started!

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Honda Manufacturing

A partner and supporter of Rainbow Omega and the people we serve for over 16 years, this fall Honda continued their commitment to our organization with volunteers working to improve our campus. The nature trail behind the homes had become impassable due to storm damage and overgrowth, and Honda associates from the Engine Plant cleared it in less than a day. They also pressure washed the Work Center building. Additionally, volunteers are updating our signage and working in our greenhouses. After volunteering with us, Honda Manufacturing of Alabama donated equipment and tools to our maintenance team.

The continued support of Rainbow Omega by the management and employees of the Honda facilities in Lincoln has been a blessing. The commitment they have shown to the residents and staff here goes beyond being a good corporate partner, and reflects a genuine corporate culture of helping others in need as taught by Jesus Christ. Ω

Volunteers Ted Heathcock (left) and Terrence Johnson clear our nature trail of debris and overgrowth.

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