

Caregiver Quarterly

A publication of Caregiver Services and Eldercare
Programs of the Area 1 Agency on Aging.

Autumn 2004
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Caregiver Services
maintains a registry, matching trained and pre-screened caregivers with potential employers, including In-Home Supportive Services clients. Information and support are available for family and professional caregivers.

Eldercare
is a care consultation service for working people whose aging parents or other relatives need assistance.

How to reach us:

Caregiver Services

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Toll Free:

877-977-1604

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caregiver@a1aa.org

Willow Creek:

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Caregiving is a Labor of Love

By Lucy Ingrey



Autumn brings Labor Day. With that in mind, we celebrate the job of caregiving, not only as a profession, but as a labor of love.

It takes a special person to be a professional caregiver. Let's face it. The pay is not great. The stress of being depended on for another's basic needs can be overwhelming. A client's pain or dementia can make the work especially difficult.

Paid caregiving is a fast growing profession as America's population ages, and it's not going to slow down any time soon with baby boomers getting older. According to the book, *The Family Squeeze; Surviving the Sandwich Generation*, by Suzanne Kingsmill and Benjamin Schlesinger, by the year 2030 there will be more Americans over 65 than children under 18. Once a traditional part of families caring for their own, the shift to hiring paid caregivers is also increasing as families become spread out over geographic regions and more women, the traditional caregivers, are employed.

Caregivers who apply to list with our registry often tell us they got started in caregiving by caring for a family member and found the experience rewarding. They often talk about making life better for those that need in-home care, and they find purpose in making a difference. Once I went to

(Continued on page 2)

Sign Up Now for Eureka Caregiver Training!

There's still time to pre-register for the next In-Home Care Provider Training! The training will be held at the Eureka Adult Day Health Services building on Wednesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 9 pm, September 15th through October 20th. There is a \$15 fee and sliding scale adjustments are available. Pre-registration is required and space is limited.

Completion of this 33-hour course is the first step to enrolling on Caregiver Services' free registry for job referrals. The registry lists trained and pre-screened caregivers available for In-Home Supportive Services assignments and private job referrals. Most people who take the In-Home Care Provider course feel it gives them a strong foundation for providing quality care and wish they had found it sooner.

Call Laura Patterson at 443-4363 (toll free: 877-977-1604) to pre-register now. You'll be glad you did!

HICAP Can Help You

By Anne Antoville

If You Need Help with the Medicare Discount Card...

HICAP can help you find a Medicare Discount Card that will work for you. If your income is low, you may be able to get \$600 per year credit in 2004 and 2005 towards prescription drug costs. HICAP can also screen to find other help for high prescription drug costs with over 100 programs that are available.

If You Need Help with Medicare...

HICAP can help you with questions or problems with Medicare. We can answer simple questions or help solve problems that seem complicated. If you need help with a Medicare billing problem, you can call HICAP.

If You Need Help with Health Insurance...

If you have questions regarding insurance benefits and/or benefits and costs comparisons regarding Medigap, Tricare, PERS and other retiree plans, HICAP can help you. If you need to know your rights to buy Medicare supplement insurance in California, you may contact HICAP.

If You Need Help with Long Term Care Insurance...

If you have long term care insurance and need to understand your benefits, or are interested in purchasing long term care insurance and would like to receive unbiased counseling, HICAP can help you.

Call HICAP in Humboldt County at (707) 443-9747, or in Del Norte at (707) 464-7876.

**Anne Antoville is
HICAP Program Manager.**

Caregiver Quarterly is published every three months by Caregiver Services and Eldercare, programs of the Area 1 Agency on Aging. We welcome your comments. Please send letters and change of address notices to Caregiver Services, Area 1 Agency on Aging, 3300 Glenwood Street, Eureka CA 95501.

You can also e-mail us at:
caregiver@a1aa.org

A Labor of Love (continued from page 1)

interview a caregiver at a client's house that was so unclean that I was sure the caregiver would decline the job. As we were leaving, he said he wanted to do the job. He wanted to make this person's house and life better.

In turn, people hiring in-home care appreciate their caregivers when they *feel* that level of caring—when it's not just a job. While we advocate setting good boundaries in the client/caregiver relationship, we know that the lines can get fuzzy as friendships form and CARING happens. We hear clients express gratitude and love for their caregivers and call them "a blessing." It has become apparent to me in my work at the registry that clients recognize that having someone who really cares come by on a regular basis is most important.

Still, it takes some planning for a caregiver to keep from feeling burned out. Caregiving takes both an emotional and physical toll. Caregivers need to find a balance between what's important to them as a caregiver and as an individual.

I have seen friendships form between caregivers and clients. The saying "There's someone for everyone" holds true. I've heard stories that have been heartwarming, sad, and hilarious—sometimes all at once. So for all of you that receive care from a caregiver, remember to join us this month and every month: give them a big **Thank You** for doing the important job of caring for our communities by helping our seniors and people with disabilities, and for making a difference in your life.

