



CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Fall 1998

Volume 15, Number 4

Annual Dinner Honors Volunteers

CAREGIVERS volunteers were honored at a festive Hawaiian luau on October 18 at Ventura's Poinsettia Pavilion. The Rotary Club of the Ventura Marina once again prepared and donated a delicious barbecue and the Royal Bakery topped off the meal with a beautiful cake and pastries. Entertainment was provided by Hawaiian dancer Pat Lord, her daughter Darlene Johnson and magician Ron Bell.



Members of the Marina Rotary Club serve hungry party-goers.



Magician Ron Bell mystifies and delights volunteer Jan Berry and husband Ken.



Volunteers Betty Patterson, Mildred Snowden, Joyce Cantrell, Mary Yoshioka and Florence Multer enjoy the festivities.

Volunteer Spotlight: Virginia Trombley and Mary Yoshioka

by Carol Basralian

Virginia Trombley was in a quandary as to how she was going to get along after she lost her ability to drive in 1994. Luckily, Mary Clark, our most valued volunteer at the time, urged Virginia to contact us for the help that she needed. Mary Yoshioka was assigned to help Virginia. Ever since then, Mary has put aside every Tuesday to take Virginia to the hairdresser and goes grocery shopping for her while she gets her hair done and takes her to the bank.

Virginia was born

in Denver, Colorado about 90 years ago. She and her mom travelled to San Pedro, California, when she was five years old. Then she moved to Oxnard where she graduated from high school. She met her husband Winfield "Bud" in Ventura and was married 37



years until he passed away in 1979. Besides raising her two stepdaughters, Virginia worked for the Santa Ana School System and Kelly Girl Services, a job she really enjoyed. She also loved having cats around

until she moved into her apartment about 14 years ago.

Virginia looks forward to her time spent with Mary and says, "Mary is the most gracious and giving person I have ever known and I do thank CAREGIVERS for all her help."

Mary hails from DuBuque, Iowa. She graduated from the University of Iowa with a BA in elementary education and taught for a while before she went into business for a few years. In 1990, she worked as a flight attendant for World Airways. She met and married Seiji, a pilot, in 1993.

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Physician promotes "Aging Gracefully" for Seasoned Citizens

by Laine Waggoner

The overriding issue in wellness for seniors is the lack of physical activity, according to Arnold Bresky, MD.

"What good is a longer lifespan if we don't have a high quality of life?" asks the former obstetrician, a popular speaker on holistic health issues for aging.

Bresky recently retired from 30 years of delivering babies. A graduate of the Albert Einstein Medical School in New York City, the Brooklyn-born physician pioneered a trail-blazing method of husband-coached natural childbirth. "My holistic approach centered upon increasing the quality of life for the newborn infant," he said.

Now, a vigorous and outgoing 58, Bresky is an avid champion of preventive gerontology for the group he likes to call "seasoned" citizens. In his lectures about proactive aging, he swears by the old adage: "use it or lose it."

For the past two years Bresky has also served as medical director of a new alternative medicine practice, Harbor Landing Medical and Chiropractic group in Camarillo.

Why? "Because the human organism either grows by means of stimulation or it withers and dies. I've actually seen people die of loneliness and boredom. As a matter of fact, my own father died at the age of 63 right after he retired."

What is Bresky's prescription for growth as we age? "In order to thrive, every day every person, including the elderly, must do productive work. Every person, including the elderly, must help another person every day. And, every person, including the elderly, needs to feel loved every day."

That's just why our CAREGIVERS program is so valuable both for our volunteers and our clients.

Most of what is called 'normal aging' is actually the result of disease and deconditioning, according to Bresky. "If seniors

want wellness, they must continue to grow mentally, be productive and learn to have fun on a daily basis. In fact, I believe that the way to measure a successful life is by the number of laugh lines we have."

Bresky advocates that seniors get at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise that uses oxygen every day. This helps to build stamina and reduce the pain of arthritis.

"You can do it by walking in three, ten-minute sessions. But strolling with your grandchild through the mall is NOT aerobic exercise," he said. "Weight training for the arms can be started by lifting light weights, such as cans of soup, at least ten repetitions, three times a day. The large quadriceps muscles of the leg can be exercised by lifting pails filled with sand."

