

# Living on the Waters Edge

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May, 2008

Established in  
January, 1972.

Now in our  
Thirty-Sixth Year  
of Providing Health  
Services to the  
Elders of the  
Alameda/Oakland  
Area.

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## Age = Happiness

By:  
Kryspin Turczynski

Everyone wants to be happy. Ignoring for a moment the vagueness of the term *happiness*, its pursuit seems to be a universal characteristic of humanity, in the midst of all diversity and distinction. For Americans, the pursuit of happiness is even enshrined as a human right in the Declaration of Independence, the founding document of our nation. It is not always clear, however, how happiness can be obtained. Unsurprisingly, our eBay culture thinks it can sell happiness like any

other product, right alongside video games, wrinkle cream, and underwear. The recent glut of books and movies claiming to reveal the secret to a happy life is, more than anything else, a testament to the hunger for true happiness in our world today.

A recent study (Yang, 2006), published in the April issue of the *American Sociological Review*, has thrust itself into the spotlight of the happiness debate. One of the conclusions of the author, an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, is

that older Americans are generally happier than younger ones. About half of Americans in their late 80s considered themselves "very happy", compared to just one-third of Americans in younger age categories. Older Americans were also likely to have better moods and less anxiety than their younger counterparts. Since the research was correlational, and therefore could not prove any causal links, the author of the study could not definitively explain why older Americans might be happier than younger ones.

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Assisted Living in a Nutshell

By: David Ruttan

America's population is getting older and, along with it, there is a dramatic rise in the need for long-term care. Advances in medical science, greater access to

health care, improved nutrition and better living conditions have contributed to longer life expectancies. These improvements have made seniors, 85 and over, one of the fastest-growing sectors

of society. This growth in the number of older people has significantly increased the age of the population, contributing to the graying of America.

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## Age = Happiness (Cont)

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In any case, this study flies in the face of our cultural stereotypes, which considers old age and retirement to be a dreaded twilight of our life, marked by decline and loss. While old age undoubtedly brings various physical challenges, this study and others are now providing solid evi-

dence that our seniors are happy and thriving. Every day, I witness the elderly respond to physical impairment with courage, humor, and a profound appreciation for the gift of life. While so many younger adults are wasting their precious time trying to "get ahead" in the rat race, the collective wisdom of our elders calls us to remember the

true meaning of happiness. Sharing delicious food with family, jamming to some great music with friends, performing acts of service, creative expression, or communing with nature and the higher dimensions of reality - these are all moments that reveal happiness for what it really is: a gift bestowed upon the grateful heart.

## Cinco de Mayo

Cinco de Mayo is a date of great importance for the Mexican and Chicano communities. It marks the victory of the Mexican Army over the French at the Battle of Puebla. Although the Mexican army was eventually defeated, the "Batalla de Puebla" came to represent a symbol of Mexican unity and patriotism. With this victory, Mexico demonstrated to the world that Mexico and all of Latin

America were willing to defend themselves from any foreign intervention.

In the United States, the "Batalla de Puebla" came to be known as simply "5 de Mayo" and now many people wrongly equate it with Mexican Independence which was on September 16, 1810, nearly a fifty year difference. Over the years Cinco de Mayo has become very commercialized and many people see this

holiday as a time for fun and dance. Oddly enough, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated on a much larger scale here in the United States than it is in Mexico. People of Mexican descent in the United States celebrate this significant day by having parades, mariachi music, folklorico dancing and other types of festive activities.

## Assisted Living in a Nutshell

*(Continued from page 1)*

Dealing with the effects of chronic disease, disability, and aging presents enormous challenges for society. The long-term care available for individuals in those circumstances has resulted in conflicts between some of Americans' most cherished values, in particular the desire to live independently and the need to be safe and secure. It has also raised questions about assuring quality of care and

determining access to such services. Assisted living has developed in response to those issues as an alternative way for housing and caring for the elderly.

Assisted living residences use a residential model for the housing component, a hotel model for a hospitality approach to service, and a consumer model for health care. The environment in an assisted living residence mirrors the attributes of a home,

with private space and personal furnishings. It maintains flexibility to provide individualized service and seeks to empower its residents to have more control over their care. At its core, the assisted living movement has been committed to the values of independence, choice and dignity of the individual. In short, it has significantly expanded the emphasis on quality of life for those needing long-term care.

## The Healing Power of Music

By: Nicki Hiemenga

How does music affect our well-being? It seems that there is no definitive answer to that question. However, experts in the field of music and sound therapy feel there are two major ways in which music and sound can positively affect our lives through entrainment and emotions.

