



CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

Summer 2003

Volume 20, Number 2

Volunteering for CAREGIVERS

A Truly Rewarding Experience

by Carol Boatner

Many people think that they just don't have the time to volunteer. Time is the great barrier preventing people from getting involved. Here at CAREGIVERS you may give a small amount of time—as little as 2 hours every other week, or lots of hours per week, depending on your schedule. We are flexible. You won't be collecting a large salary, but the psychological rewards are great!

Over and over again, we hear from our faithful volunteers that their involvement with others makes them "feel so good." Researchers tell us that the simple act of smiling can release endorphins which are our bodies' natural "feel-good chemicals." The exercise you receive by running errands for a homebound elder, doing grocery shopping, or going to the bank, will

produce the same effect. Did you ever see a really busy volunteer look depressed or unhealthy? We haven't.... They seem to have a zest for life and are always in a terrific mood.

Bertie Gaertner has been a volunteer for CAREGIVERS since 1991. Besides helping CAREGIVERS, she also volunteers for Project Understanding and the Police Storefront. Bertie says, "When I help out I get that good feeling. How do you possibly put that into words? It's so satisfying to be able to help!" Bertie's daughter, Nanci Masulis, also helps out when she can. Nanci tells us, "It's absolutely nothing for me to pick up some groceries for some-



one. It makes me feel so good and it means so much to them. The big smile and the big thank you are reward enough!"

Jerry Thomas, one of our special emergency drivers says, "The more you give of yourself, the more you receive. In volunteering, no one makes you do it, you *want* to do it, and that makes all the difference in the world. The seniors are so appreciative!"

Volunteering is a way to create a better community and alleviate the uncertainty, loneliness, and depression in a senior's life; especially a senior who is isolated, with no relatives close by (or none at all) that they can rely on. We are all getting older and everyone wants to age in the comfort and security of their own cherished home. That is the essence of the CAREGIVERS program. What a joy it is to be able to say "I am a volunteer. I make a significant difference in someone's life. I know that I am special!"

"A little more in common than I thought..."

By Selina Escoto, Program Coordinator, Santa Paula

When Dolores Fakhouri approached me about becoming a volunteer for CAREGIVERS I knew exactly who to match her with – Maria Meza.

A few weeks earlier I had the pleasure of meeting Maria, who was in need of a volunteer to help her around the house. Maria suffered a stroke 6 years ago, which left her unable to move her right arm, but this didn't stop her. She lives alone and has always been self-sufficient.

During the volunteer interview with Dolores I realized the two women shared similar hobbies and interests. Dolores also displayed the independence and strength I recognized in Maria. So it was set—the two women would be matched.

After their first meeting the two had a lot to talk about and even more in common than anyone could have imagined:

- Both were born in Mexico, in cities minutes from each other.

- Both raised children in Ventura County.
- Both attend the same church.
- Both have similar eating habits.
- Both love gardening.
- And both are named Maria! (Dolores is Maria's middle name).



Every time they meet now, it's just like old friends who have known each other their whole lives. Maria M. says, "I didn't have many visitors before Maria D. came along; it's nice to have someone to talk to." And Maria D. says, "I hope more people become volunteers; they might be surprised by what they find, and they might just meet the friend they've always wanted."

A Grand Success for "A Grand Time to Remember"

Mother's and Father's Day Campaign

We are pleased to announce that \$47,000 has been raised during our first ever "A Grand Time to Remember" fundraising campaign. A celebration to mark the end of this 8-week campaign was held on July 1, 2003 at Poinsettia Pavilion. A special "thank you" goes to Wells Fargo for their very generous first gift of \$25,000 to get the campaign off to a good start. Contributions were made to honor or memorialize mothers, fathers, or other loved ones.

Funds raised will be used to assist the many frail elders in our community who are isolated, without friends or family to help them and without the funds to pay for help.

