



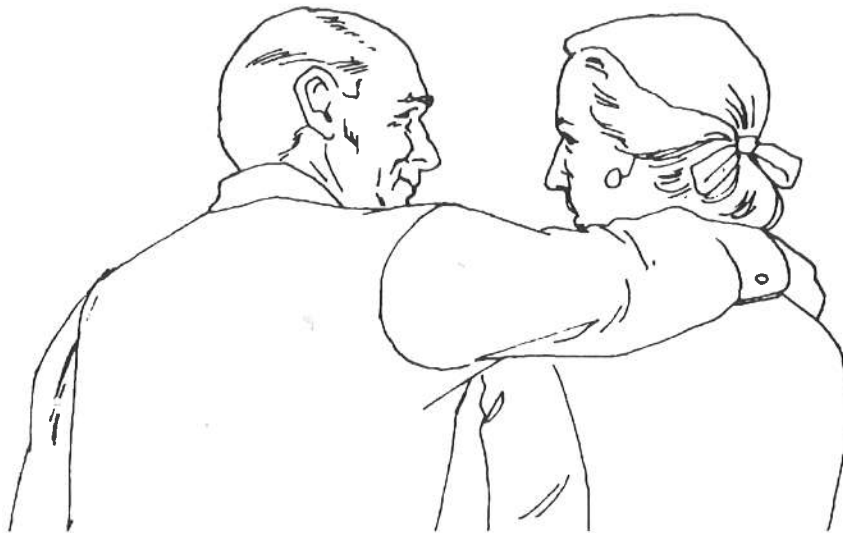
CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Summer 1995

Volume 12, Number 3

Your Presence Can Be Healing To Someone Who Is Ill



by Laine Waggoner

Do you feel uncomfortable when visiting someone who is seriously ill? Can't think of the right words to say without sounding trite or hollow? Afraid you'll fall into the trap of avoidance or false cheerfulness?

The important thing is just being there to provide support, say many hospice workers. There is no magic formula and no magic words.

Just realize that it is your presence and not your words that mean the most, wrote Rabbi Harold Kushner in his best-selling 1981 book "When Bad Things Happen to Good People."

Keep your visit brief because seriously ill people tire easily. Frequent short visits are better than infrequent long visits.

The power of touch is extremely important in the healing process. Just holding a person's

hand or giving a comforting pat or hug can mean a great deal to someone fighting fear and loneliness. If you stay at arm's length you just increase the sense of separation a seriously ill person already feels.

Listen without trying to follow an agenda. Most people just need someone to listen to their feelings and the stories they like to tell that make them feel good about their lives.

If a person with a life-threatening illness asks, "Why me?" they aren't necessarily looking for an answer, they are expressing their confusion or anger. You don't have to have an answer for this. The best thing to do is be yourself, be sincere, and indicate that you understand the person's anxiety.

"I see you're really troubled by this" is a more helpful response than "God is testing you" or

"Everything happens for a reason," according to Rabbi Kushner.

We must allow patients to discuss their feelings. "Always reflect what they're feeling so they know you understand," said Elizabeth Gagliano, who works with the sick and shut-ins of St. Benedict's parish in the Bronx, New York.

"If they say 'I know I'm not getting any better,' responding with 'Don't talk that way' does not help them come to grips with the situation."

Tears help heal. Bottling up emotions is unhealthy. Telling a person "Don't cry" is more hurtful than helpful. You don't need to say anything. Just get a box of tissues and hold their hand.

Be prepared for anger, which is one of several stages a terminal patient and his or her loved ones can go through. Visitors must realize that this is not personal but part of the normal response to serious illness or dying.

Remember that hearing is the last sense to go. So say only loving and encouraging things even if a person appears to be unaware or unconscious. Don't say negative things while in the room. And, don't leave without saying "I love you."

So take the pressure off yourself. Be a positive and healing visitor. Remember that anything you say is the right thing to say as long as you're sincere.

For more advice on how to be a good listener, see page 2.

Some advice from Camarillo Hospice on how to be a good listener:

- ☺ Learn about the patient's condition in advance...to enable you to help constructively and keep you from being frightened of the unknown.
- ☺ Encourage reminiscence to draw on past coping abilities and to reassure him/her that life has meaning.
- ☺ Show that you intend to spend some time. Take off your coat. Put down your bags.
- ☺ Keep your eyes on the same level as your friend's and try to maintain eye contact.
- ☺ Sit no more than two feet away with no physical obstacles between you.
- ☺ Respond to humor which allows the patient to vent fears and feelings.
- ☺ Be sure the patient wants to talk.
- ☺ Focus on the patient, not on yourself.
- ☺ Don't give advice unless it's asked for.
- ☺ Acknowledge the patient's feelings.



What Are "Friends" For?