The first benefit of music is entrainment which is the synchronization of organisms to the external rhythm. When we hear music, our bodies automatically react to the rhythm, or pulse of the music. Have you ever walked into a room with other things on your mind and heard music playing, and then stopped to listen for a few minutes and all of the sudden, your foot is tapping to the music or you are swaying your head or body with the beat? Music enters into the body through the ear, and the bones of the body act like a tuning fork. The neurological fields of the body are then stimulated by music. Music is a means by which all people can feel these healing vibrations. Even people with profound handicaps can benefit from music's healing affects. Research in physiological responses to music supports the hypothesis that listening to music influences a person's autonomic responses. According to music researcher Dr. Arthur Harvey, there are four distinct ways in which our brain responds to music:

cognitive, affective, physical, and transpersonal. In other words we can experience music by analyzing its structure (melody, harmony, rhythm, tone, form, etc.), by feeling the music with our emotions, by noticing the affects of music on our heart rate, breathing, etc. or feeling a higher connection through music.

Vibrational therapy sessions can be used to affect physiological changes such as lowering of blood pressure, heart rate and muscle tension. Studies have shown that music used as medicine can increase the immune function and decrease ACTH (stress) hormones. In some studies, music and sound has also been shown to kill cancer cells. French physicist, Joel Sternheimer, showed that recorded melodies repeated to the same plant increased its growth (by 250 percent) and this also strengthened its resilience to drought and disease.

Another benefit of "healing" music is to stir our emotions and feelings, which often helps us deal with grief, sadness, anger or other feelings. By allowing us to really experience our feelings, the intensity will eventually lessen and even dissipate, resulting in healing. When we avoid our feelings (consciously or unconsciously) they build up inside and they easily go away. Music and sound are wonderful tools for helping us

deal with feelings within ourselves, whether we're aware of them or not.

With music all around us, we should use music as a tool to balance and manage the mind and body. Think of music as a wonderful natural therapeutic tool that can be very enjoyable. Music has many qualities; learn to use them to your advantage.

The key is to use wisdom and listen to what our inner healer tells us about how music makes us feel. There is no one type of music that is heals us; it often depends on the situation. Listen to a wide variety of music and pay attention to how you respond to each kind with your whole being (mind, body and spirit). Music should not take the place of seeking sound medical and spiritual advice about your health, rather it can help you to feel better about what is happening in your life. Surely music is far more powerful than we realize! Happy listening!

### Music Appreciation

Residents of the Waters Edge Lodge are in for a treat as David Ruttan teaches a Music Appreciation class every Wednesday at 2:30 pm in the Activity Room . Join us during the month of May when we study the music of:

## Resident of the Month: Flora Umene

Flora Umene was born in Sacramento, California in July, 1929. She's one of seven children, six of whom are girls. "I really didn't know my mother; she passed away when I was a baby, so my father raised us." When Flora was three, her father moved them to Oakland. There, she attended Lafayette Elementary and Hoover Middle school. After middle school Flora and her family were forced to move. They stayed at an internment camp in Topaz, Utah for three years following President Roosevelt's executive order to relocate over 300,000

Japanese Americans. Flora tells us: "Those were tough times." They eventually left the camp and moved to the South Side of Chicago because her family had relatives there. Three years later, they moved back to Oakland. Flora graduated from Oakland Tech in the class of 1947. After high school she went on to work at a beauty salon in East Oakland. "I went through beauty school knowing what I wanted to do. My friend owned the salon and she offered me a job. I worked there as a cosmetologist for 25 years." During that time she met her husband and moved to Alameda, where they raised their two daughters. Flora also

has two grandchildren. "My oldest daughter lives close by. She often comes by here with her cousins." After her husband passed away Flora moved to the Waters Edge Lodge in August 2006. "I like it here. The people are nice." You might see Flora walking or relaxing with her friend Regina. They moved in on have built a strong friendship over the years living here at the Waters Edge Lodge. In the immortal words of Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The only way to have a friend is to be one." Join us as we recognize the lovely Flora Umene as our resident of the month.

## It's May

I think that Lehrner and Loewe described it best when they wrote their famous musical Camelot. The opening lyrics of the lovely song "The Lusty Month of May" sum up this time of year:

Tra la! It's May!  
 The lusty month of May!  
 That lovely month when ev'ry-one goes  
 Blissfully astray.  
 Tra la! It's here!  
 That shocking time of year  
 When tons of wicked little thoughts  
 Merrily appear!

