

# Caregiver Quarterly

A publication of Caregiver Services,  
a program of the Area 1 Agency on Aging.

Summer 2007  
Volume 4 Issue 3

## 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.

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How to reach us:

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●  
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## The Library Is Open!

By June Crym



We would like more people to use our Caregiver Services Lending Library. It is free for everyone – family caregivers, professional caregivers, anyone looking for information on caregiving and health care-related subjects including arthritis, diabetes, hepatitis and Parkinson's. Our shelves are filled with books, videos and DVD's. Books may be checked out for two weeks at a time and videos or DVD's for three days.

You do not have to be a member of the Caregiver Registry to check out items from the Library. Items are available for check-out weekdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please call for an appointment.

This past spring Caregiver Services had the great fortune to host HSU social work intern Laurie Frasher, who reorganized our Lending Library. Books and videos are now listed by subject matter to make your search easy.

Here is a sampler of what we have in stock:

***What to Eat When You Don't Feel Like Eating***, by James Haller. This book is designed for cancer patients, those facing life threatening diseases, and for those now started on the road to recovery. Haller, master chef with Seacoast Hospice in Exeter, New Hampshire, explains how certain foods

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## Summer Spotlight

By Michelle Guthrie

As summer begins, we look back on the year's caregiver trainings we have completed and thank the fine trainers we are so lucky to have. **Irma Silva, Elaine Crandall, Victoria Onstine and Margot Julian**- thank you so much for the important work you do! ***Bravo ladies, you're the best!*** Since August 2006, we have given six trainings and graduated more than 100 caregivers. Many of them have been accepted to the Caregiver Registry and are getting plenty of job referrals, if they are not already completely booked!

In the summer issue of our newsletter, we like to highlight one of our terrific trainers. This summer's spotlight is shining on **Irma Silva!**

Irma has been a Registered Nurse (RN) for ten years. She graduated from College of the Redwoods and got her start in the medical field 15 years ago as a CNA and Medical Assistant. From there, she got her LVN (Licensed Vocational Nurse) certificate and continued to take one class each semester until she earned her RN degree. That's dedication! Irma is currently taking an online course to become a certified "Dementia Care Professional."

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## How MSSP Works to Help

Are you caring for a senior who is trying to keep their independence? Do you know someone who is low-income, 65 or older and worried he or she will not be able to stay safely at home? The Humboldt Senior Resource Center has a program that may help. MSSP is the Multipurpose Senior Services Program.

MSSP is a voluntary care management program. This program serves seniors and their families by linking them with services to help keep seniors living at home and independent. MSSP is free to qualified clients who are 65 or older, receive Medi-Cal without a share-of-cost and need some assistance with bathing, grooming or dressing. All MSSP clients must be willing to work with a care manager.

MSSP care managers are trained social workers or nurses. They assess the client's needs, make a care plan and arrange the needed services. Services may include emergency response systems like Lifeline, transportation, minor home repairs, money management, home safety equipment or respite. Care managers may also assist clients with finding caregivers, making referrals to adult day health care or arranging home delivered meals. MSSP works closely with doctors, home health agencies, hospitals and Humboldt County Adult Services.

Call Robin Wolff at (707) 443-9747, ext. 259, to learn if MSSP can help someone you know.

### **Registry Caregivers – Remember To Check In Each Month**

Call our **Active Caregiver Call-In Line** at (707) 441-0444, extension 222, and leave a message on Voice Mail. Give your name, phone number, hours you will work and the type of care you will provide.

If your schedule changes any time during the month, call in again and tell us. If you were available the first week and called in, but now have enough clients, please call to tell us you are full! If you have hours available at any time during the month, call in and update so we can refer you to new clients.

If you have called to tell us your schedule is full, you don't need to call again until you are available. Your name will not be given out to consumers until you let us know you want more work.

## The Library is Open! *(Continued from page 1)*

can bring comfort and enjoyment even to those in advanced stages of illness. Introducing small portions of something new, a food never heard of before, can be an effective way of getting an ill person to eat.

**Depression and Manic Depression** – This program from *The Doctor Is In* explains depression through the experiences of several people, including *60 Minutes* host Mike Wallace; Kay Redfield Jamison, psychiatrist and author of a book on her life with manic-depressive illness; artist Lama DeJani; and State Department official Robert Boorstin. The program also provides an overview of the medications and therapy currently in use. VHS, 28 minutes.

Come visit our Lending Library. Call Michelle at 707-443-4363 or toll free: 877-977-1604.

*June Crym is Program Assistant for Caregiver Services.*

## Summer Spotlight *(Continued from page 1)*

Irma has lived in Humboldt County almost her whole life. She was born in Sonoma, but her parents moved here almost immediately after. She has been working at Fortuna Adult Day Health Services for six years and has been a trainer for Caregiver Services for more than three years.

