



CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Fall 2004

Volume 22, Number 3

Surviving The Holiday Season In A Time Of Loss

Losing a loved one is always painful and especially so during the Holiday Season. We hope that some of the following ideas will be helpful to those suffering from loss at this time. They are excerpted from the "Growing Through Grief" class at St. John's Regional Medical Center, Paula Marie Jones, Bereavement Services.

- Consider a completely different plan this year for Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year's, etc. Give yourself the option to create a new pattern or ritual that will help ease the deep pain of the loss.
- Keep the holiday traditions that you need for stability and let go of what needs changing.
- Only involve yourself with holiday rituals of decorating, parties, cards, etc. if they are comforting to you.
- Avoid plans that will lead to feeling miserable...this is enough reason to do something different.

- During a holiday meal or gathering you can include your loved one in different ways...serving their favorite food, lighting a candle in their honor, telling a favorite story, music, etc.
- Try to stay away from stressful, negative or controlling people or situations.
- Find healthy distractions—get into something that really engages you.
- Take short walks or create "breathers" and breaks in the day.
- Take more hot baths or showers. Get a massage.
- Save your energy by being more assertive about what you need at every possible moment.
- Factor in time to rest even if you haven't done very much.
- Don't expect more of yourself than you are able to give.



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Third Annual Sailathon Raises over \$9,000

By Maureen Buchanan, Event Coordinator

Once again, beautiful weather prevailed for the Third Annual Sailathon, which was held on Sunday, October 3, 2004.

Twenty-five boats participated in this one-of-a-kind event, which was open to all types of watercraft including powerboats and outrigger canoes. Boat captains raised funds by soliciting sponsorships from friends, families and business associates who either sponsored by the lap or contributed a flat donation. The Sailathon raised over \$9,000 (net), which will help provide in-home assistance and transportation for frail, homebound elders in our community. All funds raised will stay right here in Ventura County.

The day began at the Ventura Yacht Club with an early morning meeting at which boat captains registered

and received sailing instructions. Then everyone headed for their boats to prepare for a wonderful day out on the water. At noon, spectators gathered on the Ventura Pier to watch the boats commence their two-hour journey. After the Sailathon, Captains and their crews returned to the Ventura Yacht Club for some hot chili and corn bread, prize drawings and awards.



Photo by Bryan Killion

David Nolde and Judy Mikovits in *Jonah*—the one and only powerboat in the Sailathon—won an award for raising the most funds. Bill Gibbs in *Afterburner*—the fastest boat on the West Coast—won an award for most laps sailed. Pierpont Bay Yacht Club won the Yacht Club Challenge and received the Jack Killion "I didn't do it" perpetual trophy for bringing the most boats to the event.

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Twentieth Anniversary Celebration a Huge Success!

By Carol Boatner, Director of Volunteers

On October 17, 2004, CAREGIVERS Volunteers Assisting the Elderly celebrated its 20th Anniversary at the Poinsettia Pavilion in Ventura. Over 160 volunteers and donors happily greeted each other for the festivities. Some of the volunteers have been with CAREGIVERS since 1985.

Cie Macias, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the party and introduced Chair of the Event, Berta Steele, presenting her with a plaque in appreciation of her dedicated work on the event. Master of Ceremonies, the Hon. Judge Harry J. Walsh, Advisory Board member and Superior Court Judge, introduced the original founders of our program, Sr. Patricia Callahan and Sr. Veronica Maloney. The Sisters told the story of how CAREGIVERS got started. Sr. Pat said she and Sr. Veronica were very aware of the need for assistance for homebound frail elders, but did not have the funds to start up a program. However, one day, Sr. Pat saw an article in a Los Angeles paper about the availability of grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The rest, as they say, is history.

Congresswoman Lois Capps and Assemblywoman Hannah Beth Jackson sent certificates of commendation and regrets at not being able to attend. Board member, Sr. Barbara Dugan presented Board Chair, Cie Macias with a plaque from the Sisters of St. Joseph in recognition of our 20 years of caring service.

Sr. Barbara Dugan gave the invocation and invited the guests to a delicious chicken and beef buffet dinner (by Adelblue Catering). Two

luscious sheet cakes were donated by Royal Bakery and Cafe.

