

Living on the Waters Edge

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Creating a Culture of Innovation

by Kryspin Turczynski, MA

In the early 20th century, hybrid seeds were developed by agricultural scientists in large Midwestern universities such as Iowa State University.

These seeds were resistant to the most common pests and yielded 20% larger crops. Despite the clear advantage of these hybrid seeds, farmers were slow to adopt them, with only a handful of early adopters in the first few years. When a critical mass of farmers started using these seeds, however, the rate of adoption quickly mushroomed, and within the next decade, a majority of farmers had decided to try the hybrid seeds. This example, illustrated by Everett Rogers in his book *Diffusion of Innovations*, shows that the spread of ideas, knowledge, and technology is an inherently social process. Whether an innovation is adopted by a person depends just as much, if not more, on the person's social network as it does on the merits of the innovation itself. In hindsight, some would argue that the transition to biologically engineered seeds by farmers may not have been beneficial, since it led to genetic homogeneity of corn seeds and dependence of farmers on large agribusinesses. Yet the main point remains: If we want to convince people to adopt a particular technology or idea, there are social and cultural aspects that must be taken into consideration.



between aerobic activity and memory among seniors, including those with Alzheimer's disease. All this evidence can seem like a no-brainer: knowing all this, why would anyone continue to refuse to exercise?

The problem is that few people adopt new ideas or behaviors based simply on knowledge. There are some individuals who are pure innovators, the early adopters who pave the way for the rest of us. For most of us, however, the decision to adopt a new tool or idea is more of a social process. Many seniors may understand that exercise is beneficial to them, but feel uncomfortable doing so until they see their peers exercising first. Once a critical mass of seniors can be seen exercising (and having fun doing so!), those that are on the fence are likely to jump in and try it as well. This results in a snowball effect, where most members of a community are exercising, creating a culture of fitness in the community which is immediately apparent to newcomers. The fitness room at Waters Edge Lodge is brilliantly designed, since it aids in the social process of diffusion. Visible from the parking lot, lobby, and main hallway, and with classes attended by the most active, healthy, and social members of the community, there is no doubt among our seniors that fitness is an important component of the good life, at any life stage.

Consider the idea of senior fitness. Many seniors believe that physical fitness is pointless for a number of reasons: they believe it is too late to improve their physical condition, that "exercise is for young people", or that they should be able to take it easy in old age. For a generation that in its youth probably did not witness many elders devoting time to physical fitness, committing to regular exercise might take some convincing. How do we do this? It is tempting to simply point to all the research demonstrating great benefits for seniors who exercise. Physical fitness improves mobility and blood pressure, and decreases the risk of falls, which are a main source of debilitation for the elderly. The benefits of fitness extend beyond the physical, however. Newer research now shows a link



Waters Edge Lodge: March Special Activities

With the coming of March we welcome the season of spring, and with it, a lineup of exciting new events and outings. It wouldn't be March without St. Patrick's Day, and we will celebrate in style with entertainment, good food, and a sea of green (check the activity calendar for the date and time)! On Monday, March 21st, we invite residents to come participate in a blind soda tasting test. Think you can recognize the difference between Coke, Pepsi, and other brands? Come test your taste buds and win the bragging rights to the Lodge's best soda taster!



On Thursday, March 31st, we'll go to the Peralta Hacienda Historical Park in Oakland for a tour of this six-acre park and historic house, which form an educational and cultural hub for the diverse families and youth of Oakland. Our lunch outings in March will include McGee's, Marti's Place, and Angelfish in Alameda, the Englander in San Leandro, and for the first time ever, a special trip to IKEA in Emeryville for lunch and light shopping! There are many more socials, entertainers, and outings planned each month, so be sure to check the activity calendar for complete information. Also, don't forget to set your clock forward one hour before going to sleep on Saturday, March 12th, since Daylight Savings Time starts the next day. You wouldn't want to be late for John Heleen's guitar performance on Sunday afternoon!

World Tour: Scandinavian Culture of Consensus

In March, the World Tour tends to be centered on Ireland and the revelry of St. Patrick's Day, so Scandinavia can sometimes get lost in the mix. The Nordic countries are known and admired worldwide for their healthy societies. They can be found occupying top positions on virtually every index of human development and prosperity, including life expectancy, literacy, gross domestic product, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and more. The Nordic people have created societies that boast the highest overall quality of life in the world. One particularly Nordic trait that has contributed to this success is a culture of consensus. Whether in the workplace or in private life, as many voices as possible are heard and common ground is sought. In such cultures, there is a genuine concern for the common good, and public policies are enacted benefiting society as a whole. The Nordic countries are also quite innovative, since collaboration and consensus have a way of creating synergy. A prime example is the Nordic embassy in Berlin. It consists of separate buildings for the five countries of Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden, connected together with a common house. Another example is cohousing, which has been successful in Denmark and other Scandinavian countries for decades. The principles behind cohousing - consensus, co-caring, and sustainability - are the same principles that have made these societies successful on a large scale. So while we drinking green beer and celebrating St. Patrick's Day, remember Scandinavia. We can learn a lot from them about working together to build healthy and happy communities.

