

Living on the Waters Edge

Volume 3, Issue 7

December, 2006

Established in
January, 1972.

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

Inside this issue:

Elderhood	2
Gift Giving in Physical Therapy	2
Waters Edge Lodge	3
Waters Edge Nursing Home	4
Elders Inn	5
Alameda Elder Services	6
Iron Woman of the Month	7

Elderhood: An Evolutionary Blessing

By: Kryspin Turczynski

Soon after becoming Activity Director at Waters Edge Nursing Home, I started reading an excellent book written by the famous gerontologist Dr. William Thomas, *What Are Old People For? How Elders Will Save the World* (VanderWyk & Burnham, 2004). In the second chapter of the book, I was introduced to an amazing theory that I had never really considered before, but which seems perfectly obvious after some thought and reflection: **Elderhood is an evolutionary adaptation designed to**

aid in the survival of the human species.

According to Dr. Thomas, the constantly increasing longevity of humans is a result of an evolutionary process, in which the presence of older relatives has been proven to be beneficial to the species. Since the mammalian reproductive strategy is to concentrate resources on fewer offspring, the key to success is to provide as much care and attention to that offspring as possible. The uniquely human innovation was to involve grandparents in the raising of children, an extremely

important development that may have begun with something as simple as the grandmother providing food to the young. This inter-generational transmission of care and affection, also known as the *grandmother effect*, provides an evolutionary reward to those families that make best use of the grandparents' assistance. The grandmother effect is not mere conjecture – University College researchers in London found a 50% drop in infant mortality rates in Gambia when the maternal grandmother was present, and other studies (cont. pg. 2)

Good Posture

By: Laura Van Harn

Everyone knows you are not supposed to judge a book by its cover, but we must admit that every once in a while we have all committed that particular crime. We

make judgments about a person's emotions, state of mind and self esteem based on how we see them; if they slouch or are slumped over we think they are tired and old, if they stand tall and

straight we think they look confident and competent. But more important than providing psychological insight, posture dramatically affects physiological function. (Cont. page 6)

Elderhood

from around the world have also found significant correlations.

The grandmother effect suggests that far from being burdensome or useless, the elderly are actually essential partners in the development of successful human communities. We need to develop social structures and habitats that facilitate intergenerational living, in which children, adults and elders can all share their unique gifts and talents. Our society, which is dominated in so many ways by the cult of youth and physique, would be wise to remember that Elderhood is an evolutionary blessing. Our elders are with us for a reason, and they must be included and allowed to flourish if humanity can ever hope to reach its maximum potential.



**Happy Holidays to
all our Residents
and their Families
from
the Staff of Alameda
Elder Communities.**



Gift Giving in Physical Therapy

By: Kathy Hanley

December is the month of gift giving, and at this time of year we tend to think of gifts as packages wrapped in colorful paper and tied with pretty bows. But there are other types of gifts as well. One of the best of these is the giving of oneself. In the course of Physical Therapy, a relationship is established between the therapist and the patient. As any therapist will tell you, there is give and take on both sides: the therapist offers to help the person achieve functional goals, whether it be walking better, decreased pain, increased strength and endurance or improved balance; the patient shares with the therapist their life experiences. There is much to be learned and gained from each side. In my 30 years of being a Physical Therapist, I have learned much from the thousands of people that I have met and treated. I would like to share with you one of the more memorable ones, and what I have learned from her:

Joy was a 22 year old woman on the brink of achieving a life dream—becoming a police officer. She had been accepted into the police academy and was to start soon. In the meantime, however, she suffered the rupture of an aneurysm—a malformation in a blood vessel of the brain. The effects are similar to a stroke. Joy had hemiparesis on the right side of her body. She

had only limited use of her right arm and could walk only with a cane and a heavy metal brace on her leg. After months of working with her as both an inpatient and outpatient, this right sided paralysis appeared to be permanent. I advised Joy that she should set her sights on some other career path, one that would allow for her disability.

After she was discharged, I did not see Joy for several years. Then one day, she came walking into the Physical Therapy Department without a cane, without a brace and wearing a police uniform—she had just graduated from the police academy. I was dumbfounded to say the least. I asked her what had sparked her amazing recovery. She said, “I stopped listening to people telling me what I was never going to be able to do again and just went ahead and did it.”

Joy gave me a gift much greater than any Holiday package. She taught me that we should never let other people put limitations on us, that if we have goals in life, we should pursue them no matter the obstacles. She taught me that miracles do occur—maybe not very often, but they do occur. She taught me that if you keep believing in yourself, good things will happen. May good things happen to you during this Holiday season and in the upcoming year.

World Tour: Holidays

Is that Santa I see outside the Waters Edge Lodge working in the garden? He's digging at the ground—must be using his “hoe hoe hoe.”