Find out on August 21

by Sr. Barbara Dugan

CAREGIVERS needs a few friends to be the "cheerleaders" of the organization in the communities in which we serve. The excellent staff, the generous volunteers, the members of the Board of Directors help in "blowing the horn" for CAREGIVERS.

An auxiliary is something that CAREGIVERS really needs to assure that we will be able to continue our service to the frail elderly into the future.

Don't be hesitant to commit to CAREGIVERS because you are afraid it will consume too much time. We hope to attract many "pods of people" who will be able to contribute their time and talents in many different ways so no one is overburdened.

Share a skill or talent:

Speakers – make presentations to local organizations

Distributors – distribute CAREGIVERS fliers and special bulletins

Salespeople – contact businesses to join the Circle of Responsibility and secure ads for the CAREGIVERS newsletter

Card players – have a bridge tournament or any other type of card game, Monopoly, etc.

Dancers – hold a dance for CAREGIVERS

Organizers – be the "brains" behind fund-raising efforts—Salute to Seniors—a Fashion Show—any other idea?

Office Workers – help with clerical work and mailings when needed.

Whatever your talent, you will be welcome at a gathering in CAREGIVERS lounge. Attend one session at 4 p.m. or at 7 p.m., Monday, August 21.

Call 652-0566 or mail this form.

Mail Reply for Friends' Gathering – Aug. 21

Count me in!

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City _____

Please Check one: 4 p.m. session 7 p.m. session

Send to: CAREGIVERS, 261 N. Catalina, Ventura 93001



Pat Meredith, Executive Director

Executive Director's Message

to honor Donna. For her most generous help and time involved, I decided it's for Donna. I can only hope all your CAREGIVERS are as great as she is."

A grateful Santa Paula resident wrote in April, "For several years now, you all have 'been there' for me, during all my illnesses, and this last birthday. I decided I simply must write and thank you and tell you how very much it means to me. You knew I'm all alone, abandoned by my only son... Anyway, thank you for all your caring—here's one who deeply appreciates it..."

Two letters we received this spring tell, in very simple terms, the value of the CAREGIVERS program. I want to dedicate them to all our volunteers who give of themselves so unselfishly, as well as to all the kind and generous people who support this program with contributions. This type of caring assistance is what your volunteer hours and donated dollars provide.

One client mailed a contribution explaining that her CAREGIVER helped arrange a trip to Stanford to visit her daughter who had critical cancer surgery in March. "My daughter has since passed away. I debated if this gift was in memory of her or

It's amazing how spirits can be lifted by just knowing there's somebody who cares and is prepared to help just a phone call away. You volunteers and donors, who keep this program afloat, should be very proud of the difference you are making in the lives of an ever-growing number of frail elders in our county.

New Program Director

Cecilia Ollivares is the new Program Director for CAREGIVERS Santa Paula/Fillmore. Cecilia served as a CAREGIVERS volunteer for one year and with the Santa Paula Brown Bag program and Community Action of Santa Paula (CASP).

After retiring from the County of Ventura seven years ago, Cecilia worked part-time for In-Home Support Services where she saw first-hand the desperate situations that some seniors find themselves in. She trained in the Jewish Family Services Peer Counseling Program.



Among Cecilia's goals are to make the Latino community in Santa Paula more aware of our services and to recruit more Latino volunteers.

Cecilia says, "I can't begin to tell people how rewarding it is to see the happiness in an elder's face when you visit and hold her hand for a moment or give him a tender pat on the back. Such little gestures mean so much to them, and I guarantee it will fill your heart with joy."

We hope our friends in Santa Paula will stop by our office there and become acquainted with Cecilia Ollivares.



The Medicine Shoppe
Pharmacy
1842 East Main Street
Ventura; phone 648-2724

Medicine Shoppes nationwide donate 10 percent of all sales during the month of August to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. We hope the readers of this newsletter will assist in this effort and let owner Bruce Sharp know that you appreciate his support for CAREGIVERS.



The Circle of Responsibility is a way for us to bring local businesses into the CAREGIVERS family and show our gratitude for their assistance. As you walk into a participating business, please introduce yourself and make sure to mention that you read about them in the CAREGIVERS newsletter. Then make a point of going back again. With everyone's help, this can be a mutually beneficial program for CAREGIVERS and for our Circle members.

Have you remembered
CAREGIVERS
in your will?