Bresky, with his wife Phyllis, who is a licensed psychotherapist, has developed an anti-aging program they call "SMILES" for seniors in assisted living and convalescent facilities.

Why this name? "Because

Continued on page 4

Monday, **March 15, 1999** is the date set for CAREGIVERS' 7th annual "Wearin' o' the Green" Golf Tournament at the Buenaventura Golf Course. Shotgun start at 7:30 A.M. Lunch at the Wedgewood Banquet Center. If you did not receive a "Save the Date" postcard in October, call us at 652-0566, and we'll put you on our mailing list.

MARCH GOLF EVENT



New Board Member: Ernie Melonas

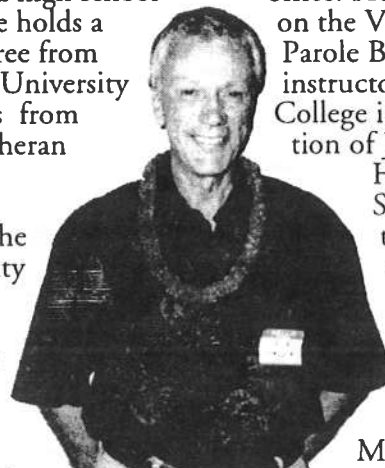
We are pleased to welcome Ernie Melonas to the CAREGIVERS board of directors.

Ernie attended both elementary and high school in Ventura. He holds a bachelor's degree from San Jose State University and a master's from California Lutheran University.

Presently employed by the Ventura County Probation Department, Ernie's professional career includes experience as

assistant executive officer of the Ventura County Municipal Court, and administrative officer for the child support unit of the District Attorney's office. He has also served on the Ventura County Parole Board and as an instructor at Ventura College in the Administration of Justice program.

He and his wife Suzy, a Ventura travel agent, have two grown children, Nick and Michele, and three grandsons, Nicholas, Michael and Mitchell.



Executive Director's Message



Pat Meredith

Volunteering for CAREGIVERS is truly a gift from the heart, a generous expression of the spirit, for the only reward is the knowledge that you have made a difference in someone's life. At our annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner on October 18th, we paid a modest tribute to the 225 or so volunteers who take part in our program, either directly with elders or as board members or support volunteers.

The Points of Light Foundation in Washington DC, has determined that volunteer service is worth \$13.00 per hour. At that rate, the value of the assistance provided to our service recipients last year was \$637,000! CAREGIVERS volunteers donated a total of 49,000 hours of service, which included 10,300 hours of visiting, 5,500 errands, 8,200 phone calls, and 82,000 miles of transportation.

This is an extraordinary contribution by some pretty wonderful people. On behalf of the board of directors, staff, and the elders in the program, I want to say again how grateful we are for each of our volunteers who with compassion, grace, and generosity, selflessly devote many hours of their time to helping frail seniors stay in their own homes.



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CAREGIVERS is able to provide this vital help to the frail elderly in Ventura County only because of the generosity of people like you. Contributions, gifts to our Endowment Fund, memorial gifts, and gifts in honor of a special person or occasion may be sent to our Ventura office, and every gift will be promptly acknowledged. All donations are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to **CAREGIVERS**. Call us at 652-0566 for more details.

AGING GRACEFULLY – PAGE 2

when depressed, bedridden, frail elders discover that they are able to do some things for themselves after a weight training program, they no longer want to die. Then, the fastest muscles they develop are those in their faces, because they begin to smile again. Both laughter and hope strengthen the immune system. The elderly must have more fun on a daily basis.”

The Breskys, who usually work as a team, have co-authored a 500-page manual on wellness for seniors entitled, “Aging Gracefully Beyond Bingo.” They are seeking a publisher.

They have also developed games that fight depression by developing memory and creativity.

Bresky has introduced his creativity and memory development programs at the Camarillo Health Care District's senior day care program.

For details, contact Dr. Bresky at 987-1800.



Special Thanks to Special People

To the faithful volunteers who help with our bulk mailings:

Joyce Cantrell, Dee Ambrosini, Robert and Rose Marie Anderson, June Brackrog, Susan Cooper, Stacy Cooper, Mildred Fletcher, Bertie Gaertner, Marcella Hoffman, Mary Hoffman, Margaret Knoll, Evalena Mitterer, Lupe Morales, Florence Multer, Peggy Murphy, Doloris Patrie, Betty Patterson, Rosemary Rooney, Vi Ryder, Eleanor Sanger, Marian Sloniker, Agnes Sylvester, Mary Yoshioka and Pauline Zimrick.