This Campaign would not have been possible without our hardworking Campaign committee. They are: Co-Chairs, Ginny Camarillo and Keith York. Committee members Gayle Bertsch, Rod Brown, Jesse Dunlap, Jezmin Fuentes (student volunteer), Cie Macias, Nancy Mayerson, Diane Moon, Judy Remley, Lisa Ross, Berta Steele, Luther Tolo, Blake Wade and Ron and Mariaemma Willis. A special "thank you" to Nancy Mayerson of Mayerson Marketing and Public Relations and Elena Trevino for the wonderful (and effective) color Campaign brochure which they created and donated to CAREGIVERS. Thank you, also, to



*Campaign committee members show their delight at the success of "A Grand Time to Remember" Mother's and Father's Day Campaign. (l-r) Lisa Ross, Marketing Director, Aegis of Ventura
Gayle Bertsch, Owner, Help Unlimited
Mariaemma Pelullo-Willis, Learning-Success(TM) Institute
Ron Willis, Real Estate Investments.*

Lisa Ross for the use of the beautiful Aegis facility for our Campaign "kick-off" and to Deb Eberhardt of The Lexington, Ventura, for donating the wine for our Campaign "wrap-up" celebration.

"Building Bridges" Intergenerational Program

Program Highlights

by Marion Holzwarth

A Successful Pizza Party!

On May 22nd, CAREGIVERS sponsored a Pizza Party for our volunteer students. This party gave CAREGIVERS student volunteers an opportunity to meet each other. Since we now have students from both St. Bonaventure and Buena High Schools, many students had not met each other. A young man from Foothill Technology High School (FTHS), Brian Collings, also came to learn about our program and is joining our team of students. In the fall we plan to sign-up additional FTHS students.

Graduating seniors Jezmin Fuentes and Rachel Pleis brought Nick Wilson and Danielle Kirk, two sophomores, to the pizza party, to give them an opportunity to learn more about our Intergenerational Program. Both Nick and Danielle are now on the team, helping out this summer, along with Brian Collings, our FTHS student. Jezmin and Rachel did a great job of introducing our program to the new students.

Student Teams Rally for the Summer Projects

Although June seemed to be a slow month for student visits (many graduations, vacations, etc.) the students have rebounded! We have over 20 visits scheduled for July and August. The students continue to be phenomenal and astonishing, their enthusiastic spirit is contagious. *Helping others through community service* is becoming a significant priority in their young lives.

Beauty Tips

by Audrey Hepburn

For attractive lips, speak words of kindness.

For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people.

For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry.

For beautiful hair, let a child run his/her fingers through it once a day.

For poise, walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone.

People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed; never throw out anyone.

Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you will find one at the end of each of your arms.

As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands; one for helping yourself, and the other for helping others.

From all of us at CAREGIVERS, a heartfelt "Thank You" to all of the following contributors to the Campaign:

IN HONOR OF...

Mae Bennett
By Nina Seibel
Jeanne Bray
By Bernadine Gross
CAREGIVERS Staff
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Blake Wade's Birthday
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Irv Broverman
By Abby Friedman
My Grandmother
By Susan Buchter
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Sisters of the Holy Cross
Trinity Lutheran Church
YTC America Inc.

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

Medicines: Use Them Safely

People age 65 and older consume more prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines than any other age group. Older people tend to have more long-term, chronic illnesses—such as arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease—than do younger people. Because they may have a number of diseases or disabilities at the same time, it is common for older people to take many different drugs.

Many older people owe their health in part to new and improved medicines and vaccines. But using medicines may be riskier for older adults, especially when several medicines are used at one time. Taking different medicines is not always easy to do right. It may be hard to remember what each medicine is for, how you should take it and when you should take it. This is especially true of people with memory problems or dementia.

Medicines may act differently in older people than in younger people. This may be because of normal changes in the body that happen with age. For instance, as we get older, we lose water and lean tissue (mainly muscle) and we gain more fat tissue. This can make a difference in how long a drug stays in the body.