YOUR DONATIONS MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO GIVE A HELPING HAND TO THOSE WHO NEED IT. THANK YOU! (April – June 1995)

Anonymous
 Dr. & Mrs. M. Abou-Samra
 Mr. & Mrs. Lyle Althoff
 Bertha Gaertner
 Betty Betts
 Mrs. Elizabeth Blanchard
 Mr. & Mrs. J. Bowen
 Susan Buchter
 Mrs. Lavona Carter
 Mr. Dan Chapman
 The Chouinard Family Trust
 Barbara E. Clifford
 Claude C. Coffman
 Barbara Cohoon
 Herman Darrow
 Edna Daugherty
 Neena Dhillon
 Diane Dowler
 Mrs. Helen J. Ellis
 Irene Esperance
 Dr. Lloyd Fellows
 Mr. & Mrs. Tom FitzGerald
 Mrs. Mildred Fletcher
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Fogo
 Mr. & Mrs. Tom Foley
 Ruth C. Fowler
 Mr. & Mrs. Millard Frohock
 Jose & Maria Gutierrez
 Mrs. Taisia Gutu
 Mr. & Mrs. Leander E. Hall
 Mrs. Mary Harrison
 Bill & Heather Hendren
 Mrs. Mildred Howard
 Loretta A. Jeffries
 Viola Jensen
 Mildred B. Kassin Family Trust
 Rosemary C. Kelley
 Greg & Nina Kenney
 Mrs. Myrle Kirk
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 Mr. & Mrs. C. Levasseur

Dennis Longwill, DDS
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 Nelly K. Mac, M.D.
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 Patricia Meredith
 Mrs. Lael Mitchell
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 Mrs. Musetta Morgan
 Carolyn J. Newman
 Joseph Oestman
 Jeff & Helen Palmer
 Claudia E. Parker
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 Mrs. Mei Hua Phillips
 Mrs. Margaret Phillips
 Mrs. Isabel C. Prickett
 Margaret E. Provence
 Charlotte B. Raitt
 John & Trudy Real
 Joseph Reardon
 Mrs. Mary Riordan
 Mr. & Mrs. Larry Rubottom
 Violet Ryder
 Carol L. Salisbury
 Mary Shepherd
 Mrs. H. M. Stanley
 Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stapleton
 Mrs. Dorothy B. Statler
 Mrs. Leona Stephens
 Anna Streleckis
 Pamela Swartout
 Mrs. Alfrida Poco Teague
 Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Thompson
 Luther Tolo
 Virginia Trombley
 Mary J. Wallace
 Mrs. Ann Wibbelmann
 Seiji & Mary Yoshioka

ORGANIZATIONS & BUSINESSES
 1918 Club
 Air Force Sergeants Association #1311
 Amgen Foundation
 Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation
 I Da Ka Club
 National Council of Jewish Women
 PacificCare Foundation
 San Buenaventura Womens Club
 Sisters of the Holy Cross, Ventura
 Sisters of St. Joseph in California
 Swift Memorial Healthcare Foundation
 United Way, Los Angeles
 United Way of Ventura County
 Wednesday Afternoon Club of Mound

IN MEMORY OF...
Ben Axelrod
 by Mrs. Marguerite Axelrod
Conrad Benson
 by Mrs. Gladys Benson
Albert Bogner
 by Mrs. Irene Esperance
Clifford Coon
 by Mr. Bob Gray
Mr. Edward Freil Sr
 by Mr. & Mrs. Richard Lagomarsino
Virgil A. James
 by Mrs. Sybil James
Clara Nicolini
 by Mr. & Mrs. Martin Rooney

A. Dewey Phillips
 by Mrs. Margaret C. Phillips
Helen Popp
 by Mr. Robert F. Popp
Sam Riger
 by Susan Buchter
Steven Michael Sandoz
 by Mrs. Connie M. Sandoz
Eunice Schleiderer
 by The Schleiderer Family
Colleen Scott
 by Florence Multer
Margaret Stoddard
 by Mrs. Virginia Zierer
Sam Terry
 by Ms. Alva Loftis
 Ms. Dixie Diane Lawler
Bill Thuman
 by The Footburners
 John Brennan
 Paul Cooney
 Jim Evans
 Pete Hughes
 Jim Isaacson
 Paul London
 Howard Macway
 Fred Soderer
 Bernard Watts
Walter Yuss
 by Mr. & Mrs. Dan Stowell

IN HONOR OF...
Marilyn Abeloe
 by Mrs. Norma Hoffer
Mr. & Mrs. P. R. Arguindegui, Sr.
 by Tere Regnier
Lael Mitchell
 by Mr. Jack Mitchell



Volunteers Mary and Seiji Yoshioka help out at one of our quarterly newsletter "mailing parties." If you have some free time in the mornings and would like to join in the fun, please call our office at 652-0566 and volunteer. You'll meet some awfully nice people, and you'll be greatly appreciated!

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, 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.



VOLUNTEER NEWS

Meet the Board

Wendy Gutierrez is Ventura County Market Center Manager and Vice President at Chicago Title Company in Ventura.



She is president-elect of the Ventura County Unit of the American Cancer Society and serves on its Gold Coast Regional Executive Committee and Board of Directors. She has been a member of the CAREGIVERS golf tournament committee for the past three years.