Gifts Received

We are very grateful to the Ventura City Council and the Archstone Foundation for their recent expressions of concern for our elderly population and for their confidence in our CAREGIVERS program.

Under the new City of San Buenaventura Community Partnerships Granting Program, CAREGIVERS will receive a total of \$12,000 over two years, beginning in 1998.

The Archstone Foundation has made a gift of \$10,000. Formerly known as the FHP Foundation, it helps to promote the health and well-being of caregivers and underserved seniors. The Foundation contributed \$10,000 to CAREGIVERS in 1996-97.

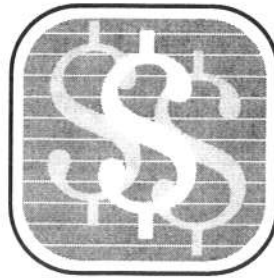
CAREGIVERS

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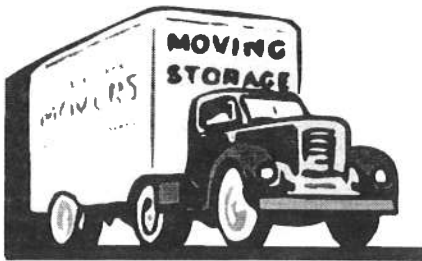
VIRGINIA AND MARY — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

They have since enjoyed travelling all over the world. Their last trip was a Mediterranean Cruise. She also likes to play tennis and loves all kinds of music.

Mary reflects, "It's such a luxury to be home now and have the time to volunteer in such a worthwhile program. I know that every hour I give is very much appreciated."

It takes a unique person to have the patience and time to be a CAREGIVERS volunteer. It sometimes is difficult but rewarding as we assume some of the burdens of others by interacting with them. We are very fortunate to have so many wonderful volunteers doing this for our community and we count Mary as being one of our finest.

Please help to ensure that this program will continue into the future by remembering CAREGIVERS in your will or trust



We're Moving!

Sometime in November, CAREGIVERS will be moving to a new home. The location will be announced at a later date.

We are very grateful to the Sisters of the Holy Cross, St. Catherine's by-the-Sea, for their generosity in providing office space for this program at a very nominal rent since 1984.



Honor Loved Ones for the Holidays

Are you stumped for a gift idea for a birthday, anniversary, or Christmas? Honor a special friend or relative and make a real difference in the lives of others by donating to CAREGIVERS' honorary gift and memorial program. It allows you to support our volunteer assistance to the frail, homebound elderly in the name of the person you wish to remember.

Please send your gift to CAREGIVERS along with a note stating the name of the person who is to be honored or remembered. Or call and ask us to send you a donor envelope with all the necessary information. We will send notification of the honorary gift (but not the amount) to the honoree. Notification of the memorial gift will be sent to the family of the deceased.

Send gifts to: CAREGIVERS, 261 N. Catalina Street, Ventura, 93001. Call 652-0566 for further information.

Coming Events:

Board Meetings

Thursdays 7:00 A.M.
 Nov. 19, Dec. 17, Jan. 21
 CAREGIVERS Office



Christmas

Office closed
 Dec. 23-25

Thanksgiving

Office closed
 Nov. 26-27



Golf Tournament

Mon., Mar. 15, 1999 7:30 A.M.
 Buena Ventura Golf Course

CAREGIVERS

261 North Carolina Street
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 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED.



CAREGIVERS' MISSION - To provide a reliable personal relationship between one volunteer and one elder in need of assistance. Without the kind of neighborhoodly services we offer, frail elders may find themselves living in unfamiliar, impersonal institutions, with a debilitating sense of having lost both independence and dignity. CAREGIVERS, an interfaith effort, matches volunteers with elders who need non-medical assistance, thereby permitting many of them to remain in the familiar and cherished surroundings of their own homes longer than would otherwise be possible.

CAREGIVERS is sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and is grateful for the financial assistance of Trinity Lutheran Church, Ventura; First United Methodist Church, Ventura; Sisters of the Holy Cross; National Council of Jewish Women; First United Methodist Women; First Presbyterian Church, Santa Paula; and the Aid Association for Lutherans.

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