In May, the lagoon beckons for us to take that walk that we keep postponing and the ducklings toddle along behind their mother---always keeping a wary eye out for danger. The trees are in full bloom and Mother Nature smiles on us at the Waters Edge Lodge.

## World Tour

We travel this month in our World Tour to Mexico, Central America and South America---our delightful neighbors to the south. Who doesn't have wonderful memories of trips "South of the Border" for delicious food, charming music and friendly people? We will be celebrating this month with a special Cinco de Mayo festivity and two outings for Mexican food—On Monday, May 19th residents are invited to enjoy the delicious offerings at Alameda's LaPinata. On Thursday May 29th, residents are invited to dine at our local favorite: El Caballo. Sign up at the front desk.

## Celebrate Mothers' Day

This month also brings Mother's Day and we can't forget the Moms can we? Not if we know what's good for us!

Dave Ballerini has scheduled a fascinating Fashion Show and Luncheon on Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am at Mastick Senior Center. **Tickets must be purchased in advance for \$16. If you want to attend contact Dave before May 5.**

We will also be celebrating with a Mother's Day Luncheon on Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup> on the water at Pasta Pelican. All residents are welcome. Sign up early so we can reserve your seat!



## Resident of the Month: Carlotta de Obarrio Schreiber

By: Linda Schreiber Davis

Carlotta de Obarrio Schreiber was born at home at 1211 Sherman St. in the Alameda Gold Coast in Feb, 1912. She is one of four sisters, all of whom were accomplished and well-known in early Alameda society. The de Obarrio girls set the town on its ear with their beauty and intelligence. Carlotta is the last surviving sister.

Their father, Dr. Pedro de Obarrio, was a noted eye, ear, nose and throat surgeon in San Francisco. He was also in the consular corps. The family moved from Panama to Alameda in the early 1900s. Pedro was Spanish, having settled in Panama in his formative years. He was the head surgeon at Santo Tomas Hospital in the Canal Zone during the building of the Panama Canal. It was his job to eradicate tropical diseases such as yellow fever so that workers could do their jobs. He met and married Carlotta Lyons of English/French descent. Carlotta's sisters Carmen and Isabel were born in Panama; she and her other sister, Rita, were born

in Alameda. In 1918, the family moved next door to 1217 Sherman St. where Carlotta and various family members lived until Carlotta's death in 1965. The beautiful home has been on vintage house tours, and has been lovingly restored. Carlotta is a gifted musician and artist. She was an accomplished classical pianist and gave lessons in San Francisco before she married. She also attended the California College of Arts and Crafts off and on for four years in between family trips. Some of her artwork is on display in her room. She was particularly good at figures, watercolor and graphic arts. In 1940, she married Gerard Schreiber of an old Alameda family. Two years later, Gerard was deployed to serve in World War II as a Seabee, the construction battalion. He left his pregnant wife and could not come home for the birth of their only child, a daughter Linda, was born on Feb. 1, at the height of the war. Carlotta and Gerard later divorced, but kept a close relationship until his death in 1961.

During her work life, Carlotta worked several civil service jobs, including work at the U.S. Post Office, the Old Mint in San Francisco and for the Social Security Administration. She lived independently in her own apartment on Broadway until her 95th year, quite a feat. Carlotta has lost most of her sight, one reason she moved to Water's Edge. But all her life, she has been an avid reader and history buff with a keen interest in world events and a sharp mind to this day. She also has a wonderful sense of humor and is full of spirit.

Her sister Isabel Hicks was a well-known Realtor for Agnew-Codiga for decades in Alameda. Sister Carmen de Obarrio was a noted concert pianist who performed here and abroad until her retirement. Rita de Obarrio Gray lived in Venezuela, then came back to Alameda in her retirement years and was quite a party-giver. Carlotta now enjoys recounting memories with friends, her daughter and her two grandchildren, Natalie & Gregory Davis.

## May Events at Waters Edge Nursing Home

The marvelous month of May kicks off with *mucha festividad*, as we celebrate Mexican culture and heritage on Cinco de Mayo which commemorates the victory of Mexican forces over the French in the Battle of the Puebla on May 5, 1862. Though only a provincial holiday in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo is more significant in the United States as a date to celebrate culture for Americans of Mexican ancestry. We celebrate at Waters Edge Nursing Home with Mexican food and music in the Bay Room at lunchtime. The cultures of Central and South America will continue to be highlighted throughout the month of May as part of our World Tour, featuring special theme meals, movies, and

music. Family and friends are welcome to join us for the Cinco de Mayo luncheon; all those interested in joining us are kindly requested to order a tray ahead of time.