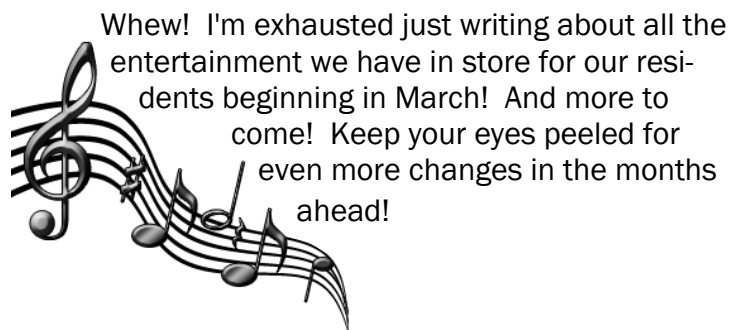
Waters Edge Lodge Resident of the Month: Marilyn Wellman

Marilyn grew up in the Jackson Heights neighborhood of New York City, near La Guardia Airport. She and her friend would ride their bicycles to go watch the airport being constructed. Marilyn attended Washington Irving High School in Manhattan. It was an all-girls school, but the boys' high school was only 3 blocks down the street, so the girls and boys could meet each other in the subway, on the way to school. At age 19, Marilyn married William H. Wellman, a sailor from Mississippi who went by the name Hale. They met in March, 1945, and married on July 1, 1945. Marilyn has lived all over the country, since Hale was a flight engineer in the Navy and was stationed on various bases. They lived in Maryland, Virginia, Kansas, Texas, and Hawaii. She remembers moving to Oahu with her children and several other families aboard a naval transport ship. She tried to spot her husband among a crowd of sailors waiting for the

ship's arrival, and eventually found him - quite surprised to see him in a full beard! Marilyn and her family moved to Alameda in 1960. She worked for J.C. Penney for over a decade, which was located right where the Trader Joe's is located today. She has seen Alameda change quite a bit over the years, especially with the construction of dense housing before the passage of Measure A. Marilyn used to do quite a bit of sewing, and was able to make dresses for her girls and boxer shorts for her son. She is grateful to have lived a very peaceful and enjoyable life, and continues to do so here at the Lodge. She likes the Lodge for all its friendly people, from the staff to the residents, and loves to meet and get to know them all. The community is blessed to have a warm and engaging person like Marilyn as a member, and is glad to recognize her as its Resident of the Month for March, 2011.

Music, Music, Music!

For our Resident's enjoyment, we have added quite a few additional entertainers to our already extensive programs of music. Our favorite pianist, Claudio Medieros, is now appearing every Wednesday in the Webster Street Dining Room for Happy Hour at 3:00pm. Come hear all your favorite musical standards with your friends while sipping some sparkling apple cider and enjoying a light snack. Jaime Alvaro, our percussionist and flutist from Peru is now appearing in the Buena Vista Dining Room every other Tuesday, alternating with Karl on the accordion. We will be welcoming a new performer for us, Eliot Kanin, who plays a rollicking old time banjo and passes out tambourines for all of our Residents to join in the fun. Eliot will be making his debut on Friday, March 4th and will return on Friday, March 25th in the Buena Vista Lounge. And don't forget our long time friend, John Heleen, who is now appearing in the Buena Vista Lounge every Thursday at 4:00pm.



Whew! I'm exhausted just writing about all the entertainment we have in store for our residents beginning in March! And more to come! Keep your eyes peeled for even more changes in the months ahead!

Elders Inn: Special Activities

Some of our trees are asleep on the patio, but many of them brave the cold and continue to be an inviting spot. Put on a light coat or sweater and ask a friend to join you for some winter sunlight and fresh air on one of our beautiful patios.

There are many changes afoot for the Elders Inn. Many of you have noticed that the vending machine that used to be in the lobby has been removed. Does that mean that our residents can no longer buy a soda or candy? Absolutely not! Elders Inn now stocks a complete selection of candy, chips and other snacks as well as ice-cold sodas. Simply ask the Receptionist for whatever tasty tidbit or drink you want and, if you don't happen to have your money with you, we will be happy to add the charge to your bill. Let us know how you feel about the selection of products and if there is a favorite snack you would like to see offered, we will do our best to provide it.

In the weeks to come, watch for a transformation of our lobby. In the space vacated by the ugly vending machine, there is now a delightful area serving complimentary fresh baked pastries and world-famous Peet's coffee. As a matter of fact, Peet's coffee is now being served exclusively at Elders Inn. There's always something brewing at the Inn!



Elders Inn Resident of the Month: Dibrell "Ben" Benafield

Dibrell "Ben" Benafield's father was a big baseball fan and named him after a player for the Philadelphia Athletics in 1931 named Dibrell Williams. Dibrell as a name just didn't stick, and he has been known as Ben most of his life. His family roots are in Ireland, but his father and mother raised Ben, two brothers and one sister in the little town of England, Arkansas—population 118. Ben jokingly says that the population is probably the same today as it was then. His father was a farmer and grew cotton, corn and alfalfa during the Great Depression. When World War II broke out, his dad sold the family farm and was employed by security forces in Little Rock.

