



CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Fall 2000

Volume 17, Number 4

The Holiday Candle

No one knows who actually invented the candle. We do know that candles are the descendants of lamps that burned liquid fuel and date back at least thirty thousand years to the days when prehistoric people used them while daubing pictures deep inside caves.

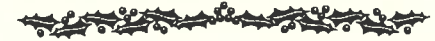
Until the risk of deadly blazes became apparent and electricity provided an alternative, the flickering light of the candle was the standard method for illuminating Christmas trees. Like so many Christmas traditions, the use of candles can be traced to Germany, where the season begins with the start of Advent, four Sundays before Christmas Day. This period is marked by the Advent



wreath, which originated with the Lutherans. The wreath consists of a circle of evergreen branches entwined with red ribbon and holding four candles, three purple and one rose or pink. One candle is lit to mark the passing of each week of Advent. Often a fifth white candle is placed at the wreath's center. This is the Christ Candle, symbolizing Christ's birth, and it is lit on Christmas Eve (*Heiligabend*) or Christmas Day. When it is bleak and cold outside, the wreath reminds us that there is life and freshness in the middle of winter.

Light continues to play an important role in many seasonal celebrations. Christians in China celebrate by using paper lanterns

Happy Holidays from all of us at CAREGIVERS



to turn Christmas trees into "Trees of Light." In parts of India, clay oil-burning lamps are used. In Sweden, people participate in Lucia processions, in which they give thanks to the Queen of Light for bringing hope during the darkest time of the year.

A candleholder called a Kinara is featured in the nonreligious holiday Kwanzaa, which was introduced after the Watts riots in the 1960s. Candles also are lit on the menorah or Hanukkiya, a seven- or nine-branched candelabrum, during Hanukkah, the Jewish festival of lights celebrating the victory of Judas Maccabees over the Syrian tyrant Antiochus more than two thousand years ago.

Source: "The Physics of Christmas" by Dr. Roger Highfield

Volunteer Spotlight: Jim Barker

by Barbara Weinberg, Executive Director

Jim Barker—computer data librarian, radio disc jockey, actor... Jim has appeared in close to 60 productions in community theaters in Iowa and Ventura County, California since 1968. His latest performance was in the Kaufman and Hart play "George Washington Slept Here" at the Santa Paula Theater Center and the Simi Valley Cultural Arts Center for which he was presented the Ventura County Reporter "Excellence in Performance as a Featured Performer" (REP) Award.

Jim, a music major in high school in Glendale where he grew up, joined the Navy as a Radioman. Upon his discharge, he worked as a chief teller for a bank in Hollywood. Growing restless, he attended radio announcing school during his off-hours.

After much searching across the country, he was finally offered and accepted a job at a small radio station in Charles City, Iowa. "I loved the job," said Jim. "But, I couldn't live on the \$700 a month they paid me, plus not having the benefits a 'non-entertainment' job offers, such as insurance, dental care or overtime."

Jim returned to California in 1980 where he became a radio announcer for KAAP/KKBZ in Santa Paula, but, again, couldn't live on the pay and had to face the fact that he had to get a "real" job. For the past 17 years, he has worked as a graphics illustrator/technical word

processor and is currently employed at Sverdrup Technology, Inc. in Camarillo.

"What has all this got to do with CAREGIVERS?" you might be saying at this point. Well,

seven years ago, Jim bumped into Laine Waggoner who has been editing and writing articles for our CAREGIVERS' newsletter for several years. She told him that CAREGIVERS needed someone to lay out the newsletter

and asked if he would take on the task. When Jim learned what the organization was doing for the elderly, he immediately agreed and has been donating his time to CAREGIVERS ever since.



Continued on page 3

A Jubilant Crowd Celebrates 16 Years of Service!!!

by Carol Basralian

On Saturday, October 28th, I awoke to a gloomy, cloudy, drizzly day. It couldn't possibly rain, I thought. Could it? In October?... But it did and the forecast for the next day was RAIN! Frantically, I called the Ventura Marina Rotary's president, Mr. Lin Howe to find out if he and his members could cook in the rain. Lin enthusiastically replied, "Sure, no problem!" So, on Sunday, October 29th, for the 10th year and in spite of the rain, this benevolent club donated the food, and cooked and served a delicious tri-tip and chicken barbecue dinner. Consequently, the 16th annual CAREGIVERS' Volunteer Recognition party at the Poinsettia Pavilion was a smashing success!

Volunteers and guests were delightfully entertained by professional singer, Paula Marie Jones, who not only sang beautifully, but kept everyone laughing with her delightful, humorous patter.

Once again, Oscar Esmaili, owner of the Royal Bakery in Ventura, donated and produced



Board Member, Rod Brown, with friend, Song Sayward

the most luscious sheet cake to honor our CAREGIVERS' volunteers. The cake seemed to disappear almost instantly, so we know it was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

After the dinner, Board Chair, Judith Frazier, presented a plaque to the Ventura Marina Rotary's President, Mr. Lin Howe, in appreciation of the club's dedication and faithful service to our organization for so many years.