Soon after the dinner, Judge Walsh and Director of Volunteers, Carol Boatner presented the following volunteers with standing plaques for their 18 years of service: John Baker, Claire Bucher, Ellen and George Appel, Jack Collings, Betty Patterson, Dorothy Schupback, Florence Multer, Eleanor Mapes, Luther Tolo, Wayne Dugan, Keith York, Millie Fletcher, and Joe Jaramillo. Plaques were presented to Hon. Harry J. Walsh, Carol Boatner and Joan Rollins for their 19 years of dedicated volunteer service.

Through the generosity of Aegis of Ventura and the Lexington, CAREGIVERS was able to present scholarships to the following outstanding "Building Bridges" youth volunteers: Vanessa Valasquez who graduated from Foothill Technology High School and is attending St. Mary's College of San Francisco received an award of \$250.

Another \$250 scholarship was presented to Kristina Vega. Kristina is a freshman at Ventura College and a graduate of St. Bonaventure High School. She has been helping CAREGIVERS for 3 years and never hesitates to lend a helping hand when needed.

Cody Phillips was then welcomed to the podium to receive a \$500 award. Cody graduated from St. Bonaventure and was one of the first to volunteer when the program started in 2002. Congratulations to you all!!

We are indebted to Aegis of Ventura and The Lexington for their generosity in providing funds for

scholarships for the last 3 years.

Topping off the spectacular evening was the wonderful songstress, Paula Marie Jones. Paula's patter and superb singing voice thrilled the audience as we concluded this very special evening.

We want to thank the following advertisers who supported this event. Please let them know how much you appreciated their involvement:

Bob Alviani, First Bank & Trust; Terry Basolo and the St. Bonaventure High School Interact Club; R. Del Brunner, DDS; Jack Collings, Collings & Associates; Russ Charvonia, The Renaissance Group; Anna Dato, LMT; Mark Eaton, Bill's Bike Shop; Dr. Arthur M. Inoshita; Paul Ma, China Dynasty; Mike and Loretta Merewether, Tolman & Wiker Insurance; Nancy Nustad, Prudential/California Realty; Judy Remley and Diane Doria, First Bank & Trust; Ann Romero, Wells Fargo Bank; Joseph Rule, The Gym; Mel Sheeler, Sheeler Moving & Storage; Royal Bakery, the Lexington for the wine, and Paula Marie Jones for donating and sharing her incredible talent with us.

Special thanks go to the following individuals who also donated funds: Jim and Carol Boatner, Bob and Ginny Camarillo, Cie Macias, Ernie Melonas and Family, Pat Meredith, Jay and Jean Midgley, Dianne and Tim Moon, Bill and Colleen Paterson, Berta and Allan Steele, Hon. Harry J. Walsh and Norm and Lynn Weitzel.

We sincerely hope to have another big celebration 10 YEARS from now!!!!



(1) Berta Steele, Event Chair and husband Judge Allan Steele; (2) Paula Marie Jones, entertainer (3) Ann Romero, Board member, and husband John; (4) Betty Patterson, volunteer; (5) Sr. Veronica Maloney, original Director of Volunteers and Carol Boatner current Director of Volunteers; (6) Kristina Vega receiving scholarship award from Hugh Carter of Aegis of Ventura; (7) Judge Harry J. Walsh and Founder Sr. Patricia Callahan; (8) "Birthday Girl" Mae Worsinger, volunteer; (9) Cody Phillips receiving scholarship from Deb Eberhardt of The Lexington; (10) Friends: Melinda Nordeng, Diane Rothberg, Carolyn Crosby Lundgren and Ramona Wilkinson; (11) Frank Cavola, original Board member and wife Helen. *Photo layout courtesy of Jim Boatner*

- Let others know that it's O.K. if you cry. Intense feelings will surface...release and move on.
- Write about your grief and healing experiences in a journal...you can choose to keep it or not.
- Don't judge yourself for feeling or being impulsive, irritable, emotional, or exhausted...it happens.
- Be careful about consuming alcohol—it decreases energy and increases symptoms of depression.
- Watch your sugar intake—it will intensely affect your energy and mood.
- Engage in any type of healthy activity and let it become a new habit for you.
- Participate in exercise, dance or sports—any kind of activity, any level, anytime or take a gentle or restorative yoga class.
- Find any kind of activity or people that make you laugh or feel good about yourself.
- Consider counseling—it helps you develop more confidence in yourself and understand life.
- Get out into nature and accept the gifts of the seasons to experience renewal.
- Be grateful for all the blessings that you do have in your life right now.
- Seek comfort in those friends and family members who want to understand and help you in your grief.
- Plan a remembering ritual to your lost loved one(s). It can decrease emotional intensity.
- Grief is an ongoing process. Healing takes time. There is no pill for it. You can learn how to work through the intense feelings in a healthy way that will eventually help you accept this deep loss gracefully.
- Know that this day/season will pass and next year will be a much different experience.