**Lucy Ingrey is a Resource
Specialist for Caregiver
Services and Eldercare.**

Some Ways to Avoid Caregiver Burnout

- ◆ Celebrate successes large and small. Even if all that you accomplish today is making your client smile or listening when they need to talk, celebrate that!
- ◆ Learn all you can about your client's disability or illness and research community programs available to them. The more you know about what to expect and who can help, the less alone you will feel.
- ◆ Find out what reduces your stress (walking, yoga, reading, golf) and keep doing it!
- ◆ Build a support network—talk to other caregivers (did you exchange phone numbers at training?), attend a support group, talk to supportive family members, clergy or friends, or call Caregiver Services for support.
- ◆ Use personal time wisely. Try to do things you want to do as well as things you need to do.
- ◆ Say "no," *before* you get overwhelmed.



Harvesting Your Herbs

By Laura Patterson

(In our Spring 2004 issue, Laura wrote about starting an herb garden. She continues on here, with harvesting tips.)

By now, your herb plants should be flourishing. Your window boxes should be full and ready to be harvested. You can harvest as soon as the plants are large enough. Never take more than 1/3 of any plant at a time if you want it to continue to live. Try to prune evenly to keep the plant looking nice.

Dry the herbs in small bundles by hanging them upside down. You can also use a drying rack or old window screen. The plants are dry when the leaves break off between your fingers but not so dry that they crumble. Store dried herbs in a capped, dark jar to protect flavor. Old vitamin bottles work great – just make sure they are clean and DRY.

You can use your herbs for cooking or you can make herbed vinegars and herbal oils, herb tea, or use them to create a relaxing or rejuvenating bath. Use bundles of herbs as a bow on gifts. Growing your own herbs will give you a sense of accomplishment, give you something to look forward to and provide you with fresh, healthy additions to your favorite meals.

Making Herbal Teas & Soaks

Supplies: Cheese cloth, muslin or a large tea ball; herbs of your choice.

Tea: Boil water and put two tablespoons of herb in a tea ball or piece of cheese cloth. Steep covered for 5 to 10 minutes. Strain herbs out and enjoy!

Soaks: Prepare as above. Add to a warm bath with 1 to 2 cups of Epsom salts. You can also use a soaking pan for feet or hands or compresses dipped in the herbal mixture.



Some relaxing herbs: Lemon balm, Chamomile, Oat straw, Catnip, Calendula and Jasmine. Herbs that can help energize include Rosemary, Peppermint, Thyme and Bay. Some soothing herbs for the tummy are Ginger, Caraway, Dandelion, Dill and Fennel. Herbs that may help strengthen the immune system include Echinacea, Garlic and Cayenne Pepper.

How to Make Herbal Oil & Vinegars

You will need: 1 pretty recycled bottle; fresh or dried sprigs of Rosemary, Thyme, Lemon Balm, Dill, Tarragon, Cayenne Pepper, Chives or other kitchen herbs; cooking oil (Olive or Canola) or vinegar (white or rice).

Put 5 to 8 sprigs of herbs in the bottle and fill with either oil or vinegar. Cap the bottle tightly and store in a cool dark place. Shake the bottle every couple of days. After two weeks, strain the herbs out and add one fresh, pretty sprig to the bottle for decoration. Pour the oil or vinegar back into the bottle and place on your kitchen table. Use for dipping bread, or serve over rice or potatoes. Can be used in cooking instead of regular oil or vinegar.



Laura Patterson is a Resource Specialist for Caregiver Services.

Please remember: Before using any herb medicinally, you should check with your doctor or pharmacist concerning health condition and drug interactions.

Willow Creek Senior Lunch Group Open

Robin Dummer, Registry Specialist at the Caregiver Services Willow Creek office, reports that the Willow Creek lunch group has been sampling the harvests of summer. The seniors shared fresh cucumbers, peaches, tomatoes, fish and blackberry pie.

They meet every Tuesday at the Willow Creek Resource Center at 12:00 P.M. for an hour of great conversation. New faces are always welcome. Bring a sandwich or something to share. Call Robin at (530) 629-1139 for more information.



Wanted: Relief Caregivers

We still need caregivers for our Relief Caregiver List. This list will be available for caregivers on our registry to call if they need fill-in care when they are sick or want to go on vacation. So far, we have more caregivers who want to use the list than want to be on it!

Please help your fellow caregiver by filling in occasionally. Call the registry at 443-4363 (toll free 877-977-1604) to have your name added to the Relief List.

Calendar of Coming Events

Caregiver Trainings

In-Home Care Provider Training, Wednesday & Thursday evenings, September 15th through October 20th, 6 to 9 pm, at the Eureka Adult Day Health Services building. \$15 fee. Pre-registration is required. Call Laura at 443-4363 (toll free 877-977-1604).

Soroptimist 15th Annual Walkathon to benefit Alzheimer's Resource Center

Saturday, October 23rd. Walk begins at 10 a.m at the Adorni Center, and finishes at the Alzheimer's Resource Center, 1901 California Street in Eureka. A shuttle bus will be provided to return to the Adorni. \$15 registration includes a Walkathon T-Shirt and Brunch at the end of the walk. Prizes will be awarded to top two walkers who collect more than \$500 in sponsor donations. Net proceeds benefit the Alzheimer's Resource Center. Call Walkathon Hotline at (707) 444-5120.