May also brings Mother's Day, and we will continue the tradition of the Mother's Day Luncheon, but we will also start new one: the Mother-Daughter Tea. On Thursday, May 8, our tea social will be replaced with a special event reserved for ladies, Tea and cookies will be served, and this will also be the first event we hold outdoors on our beautiful waterfront patio (weather permitting). Space is limited, so please reserve yourself with Kryspin by phone or e-mail

(wenhactivity@gmail.com).

Beginning May 12, we will celebrate National Nursing Home Week which provides an opportunity for us to reflect on the rewarding nature of working in the field of geriatric care. Although the work is demanding, it is also one of the most humanizing and meaningful experiences for those who are called to it. But we couldn't do it without the great love and sacrifice of so many relatives and friends who are closely involved in the lives of our residents. Your presence in the home enriches us all immensely, and we invite you to continue with us on our journey towards community.

## Administrator's Desk

We are encouraging residents to join the House Committee meetings. Come share your ideas with other residents. Look for dates and times beginning with the May 2008 Activity Calendar.

You asked, we listened. More fresh fruit choices are being offered. We now serve bananas, pears, oranges, apples and a fresh fruit medley. We now offer Oatmeal Raisin Cookies at the front lobby and for dessert. Delicious!

The Activities Department is being reorganized. The Activities Team currently consists of Patrick McCabe, Nancy Rafalaf and Mat Hiner.

All employees of Elders Inn and Alameda Elder Services are wearing uniforms. Elders Inn's employees wear burgundy shirts and Alameda Elder Services (the Gym) wear beige shirts.

Just a friendly reminder that Nursing Clinic hours are Monday-Friday 2pm-4pm. Should you need to meet with the Resident Care Coordinator, contact Ami at 510-521-9200 Ext. 106 to schedule an appointment.

We also have a new residents: William Kuhns. We would like to welcome him to the Elders Inn family!

Sadly, Arza Maude Ralph, long-time resident of Elders Inn, passed away in the beginning of April. We will miss

## May Special Events

**May 5, 2008:** In honor of Cinco de Mayo, we will be having a lunch outing at 12:00 pm to Otaez Restaurant. If you would like to go, please add your name to the sign-up sheet, which is located in the Front Lobby. We will also be having a Cinco de Mayo party in the Garden Neighborhood at 2:00 pm. Refreshments will be served.

**May 11, 2008:** In honor of our beloved mothers, we will be having a Tea Party in the Main Courtyard at 3:00 pm. Refreshments will be served. Dads are welcome to join us!

**May 26, 2008:** Our fun in the sun begins! We will be having our First BBQ of the season. We will be celebrating Memorial Day by having a BBQ luncheon in the Main Courtyard. Lunch will be served at 12:00 pm. All residents of Elders Inn are invited to attend the BBQ.

## Live Oak

At our Champion Meetings we have been focusing on ACCEPTANCE. Please join us for our Champion meetings which are held every Tuesday @ 2:30 pm in the Buena Vista Dining Room.

## Resident of the Month: Jean Prodger

We are pleased to have Jean Prodger as Elders Inn's Resident of the Month for May 2008. Jean is a happy and pleasant lady, whose smile and sense of fun reveal her great personality!

Jean started her life in Denver, Colorado, but in her early 20's, she moved to California, she says, to "seek her fortune" (not the Gold Rush). Her uncle in Los Angeles helped her get her first job at an advertising agency where she got scope for her creativity. "She loved that job" she said. There was no smog in LA at that time.

Jean met her husband Clifford at a church dance. He was a newspaper and magazine writer. Jean developed a fondness for writing short fic-

tion stories, but never published any. She has three children; two daughters and a son. Her children reside in Alameda, Bay Area and Long Beach and sees them often.

Moving with her family to the Bay Area, Jean worked again in the advertising field. She enjoyed traveling and as well as having visited Japan, the Philippines, and Hawaii, Jean lived in China for 3 1/2 years. Jean loves her family and keeps in touch with them. She is grateful for her good health. Her advice: "keep up with the times" (her daily paper was on her knee) and make friends.

It was a pleasure to talk with Jean. We wish her "AD MULTOS ANNOS".