Ben also left during the Great Depression, joining the Conservation Corps, and was stationed in Utah as well as other places. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in July 1941, a few months before Pearl Harbor. Fortunately, he was stationed at Mare Island in Vallejo on

D-Day, but was soon shipped overseas as an armed guard on 2 transports for the medical corps. He retired from the Navy after 26 years and then went to work for the Sheriff's Department of Maricopa County, AZ. He and his wife saw many changes during their 20 years in the Phoenix area of Arizona, and they enjoyed their move to an assisted living community. After Ben's wife passed away, he moved to the Bay Area to be closer to his nephew Kevin.

Ben is a voracious reader and enjoys a few favorite television programs. The television isn't on very much in comparison to the many newspapers and books that Ben is always reading. A little secret is Ben's passion for clam chowder! He fondly remembers my large bowl of clam chowder at the Waters Edge Lodge every Friday and he would always have two bowls himself! We welcome Ben Benafield as a great addition to our family at the Elders Inn.

Waters Edge Nursing Home: March Special Activities

To celebrate St. Patrick's Day we will be having a special performance by The Rockridge Chorale on March 12th at 2 p.m.

Spirit Care Ministry March 1st

Gardening Volunteers March 15th

Live Guitar Jimmi James March 7th 14th and 21st

Live Jazz with Anne: March 28th

Jaime on Incan Flute March 1st 8th 15th 22nd & 29th

Live Piano with Miles March 2nd,
9th, 16th, & 23rd

Live Guitar with John March 3rd,
10th 17th, 19th & 24th

Live Jazz with Dave March 4th,
11th, 18th & 25th

Live Piano with Marie March 5th 19th & 26th

Live Harmonica Jerry G March 6th, 13th 20th & 27th



Waters Edge Nursing Home Resident of the Month: Jo Kirby

Josephine Kirby was born on August 16 in Shenandoah Pennsylvania and Jo was the middle child with nine brothers and sisters. As a child, Josephine was nicknamed "Jo." Growing up, Jo enjoyed knitting, crocheting and picking strawberries. Her favorite color is blue and "You Are My Sunshine" is her favorite song. Jo's favorite movie of all time is "The Sound of Music."

As a young adult, Jo worked for the Pentagon in Washington D.C. and was responsible for organizing soldiers to be sent to training and selecting people for flight school. In 1948, Jo met her first husband, Bud Cummins, who served during WWII. They had a daughter,

Darlene Cummins in 1955. Josephine later married Homer Kirby in 1975 and became Shirley Kirby's step-mother.

Jo did a lot of volunteer work in hospitals in the Washington D.C. She was also an active member of the Federal Retirees. In 2001, Jo moved to California to be closer to her family. She moved to the Elders Inn, where she lived before joining us here at the Waters Edge Nursing Home.

Jo has a sweet and loving personality, and we are pleased to honor her as our March Resident of the month.

AES: Iron Woman of the Month—Sue Rosati

By: Nathan Ubl

In September of 2010 both Sue Rosati and I found ourselves in a new environment at Elders Inn, but little did we know that our paths would cross and we would greatly impact each others lives. When Sue first arrived at Elders Inn, she was participating in exercise classes, regularly using her walker and she seemed to be doing well, but then a change took place. Sue began to use her walker less, seemed to sleep in a bit more and was not participating in exercise classes as frequently. Her family decided to see if personal training was something that would help get her back on track.

Sue was born in Worcester, Massachusetts. She was working as a bank teller when she met her future husband who was a World War II veteran; Sue went on to have 5 children, 3 girls and 2 boys, and it is when she became a wife and a mother that her family became her priority. As a mother, Sue was active in the PTA, very much involved with the Catholic Church, and a cornerstone for the family. Her son, Jim said that if someone needed help or guidance, Sue was the one that they would turn to. To this day you can tell Sue enjoys her family very much, just by

simply viewing her room filled with family pictures. Sue also enjoyed walking in her younger days and you can tell that she still has the spirit for a walk when she stands up and begins to move her walker down the sunshine filled hallway wearing her dark shades!

When I first began working with Sue, she was in a wheelchair most of the day and her walker had actually begun to collect dust. One of the first things we worked on was being able to rise from a chair safely and efficiently. It did not take long for Sue to get up and walk. Once Sue began to walk more, her progress was tremendous; she slowly started to regain strength in her legs, her endurance increased, and she started to smile more. One of the positive outcomes was that surprised the staff was when she became more interactive and holding a wide grin when walking around the Elders Inn.

It is now March and the wheelchair that Sue was using almost all the time is now the device that is collecting dust instead of the walker. We now take longer walks than ever, venture outside on occasion and our next goal is for her to stand and sit entirely on her own, which will enable her to get up and walk whenever she wants!