Keep in mind that “drugs” can mean both medicines prescribed by your doctor and OTC medicines, which you buy without a doctor’s prescription. OTC’s can include vitamins and minerals, herbal and dietary supplements, laxatives, cold medicines, and antacids. Taking some OTC’s together with prescription medicines can cause serious problems. For example, aspirin should not be taken with warfarin (Coumadin). Be sure your doctor knows what medicines you are taking and assures you that it is safe for you to take your medicines together. Also ask about taking your medicines with food. If you take alendronate (Fosamax) with food, for example, the drug will be less effective. Herbal supplements also should be taken with care. Gingko biloba, for instance, should not be taken with aspirin, acetaminophen, warfarin, or thiazide diuretics because it may increase blood pressure and the risk of bleeding problems.

You and your family should learn about the medicines that you take and their possible side effects. Remember, medicines that are strong enough to cure you can also be strong enough to hurt you if they aren’t used correctly. Here are some hints to help avoid risks and get the best results from your medicines:

At Home

- **DO** keep a daily checklist of all the medicines you take. Include both prescription and OTC

medicines. Note the name of each medicine, the doctor who prescribed it, the amount you take, and the times of day you take it. Keep a copy in your medicine cabinet and one in your wallet or pocketbook.

- **DO** read and save any written information that comes with the medicine.
- **DO** check the label on your medicine before taking it to make sure that it is for the correct person—you—with the correct directions prescribed for you by your doctor.
 - **DO** take medicine in the exact amount and precise schedule your doctor prescribes.
 - **DO** check the expiration dates on your medicine bottles and throw away medicine that has expired.
 - **DO** call your doctor right away if you have any problems with your medicines or if you are worried that the medicine might be doing more harm than good. He or she may be able to change your medicine to another one that will work just as well.



- **DO NOT** take medicines prescribed for another person or give yours to someone else.
- **DO NOT** stop taking a prescription drug unless your doctor says it’s okay—even if you are feeling better.
- **DO NOT** take more or less than the prescribed amount of any medicine.
- **DO NOT** mix alcohol and medicine unless your doctor says it’s okay. Some medicines may not work well or may make you sick if taken with alcohol.

At Your Doctor’s Office

- **DO** review your medicine record with the doctor or nurse at every visit and whenever your doctor prescribes new medicine. Your doctor may have new information about your medicines that might be important to you.
- **DO** always tell your doctor or nurse about past problems you have had with medicines, such as rashes, indigestion, dizziness or not feeling hungry.
- **DO** always ask your doctor or nurse about the right way to take any medicine before you start to use it.
- **DO** ask these questions (and write down the answers) before leaving your doctor’s office:
 - What is the name of the medicine and why

Continued on next page

MEDICINES from previous page

- am I taking it?
- What is the name of the condition this medicine will treat?
- How does this medicine work?
- How often should I take it?
- How long will it take to work?
- How will I know if this medicine is working?
- How can I expect to feel once I start taking this medicine?
- When should I take it? As needed? Before, with or between meals? At bedtime?
- If I forget to take it, what should I do?
- What side effects might I expect? should I report them?
- How long will I have to take it?
- Can this medicine interact with other medicines (prescription and OTC's including herbal and dietary supplements) that I am taking now?
- If I don't take medicine, is there anything else that would work as well?

At the Pharmacy

- **DO** make sure you can read and understand the medicine name and the directions on the container. If the label is hard to read, ask your pharmacist to use larger type. Let your pharmacist know if you have trouble opening the medicine bottle.
- **DO** check the label on your medicine before leaving the pharmacy to make sure that it is for the correct person—you—and with the correct directions prescribed for you by your doctor. If not, tell the pharmacist.