Christmas Etiquette for Dogs

1. Be especially patient with your humans during this time. They may appear to be more stressed out than usual, and they will appreciate long comforting dog leans.
2. They may come home with large bags of things they call gifts. Do not assume that all the gifts are yours.
3. Be tolerant if your humans put decorations on you. They seem to get some special kind of pleasure out of seeing how you look with fake antlers.
4. They may bring a large tree into the house and set it up in a prominent place and cover it with lights and decorations. Bizarre as this may seem to you, it is an important ritual for your humans, so there are some things you need to know: don't p—on the tree; don't drink water in the container that holds the tree; mind your tail when you are near the tree; if there are packages under the tree, even ones that smell interesting or that have your name on them, don't rip them open; and don't chew on the cord that runs from the funny-looking hole in the wall to the tree.
5. Your humans may occasionally invite lots of strangers to come visit during this season. These parties can be lots of fun, but they also call for some discretion on your part: not all strangers appreciate kisses and leans; don't eat off the buffet table; beg for goodies subtly—be pleasant, even if unknowing strangers sit on your sofa; and don't drink out of glasses that are left within your reach.
6. Likewise, your humans may take you visiting. Here your manners will also be important: observe all the rules in #4 for trees that may be in other people's houses. Respect the territory of other animals that may live in the house, tolerate children and turn on your charm big time.
7. A big man with a white beard and a very loud laugh may emerge from your fireplace in the middle of the night. **DON'T BITE HIM!** - *Author Unknown*



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Executive Director's Message

It's hard to believe that 2004 is almost at an end, and we will soon be celebrating the arrival of 2005. As we all share the pain of a war raging in Iraq and the loss of our young men and women, at CAREGIVERS we are fortunate to be surrounded by the love and compassion exhibited every day by our wonderful volunteers. Our spirits continue to be nourished and inspired by their generosity and caring service. They are making significant improvements in the lives of so many homebound, frail seniors, bringing love, help and friendship into their lonely lives. We are continually heartened at CAREGIVERS by the many wonderful stories of lives turned around from despair and depression to hope and joy in living.

It has been an exciting year of growth at CAREGIVERS. Our intergenerational "Building Bridges" program has over 100 student volunteers from four Ventura high schools assisting homebound seniors. (It began with ten students from one high school

two and a half years ago). And, at last, we are able to expand our free services into Oxnard, where we know there are hundreds of homebound seniors in great need of help.

In the fall, our Board of Directors and Advisory Board members together with Staff completed two strategic planning sessions under the guidance of Doug Green of DH Management Consulting. Doug helped us through the planning process, which was thought-provoking and challenging. The sessions resulted in a sensible "roadmap" for the next two years along with strategies to meet the challenges of the increased need for our vital services, continued funding and volunteer recruitment.

We are very positive and excited about the future of CAREGIVERS and want to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you who support homebound seniors in our County, through CAREGIVERS.

Best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.

Sailathon from page 1

Other winners include:

Cruiser class—first place, Jeff Greer in *Island Time*; second place, Ted Pounder in *Asmara*; third place, Richard and Susan Countess in *Symphony*. Racer class—first place, David Chase and Ann Fitzgerald in *Uhambo*; second place, David Wilson in *Slug*; and third place, David Boatner in *Sea Hawk*. Multihull—first place, Mike Dobbs in *Full Tilt*; second place, Bill Gibbs in *Afterburner*; and third place, Colin Gegg in *Indefatigable*.

A hearty thank you to all the captains for participating and contributing to the event's success: David Boatner, David Chase and Ann Fitzgerald, Susan and Richard Countess, Gerald Davies, James Dembowski, Mike Dobbs, Alan Ferentz, Thomas Gardner, Colin Gegg, Bill Gibbs, Jeff Greer, Verne Haller, Andy Killion, Bryan Killion, Sally Ann Ledbetter, George Moore, David Nolde and Judy Mikovits, Dale Pelka, Ted Pounder, Joe Vetrano, Dave Wilson, Graham Paine and members of the Hokuloa Canoe Club.