Wendy lives in Ventura with husband, Alex, an attorney, and their children, Chasen, 7-1/2, Taylor, and Lauren, both 6-1/2.

Volunteer Honored



Jack Bowen, a CAREGIVERS volunteer since 1984, was recently honored at the Kiwanis Club of Ventura's annual Community Service Day. A volunteer from each of six local agencies received the Club's award for outstanding service to our Ventura County communities. We salute Jack and thank him for his devotion to our mission of service to frail seniors.

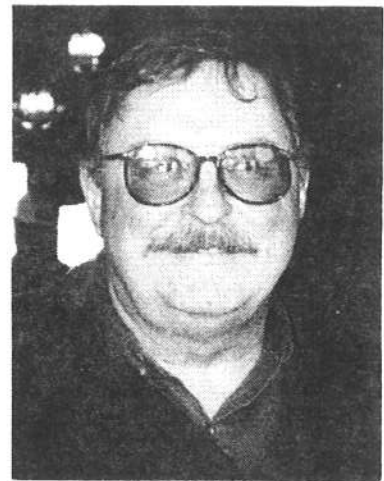
New Board Elected – Norm Weitzel is Chairman

At the June board meeting, the CAREGIVERS Board of Directors elected its leadership for the coming fiscal year. The new chairman is Norm Weitzel, who is completing his third year on the CAREGIVERS Board.

Born into a Navy family, Norm attended George Washington and San Diego State Universities. He retired from the Southern California Edison Company in 1990, after 25 years of service, and now devotes his time to community service activities and recreation.

Norm is a director of the University Club, member of the Friends of Channel Islands National Park and a founding member of the Ventura County Cribbage Association. He is a volunteer tutor for the HOSTS Program at Poinsettia School, helps with Ventura Boys & Girls Club special events, and has co-chaired the CAREGIVERS Golf Tournament for the past three years.

He and his wife Lynn are photojournalists for the Ventura County & Coast Reporter and other regional and national publications.



Norm Weitzel

Other CAREGIVERS officers elected were Ginny Camarillo, vice-chair; Sister Barbara Dugan, secretary; and Judy Frazier, treasurer.

Volunteers Needed

It seems as though the calls for help always come in faster than the volunteers! So many good people need just a little extra assistance to improve their quality of life. Remember, CAREGIVERS volunteers are never put in a position beyond their capabilities. NO nursing care is ever involved. And you set the hours and the tasks you're willing to help with. If you can volunteer 2 to 8 hours a month to help an elder in need, please call us at 652-0566 for more information.

Join "Friends of CAREGIVERS"

Many people have told us that they cannot volunteer as one-to-one CAREGIVERS, but they would still like to help the program in other ways.

To respond to these kind folks, we are starting "Friends of CAREGIVERS." You can help support this program by helping with events, publicity, fundraising or in other ways. Please call us at 652-0566 to attend the "Friends" meeting coming up Monday, August 21.

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
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VENTURA CA

Buenaventura Interfaith Volunteer
CAREGIVERS
261 North Carolina Street
Ventura, CA 93001
Address Correction Requested.

- Healing Presence
- How to be a Good Listener
- Volunteer News
- Circle of Responsibility
- New Board Members

INSIDE FEATURES

CAREGIVERS' MISSION – To provide a reliable personal relationship between one volunteer and one elder in need of assistance. Without the kind of services we offer, frail elders may find themselves living in unfamiliar, impersonal institutions, with a debilitating sense of having lost both independence and dignity. By matching such elders with volunteers who provide basic assistance, CAREGIVERS permits many of them to remain in the familiar and cherished surroundings of their own homes.

Board of Directors

*Norman T. Weitzel, Chairman
Ginny Camarillo, Vice-Chairman
Sr. Barbara Dugan, Secretary
Judith V. Frazier, Treasurer*

Sister Marilyn Binder, CSJ

*Roderick E. Brown
Jesse Dunlap
Wendy Gutierrez
Craig Ploss
David Tipton
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*Wayne Dugan
Hon. Susan Lacey
Beverly O'Gorman
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Harry Walsh*

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*Patricia B. Meredith,
Executive Director
Carol Basralian,
Director of Volunteers
Cecilia Ollivares,
Santa Paula Program Director
Maria Ridge,
Administrative Assistant
Laine Waggoner and Jim Barker
Newsletter Consultants*

In Ventura:

(805) 652-0566

In Santa Paula:

(805) 525-5006

In Fillmore:

(805) 524-5665



Coming Events:

Friends Meeting

Mon. August 21, 4 p.m. or 7 p.m.

CAREGIVERS lounge

Annual Board Retreat

Sat. August 12, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

CAREGIVERS office

Board Meetings

Thursdays 7:00 a.m.

September 15/October 20

Save the Date!

Volunteer Recognition

Sun. October 15

Poinsettia Pavilion