Watching a class develop and seeing the students go from being hesitant to feeling more confident is Irma's favorite part of teaching. She hopes all students walk away from the classes with a better basic understanding of caregiving. Irma really likes the nutrition part of the training as it tends to be a true eye-opener for students. She knows that at the end of training students will not know everything, but they will have the skills to take better care of clients and resources to know where to get more help.

In her spare time, Irma enjoys quilting and gardening. She especially likes to "rescue" plants that are going to be thrown away or destroyed. She is a true caregiver in every sense of the word.

*Michelle Guthrie is a Resource Specialist & Training Coordinator for Caregiver Services.*

*Caregiver Quarterly* is published every three months by Caregiver Services, a program 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](mailto:caregiver@a1aa.org)

## Respite: A Time of Rest

The Humboldt Senior Resource Center's Linkages Program will have Respite Funds beginning in July. Respite funds may purchase services for caregivers who give regular care to a frail senior or disabled adult. A "caregiver" in this case is a spouse, relative or friend who regularly provides care for someone.

Respite funds can be used to hire in-home care providers, pay for adult day care programs, temporary residential care or skilled nursing care. The services are to help main caregivers take a break from their regular caregiving duties and prevent burnout or accidents.

Families are not qualified if they are receiving respite care from another program. Linkages will give families information about caregiver resources and support groups. Call the Linkages Long Term Care Coordinator to learn if you can get respite funds.

For more information, check online at [www.humsenior.org](http://www.humsenior.org) and click on the **Caregiver Respite** link or call the Linkages Program at (707) 443-9747, ext. 272.

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## A Summer Caregiver Training!



In the past few months Caregiver Services has received many requests for trainings. Our training calendar usually revolves around the regular school year. We plan

this way to accommodate school schedules, so caregivers can plan their vacations around major holidays and summer. Because of the increased demand, we are changing our routine this summer to hold a special training in July / August in Eureka.

The standard 33-hour training will be compressed into just four weeks of evening classes from 6 to 9 pm. Class dates are July 10th and 11th; 17th, 18th and 19th; 24th, 25th and 26th; 31st, August 1st and 2nd.

As usual, pre-registration is required. Call Michelle at (707) 443-4363 or toll free: 1-877-977-1604 to pre-register.

## Be Smart About Medicare Marketing

By Anne Conrad-Antoville

Until two years ago, Medicare was a single program in Humboldt County. Medicare Modernization has changed that fact. We now have 20 Private Medicare Plans, also known as Medicare Advantage Plans, available locally.

Medicare Advantage plans are offered by private insurance companies and sold by insurance agents. Agents receive a commission for selling a plan. Some companies are paying commissions of \$300- \$500 for every beneficiary an agent enrolls in a Medicare Advantage plan.

Recently the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* reported that marketing abuses with the sale of Medicare Advantage plans have occurred across the country.

### What You Need to Know

- If you get a Medicare Advantage Plan, you agree to take yourself out of Original Medicare and get all of your medical coverage through the Medicare Advantage Plan.
- Once you sign up for the Medicare Advantage plan, you are locked into the plan until January-March of every year.
- If you get a Medicare Advantage Private Fee for Service Plan, you are responsible to contact your medical providers to find out if they will accept the plan. There is no published directory.
- Many local providers have indicated they **will not accept** the Private Fee for Service Plans.
- Some Medicare Advantage Private Fee for Service Plans have less benefits than Original Medicare for hospitalization and for medical equipment.
- If you have Medi-Cal with your Medicare, you may lose Medi-Cal benefits if you enroll in a Medicare Advantage plan.

### Your Rights

You do not have to agree to speak with an agent over the telephone. You do not have to agree to let an agent come to your home. You have the right to examine information about benefits without signing up for a plan. If you feel that you have been a victim of agent misconduct, you have the right to make a complaint to the California Department of Insurance.

HICAP does not sell insurance. If you need help comparing plans you can call HICAP for free and objective counseling. HICAP can also assist you if you would like to file a marketing misconduct complaint. Call (707) 444-3000.

*Anne Conrad-Antoville is HICAP Manager for Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.*



## ***Thanks For My Independence***

What is it that makes your caregiver special? Does she take the time to shop for the groceries you need but can't get out to buy? Is he always careful to see that you arrive on time for your doctor appointments? The ability to remain in one's home is a desire that does not diminish with age or disability. Caregivers help make that independence possible. And now there is a way that you can brag about the wonders of your caregiver.

This is the second year that the IHSS Advisory Board is offering IHSS recipients and private pay recipients an opportunity to publicly thank their caregivers for the independence they provide. Full-page ads will appear in two local newspapers on July 4<sup>th</sup>, including personal statements of recipients. No last names or cities will be used, for privacy.

If you or someone you know would like to be included in this campaign, please call the Advisory Board message phone at **(707) 476-2170**. Speak clearly and leave your message and your first name. Please include a call-back phone number in case there are questions. Don't wait too long to sing your praises—the deadline to phone in your thank you is **June 15<sup>th</sup>**. As many Thanks as can fit onto the pages will be included.