The trees have either dropped their leaves or they are in the process of doing so; they present us with bare wooden arms reaching out for the gray skies—trying to scratch a hole in the clouds and let a ray of hazy sunlight dance to earth. We bundle up when we go outside for a breath of fresh air, but it is warm and cozy inside our beautiful Lodge and we have much to be thankful for.

On this month's World Tour we celebrate the different Holiday Celebrations around the world, learn how different cultures celebrate the winter solstice and discover the creation of the world's great religions.

Holiday Party

As a reminder to Residents: Our annual Holiday Party will be held on Tuesday, December 12th at 6:30pm. Please invite your family and friends to join us for this celebration. We will be joined by Dancing Christmas Trees and strolling violinist Helen Placourakis. There may be other treats in store also, but if we told you now it would ruin the surprise!

Resident of the Month: Elise Niven

Elise Niven was born on January 24, 1929, at home in Elizabeth, New Jersey. She was a tiny child and when she was 5 her parents enrolled her in a small gymnasium to build up her strength and endurance. She attended medical assistance school in New York City, married, moved to New Mexico and finally settled in Philadelphia working for a doctor specializing in hematological research.

She returned to New Jersey after her marriage ended, and one day her phone rang with an offer she couldn't refuse—her aunt asked if she would accompany her to Hawaii! She learned to sail, crewed

aboard small yachts and visited Tahiti, the Cook Island, Marquesas and, finally, Auckland, New Zealand. She stayed in Auckland and one year later was introduced to a man who wanted a female to sail with him to Honolulu with his daughter and two cats. After guiding them to berth in Hawaii, Bill and Elise were married.

Elise has two adult children and two grandsons and we are delighted to have her as a Resident of the Waters Edge Lodge.

December Activities

We are going to have to sleep in for the first week of January to catch up from all of the activities in the month of December!

A few highlights are:

December 3— Young piano students perform.

December 6— Preschool children sing and bring treats.

December 10— Rockridge Chorale performs.

December 13— Rabbi Bennett of Temple Israel speaks about Hannukah.

December 14— Annual trip to see the Christmas Lights.

December 17— Special Magic Show.

Live Oak

A clown running for Mayor of Alameda? National Split Pea Soup Month? A new variety of artichoke that will revolutionize the industry? How have the values of the current age changed in the last 50 years? These are just a few examples of the subjects that we discuss at the Circle of Elders every weekday from 12:30 until 1:30.

No topic is to political, too controversial or too trivial for David to bring to the forefront and engage everyone in the room in stimulating conversation. Please come join us for an entertaining and provocative hour.

Holiday Fun at WENH

Happy Holidays! With the Thanksgiving feast behind us, we are now officially in the holiday season, and Waters Edge Nursing Home is bustling with joy and activity! We are putting up decorations to celebrate the spirit of the season, and we look forward to hosting some special musical guests in the coming month, in addition to our stellar lineup of regularly scheduled performers. The main event will be our annual Holiday Extravaganza, which will take place on December 11th at 1:30 pm. Come have a jolly good time with us as we enjoy dessert and live entertainment (rumor has it that Kris Kringle may make an appearance as well). Please remember that family and friends are always welcome to participate in any of our events. Please consult the calendars included with this newsletter for dates & times.

Resident of the Month: Buddy Hubbard

Our resident of the month for December 2006 is Walter "Buddy" Hubbard. Buddy is a daily fixture in the hallway near the birds, where he enjoys greeting all who walk by with a smile and a friendly wave. Born and raised in Houston, Texas, Buddy came to California after he retired from the Navy, having served on the U.S.S. Phoenix for over 20 years. The Phoenix was moored in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 when Japanese planes launched a surprise attack that led to American involvement in World War II; luckily, neither Buddy nor any of his fellow sailors on the Phoenix were hurt on that fateful day. After retiring from the Navy, Buddy worked for Pacific Motor Trucking, doing administrative work in their personnel department. Buddy's passion is music, and he is able to play the piano, organ and accor-

dion. Since he never took any lessons, Buddy figures his talents must have come from the Lord, and he certainly put them to good use by playing the piano in churches for many years. We gratefully acknowledge our resident of the month, Buddy, for bringing so much music, joy, and gentle kindness to Waters Edge Nursing Home.

From the Dietary Dept.

The Dietary Department will be celebrating the Holidays throughout the month of December. We will have special Luncheons on the following dates:

- December 5: Winter Lunch
 - December 20: Almost Christmas Luncheon
 - December 24: Christmas Eve
 - December 25: Christmas Day
- The food promises to be delicious as we enjoy the many tastes of the season.

Did You Know?