Also honored with plaques were: Sherry Lyons of Vance, Thrift and Biller, for her many years of expert volunteer bookkeeping services and Jim Barker, for his expertise in helping with our quarterly newsletter and his extensive computer assistance.

Longs Drugs on North Ashwood in

Ventura donated a clock and See's Candies donated five 1-pound boxes of chocolates for the surprise drawings that completed the evening's festivities.

We are so proud of the CAREGIVERS' volunteers donation of 41,111 hours of FREE assistance to the frail seniors in our program last year and the incredible 94,806 miles driven by them so that these homebound seniors could get to their many doctors, dentists and grocery stores. As CAREGIVERS' Volunteers, you have successfully and admirably

demonstrated that you care about this

community and about this organization.

We commend you on

giving the most important thing any human being can give to another—your TIME. No matter what services you offer, whether it's visiting, telephoning, transportation, or writing out their monthly bills, you are an integral part of CAREGIVERS' outreach that makes us so special in the various cities that we serve. We sincerely hope you had a wonderful time at the dinner and THANK YOU again for another year of loving service. 🌸



Board Chair, Judith Frazier, presenting plaque to Rotarian President, Lin Howe



left to right: Volunteers Dee Ambrosini, Ardelle Faue, Warren Faue, Maureen O'Brien

CAREGIVERS joins Vehicle Donation Program.

We are excited to announce that you can now donate your car, truck, boat, motorcycle and recreational vehicle to CAREGIVERS and deduct 100% of the fair market value from your income tax. Our first vehicle was donated to us by Mike Monaco of Ventura in August, 2000 and we received a check for \$3,300. We are so grateful to Mike for his gener-

osity. So, if you have a vehicle that you would like to donate, please call our office at (805) 658-8530 or (800) 203-2940 Your vehicle will be picked up, a receipt will be given to you and DMV paperwork completed for you. Please spread the word to your friends, family and colleagues. For further information or to receive a brochure, please call. 🌸

Executive Director's Message

by Barbara Weinberg

Dear Friends:

It's hard to believe that six months have already passed since I joined CAREGIVERS. It has been a very busy and fulfilling six months. During this time, among many other activities, I have met our Volunteer Coordinators and attended our Volunteer Recognition Dinner. Each was a rich experience for me and I was inspired by the wonderful energy, humor, compassion and caring of our volunteers.

As we look to the future of this much needed program in our community, there are two great challenges that we face – one is to find more volunteers and, the second is to raise the funds necessary for the program to continue and to grow.

Sometimes we are asked "since this is a program carried out by volunteers, why do you need money?" While it is true that volunteers are the lifeblood of this program, unfortunately, the program could not be accomplished without professional staff to recruit and prepare volunteers, assess clients' needs, make appropriate matches, support the volunteers in their efforts and make sure that we

have a cost-effective and efficiently-run organization. Our budget is small: \$150,000. Through individual donations, grants and a vehicle donation program, we have raised \$50,000 of it to date, but we have a long way to go and really need your continued financial help.

As a result of CAREGIVERS' programs, our County benefits in many ways that we don't often think about. For example, by enabling elderly persons, living on fixed incomes, to stay in their own homes longer than they could otherwise do, we save taxpayers millions of dollars in payments to tax supported institutions. Last year, our volunteers provided over 41,000 hours of free services for 311 homebound elderly seniors. According to the Points of Light Foundation, the cost of these services at \$13 per hour would be \$543,443 in one year. Medical costs are also saved, because our clients live healthier and happier lives with the care and companionship of a CAREGIVERS' volunteer

and, lastly, the spirit, caring and compassion of our over 250 volunteers contributes to the positive climate of our County.

So a heartfelt "thank you" to all of you who so generously give of your time, effort and money to ensure that CAREGIVERS continues to flourish. I wish you all a very Happy Holiday. ❄️



What's New at CAREGIVERS!

CAREGIVERS' welcomes three new members to its Board of Directors. Joining the Board are Blake Wade, Attorney at Law, of Wadelaw, specializing in tenant/landlord issues. (Blake has served on our Advisory Board for the past 9 months); Jim Cunningham, Jr., Attorney at Law, of Cunningham & Lansden. Jim specializes in Estate Planning and Shalene Spears, auditor with Soares, Sandall, Bernacci and Petrovich. We are delighted and fortunate to have these three dynamic people join the CAREGIVERS' family. ❄️



SPOTLIGHT – Continued from page 1

"When I learned what this organization was doing," said Jim, "I wished it had been in existence when I was taking care of my mother. She had several strokes and needed constant care. I was working full time and trying to take care of her. We fell into that crack of having too much income to qualify for Medi-Cal, but not enough to pay for professional care. It was a terribly difficult period of my life.

"I know that the lifeblood of CAREGIVERS is volunteers," said Jim. "I urge anyone with a spare two to four hours a week to become a volunteer to help the elderly."