Resources

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Consumer Affairs Office has more information about safe use of medicines. Contact:
FDA
5600 Fishers Lane
HFD-210
Rockville, Maryland 20857
Telephone: 1-888-INFOFDA
(1-888-463-6332)

The Peter Lamy Center for Drug Therapy and Aging has brochures and information about medication use in the elderly. Contact:
University of MD School of Pharmacy
5506 West Fayette Street, Suite 101
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
Telephone: 1-877-706-2434 (toll free)
Fax: 410-706-1488
lamycenter@rx.umaryland.edu

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) distributes a free booklet, *Talking with Your Doctor: A Guide for Older People*. To order this booklet or other free materials on health and aging, contact:
The National Institute on Aging Information Center
P.O. Box 8057
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20898-8057
Telephone: 1-800-222-2225
TTY: 1-800-222-4225

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Executive Director's Message

by Barbara Weinberg

It's hard to believe that our fiscal year 2002-2003 has come to an end (June 30, 2003) and yet another year has just flown by! I'm delighted to report, however, that it has been a very successful year. More than 300 frail, homebound elders have been assisted by CAREGIVERS volunteers during the course of the year.

In addition to the help they have received from our adult volunteers, our elderly clients have had the benefit of help from the high school students in our "Building Bridges" program. Under adult supervision, our student volunteers have visited and brought their high energy, enthusiasm and laughter into the homes of our elderly clients. They have helped with yard work, cleaning appliances, mopping floors, organizing clutter and myriad other essential tasks.

Our adult volunteers have helped with light household tasks, reading and writing. They have made over 3,500 automobile trips taking frail elders to their medical appointments, grocery shopping and other errands. Above all, they have provided companionship and brought the joy of friendship to lonely, isolated, frail elders.

All of this assistance has been instrumental in helping our elderly clients to remain living in their own homes, instead of being placed into institutions. Because of the generosity of so many caring people in our community, we have been able to assist seniors, most of whom live on very low, fixed incomes, *totally free of charge*.

The need for our services continues to grow, as the population 60 years and older increases at a rapid rate in our County. We begin our new fiscal year, therefore, dedicated to expanding our services to help many more needy elders in our community. We will need your continued generous support to provide these vital services, which, at some point in our lives, all of us may need. On behalf of all of us at CAREGIVERS, thank you to all of you who care enough to make this program possible.

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Aegis
of Ventura

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Change of Date for 2nd Annual "Sailathon"

Because of a conflicting power boat event that will take place on September 28th in Ventura, we have changed the date of the Second Annual "Sailathon" to **Saturday, November 1, 2003**. There will be two courses this year—Racer: Windward-Leeward and Cruiser: Reach-Reach.

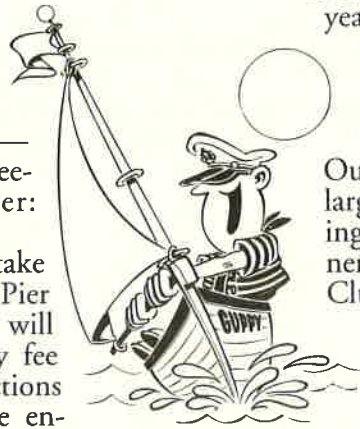
The event will take place off the Ventura Pier in Pierpont Bay and will start at noon. Entry fee will be \$20. Instructions will be given to the entrants at the Ventura Yacht Club before the start of the event.

Each entrant solicits sponsors for the "laps" that the boat makes. The winner will be the boat that does the most laps and the boat that raises

the most money (not always the same thing). There will be awards and prizes!

Everyone participating last year had a great time. Six sailing boats entered the event and raised close to \$4,000 net for this first time event. Our goal is to have a much larger event this year ending with a barbecue dinner at the Ventura Yacht Club.

If you own a boat (or know someone who does) and would like to enjoy a fun afternoon of sailing, while at the same time making a truly significant difference in the life of an isolated, frail, elderly person, please call our office at (805) 658-8530 for further details.