On the northwest corner of Lincoln and Webster in Alameda, you will find California State Historical Landmark #440, commemorating America's first transcontinental train, which passed through Alameda in 1869. (Thanks to resident Beth Hegeman)

In Service Schedule

- Week 1: Dignity
- Week 2: Contracture Reduction and Range of Motion
- Week 3: Care Plans
- Week 4: Body Mechanics

Do You Have a Special Talent?

Do you have any interests or hobbies that you are passionate about? Are you available at least 2 hours a month to share that passion with others? At Waters Edge Nursing Home, we are looking for enthusiastic and dependable volunteers to spend some quality time with our residents, doing something enjoyable and rewarding. At the moment, we are especially in need of:

- Canine companions who are

outgoing, friendly, and current with their immunizations

- Someone to teach our residents how to knit/crochet

- People with musical talents or a knack for entertaining

No matter what your interests or talents are, chances are we have a need you could fill here at Waters Edge Nursing Home. For more information, please call 522-1084 and ask for Kryss, the Activity Director.

World Tour: Holiday Celebrations

This month's World Tour focuses on the different celebrations of the season. Here is just a hint of what we are looking forward to.

In Germany children leave their shoes outside on December 6, so that St. Nikolaus can put presents in them. If you are good, you receive candy and goodies; if you are bad then you receive lumps of coal. On the first Sunday in December, a candle is lit, and this continues until the last Sunday of the month when a large white candle is placed in the middle of the other candles. Here gingerbread men are special treats and ornaments are usually made of blown glass and bells.

In Australia, the temperature hovers around 100 degrees throughout the holiday season. People have BBQs, go camping or spend the day at the beach. Christmas dinner

reflects the weather with meals consisting of salads, tropical fruits and seafood. Unlike in America, children leave out cake and beer for Santa during his midnight gift run.

In Native American cultures, Christianity is relatively new. Introduced only 400 years ago, holiday celebrations are a combination of Tribal and Christian traditions. In the nativity scene, the three wise men are replaced by three Indian Chiefs and Christmas carols are sung in the tribe's native tongue.

In China, where most are not Christian, children hang out stockings and wait for Du Che Lao Ren (Christmas Old Man) but do not receive new clothes and gifts until the Spring Festival in January.

Special Activities

December 07—Remembrance Day. Canadians pause in a silent moment of remembrance for those men and women who have, and continue to serve our country during times of war. We will be honoring those who fought for our country.

December 12—Virgin of Guadalupe is a 16th century image, a Roman Catholic icon and Mexico's most popular religious image. We will be having Rosary prayers in the Buena Vista Lounge at 3:00.

December 13—Hanukkah begins. Hanukkah is the annual Jewish festival celebrated over eight successive days beginning on the 25th day of Kislev, the third month of the Jewish calendar. We will be having an Ice Cream Social, refreshments and Festival Movies in the Buena Vista Lounge at 3:00.

December 22—Winter begins. Help us celebrate the shortest day of the year and the official start of winter.

December 25—Christmas is the Christian holiday celebrating the birth of Jesus. Residents will be able to make personalized Christmas cards at 1:00 in the Webster Dining Room.

December 26—Kwanzaa begins. Kwanzaa is a unique African American celebration focusing on family. Join us in the Buena Vista Lounge at 2:30 to celebrate.

Resident of the Month: Dorothy Bryant

Dorothy Bryant was born on October 17. She graduated from Alameda High School and later attended business school. After finishing school she worked for the City of Alameda Electric Company (today's Alameda Power and Telecom).

Dorothy and her husband, a UC Berkeley graduate and an army man, were married for many years and belonged to Eastern Star—she is a past Worthy Matron.

Dorothy is an avid bridge player who enjoys cats, shop-

ping and going out. But her favorite passion is travel. She has traveled to the Panama Canal, Alaska and Spain. She admits that she prefers to travel with tours because she likes to have everything planned out in advance. Blessed with two sons, one daughter, three grandsons, one granddaughter and one great-grandson, Dorothy's favorite holiday is Christmas because all the family can get together.

Good Posture

Good posture can:

- Improve your range of motion making it easier to accomplish daily tasks;
- Decrease pain by eliminating stress on your muscles and joints;
- Improve lung capacity which in turn improves stamina and the ability of your body to process nutrients and eliminate waste;
- Decrease headaches by limiting pressure on the spinal column and skull;
- Decrease or eliminate lower back pain by strengthening the muscles that support your torso;
- Keep your spine properly aligned which helps to safeguard your nerve function

To maintain proper posture while standing, keep your feet parallel, about hip width apart, distributing your weight equally on both feet, bend your knees slightly, pull your buttocks and your stomach in, and make sure to keep your shoulders back and your head up. When sitting, the stance is very similar: shoulders back, head up, torso solidly above the buttocks and thighs.

Remember, good posture reflects well on you so stand tall and straight.