## Fitness: First Quarter 2008 Review

By: Kathy Hanley, PT

April was a busy month for the Fitness Department. In 2008, we have instituted a new modular system for our fitness programs, each module consisting of 3 months. A period of review, planning and program adjustment follows each 3 month module. The purpose of this review is to assess each resident's individual response to the fitness programs, assess the efficacy of the programs in general and make program adjustments for the betterment of the residents and the program in general.

The first step of this program review was to do the Senior Fitness Test on all residents who participate in the fitness programs. The Senior Fitness Test is comprised of 6 simple tests which assess the individual's upper and lower body strength, upper and lower body flexibility, endurance and agility. The results were put into a software program which determines the individual's performance to be either at, above or below national standards for that particular gender and age group.

The next step in the 1st Quarter Review was to ask participating residents to set Fitness Goals for themselves for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (April-June). Residents came up with many varied responses. Some wanted to improve endurance or strength, some wanted to

walk further, some wanted to have better balance and some just wanted to "keep on keeping on." Goals give residents an incentive to regularly participate in the fitness programs. Part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Review will be to see if these goals have been achieved. If they have, we will set higher goals for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter.

A third step in the 1st Quarter Review was to assess our fitness programs. During the review of the Senior Fitness Test results, it became apparent that, in general, our residents need greater leg strength to assist in walking and coming to standing from a chair. They also could benefit from improved endurance. Our classes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter will emphasize these areas. We are also going to increase the weight lifting component of our programs.

Any person, regardless of age, can benefit from a regular exercise program. But to get the best results from exercise, an individual has to make a life-long commitment to attend exercise classes on a regular basis and to consider this a life-long commitment. So if you're attending your facility exercise classes on a regular basis, continue. If you've stopped coming or come only irregularly, make a 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter goal to attend class on a regular basis. People have lots of excuses for not exercising;

a common one is "I don't have time." A doctor recently told me that he tells his patients, "If you can't find time for exercise, you'd better plan on making time for being sick." So make time for exercise. You'll be healthier and you'll have the ability and energy to do all those other things you really want to do.

Please help us congratulate the following residents on their participation in our fitness program:

Superstars: The following residents attend their scheduled classes 75% of the time:

**WE Lodge:** Charlie Johnston, Ben Omi, Grace Owdom, Regina Schein, Lilian Tillson and Flora Umene.

**Elders Inn:** Mary Bussell, Bertha Golightly, Clara Clegg, Henrietta Woon, Rose Collihan, Nancy Baughman, Florence Clazie, Shirley Hutchinson, Pauline Johnston, Jo Kirby and Vicky Sanchez.

All Stars: The following residents attend their scheduled classes more than 50% of the time:

**WE Lodge:** Bernice Brown, Alda Harkey, Virginia Linkhart, Margaret Medved, Tony Medved, Norm Morrison, Agnes Neuroth, Mary Rarick, Dorothy Silver, Mary Tully.  
**Elders Inn:** Verlone Baker, America Carbone, Evelyn Eierman, Marilyn Hill, Christina Rupakalvis, Lois Morris and Robert Morris.

**For placement and care questions:**

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For free copies of Alameda Elder Communities monthly newsletters, please visit our website at:  
[www.alamedaelder.com](http://www.alamedaelder.com)

Edited by: Sabrina Britton



*A Continuum of Caring,  
Since 1972  
Waters Edge Nursing Home  
Waters Edge Lodge-011440777  
Elders Inn-015600526  
Alameda Elder Services  
Rehab Agency*

*Alameda Elders Communities believes that long term care facilities should be active and friendly places, where the Residents receive the best possible care, while enjoying companionship in our family of facilities. The **Waters Edge Nursing Home** is a 120 bed Medicare certified Skilled Nursing Facility, offering outstanding rehab and custodial care to all Residents. The **Elders Inn on Webster** is a licensed 52 unit assisted living offering every resident the opportunity to live as independently as possible. The **Elders Inn** also offers a special care "neighborhood" for the safety and comfort of Residents affected by Alzheimer's and dementia. The **Waters Edge Lodge** is an assisted living facility located in a unique and peaceful setting on the Lagoon at Harbor Bay. Offering 102 suites which provide seniors with a warm and familiar homelike setting. The **Waters Edge Lodge** allows Residents maintain and independent and active lifestyle. **Alameda Elder Services Rehab Agency** provides a wellness and fitness center that has been specially designed for elders aged 70 years and older. This facility is both a Medicare approved Out-patient Rehab agency, and a Fitness Center providing affordable wellness and strengthening programs.*



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