Wellness

By Marion Holzwarth

Recently I read, "Wellness is an active process of living in which persons strive to achieve a sense of balance and integration among their mind, their body, and their emotions" (Leafgren & Elsenrath, 1986)

Which means...

- that at 40 you can have twins
 - that at 50 you can continue to run a 5-mile run, even though at 35 yrs. old you are considered an "old runner"
 - that at 75 you can purchase your first computer and get on the internet
 - that at 80 you can play softball
 - that at 87 you can join the Pierpont Racquet Club, and begin a water exercise program
- AND
- when you retire you can continue to use your knowledge and skill through volunteering.

This world sometimes gives us limits according to our age, but we can create our own wellness at any age!

Board Elects Officers for 2003-2004

At the June board meeting, the board of directors elected its leaders for the coming year. The board elected **Ginny Camarillo**, Chair, **Cie Macias**, Vice-Chair and **Keith York**, Treasurer, for a second term. **Judy Remley** was elected Secretary. Our thanks to **Jesse Dunlap** who held the post of Secretary last year.

Our Thanks to First Bank Association Services of Westlake for a Generous Printing Donation

First Bank Association Services of Westlake will cover the cost of paper and printing of 32,000, double-sided CAREGIVERS water bill inserts, which will be distributed by the City of San Buenaventura in their September/October billing cycle.

We are delighted to have been one of the non-profit organizations selected by the City of San Buenaventura to have the opportunity to insert information about CAREGIVERS into the 32,000 water bills. We are so grateful to First Bank for covering this cost. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Copy Court in Oxnard for their support in printing these inserts at a reasonable cost.

Special Thanks to Swift Memorial Health Care Foundation

This Foundation has so generously supported the CAREGIVERS program since 1987. Over the past several years, the Foundation has specifically funded our Santa Paula program, making it possible for us to serve frail, homebound elders in the Santa Paula/Fillmore area. Our deepest thanks go to the board of directors of the Swift Memorial Health Care Foundation for their grant award of \$5,000 which was presented to CAREGIVERS at a reception on July 10, 2003 at the Pacific Corinthian Yacht Club.

The Swift Memorial Health Care Foundation was established in 1984. It was named in recognition and honor of **Dr. Floyd J. Swift** and his wife, **Ida**, who both made significant contributions to the quality of life in Ventura County. The Foundation awards grants to organizations providing health care services to residents of Ventura County, and provides scholarships to students entering health care fields.

A special thanks to all of the Foundations that make our work possible.

Affinity Bank
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 City of Ventura, Community Partnerships Granting Program
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 PacifiCare Foundation
 Martha K. & Martin V. Smith Foundation
 Swift Memorial Health Care Foundation
 The California Endowment
 The California Wellness Foundation
 United Way
 Ventura County Community Foundation
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 Wood-Claeysens Foundation

“Wearin’ o’ the Green” Golf Tournament

Mark your calendars now for the 12th Annual Saint Patrick’s Day “Wearin’ o’ the Green” Golf Tournament. The Tournament will take place on Monday, March 8, 2004 at the beautiful Spanish Hills Golf and Country Club. Golfer fee will be \$150 which will include a wonderful day of golfing, fun contests, lunch, awards, prizes, dinner and live auction. For further information, please call the CAREGIVERS office at (805) 658-8530.

Last year’s sponsors:

Avenue TV Cable
 Cardiology Associates Medical Group/Dr. Siegfried Storz
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 In-N-Out Burger
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Thank you to Maureen Hening and Cie Macias for their vehicle donations.



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Coming Events:



Second Annual Sailathon

November 1, 2003
(see page 6)

Major Donor Reception

October 9, 2003



12th Annual "Wearin' o' the Green" Golf Tournament

March 8, 2003
Spanish Hills Country Club
(see page 7)

Volunteer Recognition Dinner

October 19, 2003

CAREGIVERS Board Meetings

Fourth Thursday of each month

CAREGIVERS

VOLUNTEERS ASSISTING THE ELDERLY

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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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