Iron Woman of the Month: Betty Chambers

Betty Chambers, 79 is our December fitness buff who recently came to the Lodge from Stockton. Having just lost her husband, Betty and her family decided that it was time to be in Alameda. Betty has been a great addition to the fitness program and has brought a lot of enthusiasm and spunk to our classes.

What caught my interest was learning that Betty use to ride a bicycle up until 4 years ago. She enjoyed riding alongside the creeks in her town. I also learned that she played basketball in college and enjoyed swimming, walking and anything that required her to move. As Betty stated, she can't stand to sit still.

Betty graduated Phi Beta Kappa from UC Berkeley with a degree in Social Welfare. She taught school for several years and was married for 54

years. Together they raised Cynthia, who is a dentist, Jennifer, who is an attorney and Peter who is a teacher. Betty is very proud of her children's accomplishments.

Besides being fit and active, Betty and her husband spent a decade making ceramics and selling them at arts and craft shows throughout California. Hopefully someday soon we can talk her into teaching a ceramics class here.

Congratulations Betty on being our December Iron Person of the Month. We are so very glad you decided to join our family and for bringing your enthusiasm to the fitness program. Your upbeat attitude in exercise and balance classes has inspired many a resident in the short time you have lived here.

Healthy and Happy Holidays

The holiday season is a time of joy and good cheer. It can also be the most stressful time of the year, due to unrealistic expectations, frenzied schedules and financial pressure. Don't feel like you have to give in to "holiday burn-out." There are several things you can do to combat the stress and fatigue and make sure that you enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season.

1. Exercise. Get outdoors, get fresh air, and work out the

built-up stress. Talk to Peggy, Kathy or Laura about a walking plan that allows you to enjoy the holiday scenery while banishing the winter blahs.

2. Take time outs. Grab 15 to 30 minutes for yourself to revitalize and recharge when you find yourself getting weary. Check your Activities Calendar and join one of the mediation classes.

3. Spend time with supportive and caring people. (cont. pg. 7)

Congratulations!

Alameda Elder Communities would like to thank the following staff members for their continuing service and dedication. We couldn't do it without them! The following staff members are celebrating their Anniversary during the month of December:

1 Year

Michael Partido, WENH
Cesar "Sarge" LaFuente, WENH

Katie Khanthavong, WENH
Swechha Shrestha, Elders Inn

Tim Smith, Elders Inn
Normita deLeon, WENH

2 Years

David Ruttan, WE Lodge

Laurie Manzo, Elders Inn
Stephen Zimmerman, Elders Inn

3 Years

Delight Camacho, WENH

4 Years

Veronica Bernal Juarez, WE Lodge

Teison Saeleee, WE Lodge

Carol Hess, WENH

Rene Eastridge, Elders Inn

Estelita Acosta, WENH

7 Years

Amin Koribocus, WENH

20 Years or More

Louise Smith, WENH— 22 Years

Barbara Covington, WE Lodge—24 years

Holiday Health cont.

Join one of the daily exercise classes; the groups are full of wonderful people who would love the chance to be part of your day. Peggy, Kathy and Laura look forward to being part of your health team.

4. Leave "yesteryear" in the past and look toward the future. Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Embrace this season of the year and your life, talk with Kathy, Laura or Peggy to discover what new programs will be starting in the New Year.

Most important, remember to keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities. Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Do not put entire focus on just one day (i.e., Christmas Day) remember it is a season of holiday sentiment and activities can be spread out (time-wise) to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.

Outside the Garden Fence

By: Daine Ambegia

The garden is divided for those who wish to plant, whether flowers or vegetables, it's up to them, I grant.

I am not a gardener, but wanting to do some good, I volunteered to help in whatever way I could.

The garden is enclosed by fences all around and there was a need for watering

so a job, for me, I found. They sent me to this section "Outside The Garden Fence," there were flowers there, that needed care, the area was quite dense.

I arrived early in the morning, the sun was bright and hot. I started the water flowing, and began tending to my plot. The flowers smiled, nodding

happily, as I watered them so snappily. They told me that they were aware, that I was giving them their food and, oh, how it made them feel so good.

They whispered and laughed to each other, not one flower seemed to pout. The birds, the bees, even squirrels came to see what the carrying's-on was all about.

The wind was lazily passing by as the flowers fluttered to and fro, and now that I have finished my task, I guess it is time for me to go.

I've learned from the flowers that it makes very good sense, to water them, even though they live, just "Outside The Garden Fence."



**Alameda Elder
Communities**

801 Island Drive
Alameda, CA 94502

Phone: 510-748-9700
E-mail: aeadmissions2@gmail.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*

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 and the Elders Gym 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 Outpatient Rehab agency, and a Fitness Center providing affordable wellness and strengthening programs.



Alameda Elder Communities
801 Island Drive
Alameda, CA 94502