A very special thank you to the Mirlak Corporation for sponsoring the Sailathon and to additional sponsors C & R Reprographics, City of Ventura Environment Services, Full Sail Brewing Co., Island Packers, Margarita Villa Mexican Restaurant, Milano's Italian

Restaurant, Morgan Stanley, Oriental Treasures, Roebeks, Surfdog, Trader Joe's and the Ventura Port District. Also, thank you to Amgen for their matching gift.

Without the help of the following committee members, the Sailathon would not be possible: Andy Killion, Chair, Ginny Camarillo, Bill Gibbs, Cecilia Macias, Melinda Nordeng, Paul Swanson and Leticia Wilson. Also, thank you to those individuals who came out and helped on event day: Michael Herron, Tina Killion, Alex Luu, Alex Lewis, Dick Mullarky, Nancy Masulis and Blake Wade. Finally, thank you to all the individuals and businesses who so generously donated to our boat captains. Mark your calendars for next year's Sailathon, which will be held on Sunday, October 16, 2005.

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From all of us at CAREGIVERS, a heartfelt "thank you" to all of the following supporters of our vision—"Dignity For Life" (August 2004 through November 2004)

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

Honor Your Loved Ones with a Meaningful Gift for the Holidays

Are you looking for a worthwhile gift for your family and friends for the holidays? A tribute to CAREGIVERS is a thoughtful gift that honors or memorializes a loved one and, at the same time, makes a significant difference in the lives of the frail homebound elders that we serve. Tribute gifts can be made in honor of special occasions such as birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, or to say "thank you" to a friend. Please send your gift to CAREGIVERS along with a note stating the name of the person who is to be honored. We will send notification of your tribute gift (but not the amount) to the honoree. For memorials, please send the name of the deceased and the address of the family member you wish to receive the notification of your gift.



Caregivers Expands Into The City Of Oxnard

Each year, we receive many pleas for help from isolated, homebound seniors in Oxnard. Until now, we have not been able to respond to their needs because we did not have the resources. We are, therefore, very grateful to the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging for awarding CAREGIVERS a \$50,000 grant to help us to bring our free services for homebound elders into the City of Oxnard and to increase the services we currently provide for our clients in Ventura and Santa Paula.

We need help finding volunteers and getting the word out to the frail elderly, 60 years and older that our free services are now available in Oxnard. If you are an Oxnard resident who can give between two to four hours, once a week, to help an

elderly person, please call our office at (805) 658-8530 and ask for Carol. If you are unable to make a weekly commitment, but could drive a frail elder to the doctor's office and/or the grocery store, on an as needed basis, our seniors need you.

Our more than 200 Ventura/Santa Paula volunteers tell us that volunteering for CAREGIVERS has brought them wonderful, lasting friendships and more rewards and benefits than they could have imagined. "I get so much more out of volunteering than I ever give. It is the simple pleasure of sharing yourself with another person" said volunteer Mary Kay. And many of our student volunteers tell us that "it is the best experience of their lives."

In Memory of Our Beloved Board Members.

We mourn the loss of our dedicated, wonderful Board members Rod Brown and Jesse Dunlap. Both served on the CAREGIVERS Board for many years. They were caring, compassionate, hardworking members. We miss Rod's sense of humor and Jesse's irrepressible cheerfulness and positive attitude. We are sustained by happy, warm memories of them both.

Reserve Now! March 7, 2005



We are taking reservations for the 13th Annual "Wearin' o' the Green" Golf Tournament to be held on Monday, March 7, 2005 at Spanish Hills Golf and Country Club. Come join us for a day of golf, good friends, great food and prizes that concludes with a traditional Irish dinner and a live auction. The cost is \$175 per person. Call 805.658.8530 for more information.

A special thank you to the 2004 sponsors: Bunnin Auto Group; Bob & Ginny Camarillo; Community Memorial Hospital; In-N-Out Burger; Metro-Med., Inc.; Mid-State Bank & Trust; Jay & Jean Midgley; Santa Barbara Bank & Trust; Sheeler Moving and Storage; Steve Thomas BMW; and Ventura Printing.



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Coming Events:

CAREGIVERS Board Meetings
Fourth Thursday of each month



"Wearin' o' the Green"
Golf Tournament
March 7, 2005

4th Annual Sailathon
October 16, 2005

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CAREGIVERS MISSION – To promote the health, well-being, dignity and independence of frail, home-bound elders through one-on-one relationships with trusted volunteers

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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