Jim is a generous, caring and talented person in our CAREGIVERS family who, although an actor, has been "behind the scenes" of CAREGIVERS for too long. Our heartfelt thanks to you Jim, for your involvement and everything you do to make CAREGIVERS a vital organization. ❄️



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WE ARE PLEASED TO SUPPORT CAREGIVERS!

YOUR DONATIONS MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO GIVE A HELPING HAND TO THOSE WHO NEED IT. THANK YOU! (July - September, 2000)

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 Claudia & George Morrey
 by Jerry Leavitt
 My Uncle Chris Overgaard
 by Carol Basralian

IN HONOR OF...

Elsie & Jack Mendelssohn
 by Custom Awards & Engraving

We are 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. Every gift will be promptly acknowledged. All donations are tax-deductible. Please make checks payable to **CAREGIVERS**. Call us at 658-8530 for more details.

CAREGIVERS Benefactors

(Gifts of \$1,000 or more, donated during the past year)

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CAREGIVERS is on the Web!

Thanks to the generosity of Don Davidson Computer, you can now reach CAREGIVERS on the web at:

<http://www.vcnet.com/~caregivers>

Everything you wanted to know about CAREGIVERS but were afraid to ask is there!

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

A GREAT LOSS FOR CAREGIVERS AND OUR COUNTY

"As a blind man, there are no words to express just how much CAREGIVERS' means to me. The help I have received over the past nine years has enabled me to remain active and to help others who are disabled and suffering in isolation." Russell Murawski, July, 2000.

On November 14, 2000, CAREGIVERS and Ventura County lost a dear friend—Russell Murawski. Russell was a client of CAREGIVERS, an advocate for the physically challenged and for seniors. He died after a brief illness. He was 77 years old. Russ was passionate about the many causes he believed in. In particular, he fought for better transportation for seniors throughout the County.

Although blind for approximately 30 years, nothing deterred Russell and his longtime companion Virginia Forbes, from traveling to various churches and civic groups to speak about the help they have received from CAREGIVERS since 1991. For nine years, CAREGIVERS provided volunteers to read the minutes of the many civic organizations he belonged to. They also read the local newspapers to him so that he was able to keep in-

formed about community issues.

Because of the help of our CAREGIVERS' volunteers, his many tape recordings and his wonderful mind, Russell was able to continue to fight for a positive change in the many services that were inadequate around the county. As Russell used to say "there is no greater reward than helping others." And he surely lived up to that. We'll sure miss you, Russ.

Make a Lasting Difference—Leave a Legacy in Our Community!

Ensure CAREGIVERS' Future

Bequests and other gifts may be deductible from your income and estate and can therefore offer significant income and estate tax savings. There is no limit on the amount that you can gift to CAREGIVERS (or to other charitable organizations) through your will, trust, or other giving methods. By remembering CAREGIVERS in your will or trust, you will ensure that CAREGIVERS will continue to offer assistance for future generations. Consult your attorney, accountant or financial advisor for more information.



Our Heartfelt Thanks for These Grants Recently Received

Archstone Foundation - \$15,000
City of San Buenaventura - \$6,000
Carrie Estelle Doheny - \$8,000
The Joseph Drown Foundation - \$10,000
Swift Memorial Health Care Foundation - \$5,200
Wells Fargo Bank - \$1,000

"WEARIN' O' THE GREEN" NINTH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



Planning is well under way. The date is Friday, March 16th at the Buenaventura Golf Course, Olivas Park Road, Ventura. A wonderful Irish buffet lunch will be served.

The entrance fee will remain at the same low price as last year - \$95. Sponsorships are available from \$10,000 to \$500 and Tee Sponsorships are the same as last year - \$100. We also need prizes for the raffle and auction, so if you would like to donate and receive the publicity for your company, please call the office. Reservations for the golf tournament are now being accepted. We expect a full contingent of 144 players. We fill up fast, so please call the office today to reserve your spot (805) 658-8530.

Help Desperately Needed

Would you like to...

Give service to your community?
Have a rewarding volunteer experience?
Use your talents and abilities to help an elderly person?
Make a new friend?
Be free to set your own hours of service?
Work independently but with plenty of support?
Be challenged and greatly appreciated?
Feel good about yourself?
Call CAREGIVERS at 658-8530 to find out about volunteer opportunities. We need you!

Coming Events:

Board Meetings

Every fourth Thursday of the month – 7:30 A.M.



9th Annual “Wearin’ o’ the Green” Golf Tourney

March 16, 2001
Buenaventura Golf Course
(see page 5)

CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

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CAREGIVERS’ MISSION – To provide a reliable personal relationship between one volunteer and one elder in need of assistance. Without the kind of neighborly 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 was founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in collaboration with Trinity Lutheran Church, Ventura; First United Methodist Church, Ventura; Sisters of the Holy Cross; National Council of Jewish Women; First United Methodist Women, Ventura; First Presbyterian Church, Santa Paula; Ventura County Church of Religious Science; and the Aid Association for Lutherans.

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