

Caregiver Quarterly

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

Winter 2008
Volume 5 Issue 2

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.

•
How to reach us:

Caregiver Services

(707) 443-4363

Toll Free:

877-977-1604

FAX: (707) 443-8946

caregiver@a1aa.org

•
Willow Creek:

(530) 629-1139

FAX: (530) 629-1148

•
Caregiver Services
is located at
434 7th Street, Suite B
in Eureka.

•

A Safe Holiday Makes for a Happy New Year

All of us at Caregiver Services want to see you well and happy in the New Year! Safely heating your home is a major way to keep yourself safe during these winter months. With the cold, we fire up the old stove or turn on the furnace. Built up deposits in stovepipes and on heater elements can cause fires in walls and on roofs. Make sure to keep these devices in good running order by having them checked by a qualified person.

Here are some other safety reminders for your heating checklist. Do not empty stove ashes into the trash (even if you think they are cold). Stack kindling and firewood far from the stove or fireplace. Never leave a fire unattended in the fireplace. Start a new fire in the morning instead of loading up the stove to smolder overnight. Keep flammable items away from heaters and open flames. Most importantly, replace the batteries in smoke detectors once a year. And, replace any smoke detector that is more than 10 years old.

From all of us at Caregiver Services, Teresa, Michelle, Suzy, Michele and Anthony, have a wonderful holiday season and a great beginning to 2008!

Anthony Antoville is Caregiver Services Manager

Star Caregiver

Our Star Caregiver spotlight shines on Marilyn Fisher this quarter. Marilyn has been a caregiver for 10 years and has been on the Caregiver Registry since the summer of 2003.



Marilyn began her career in caregiving when she was living in the San Bernardino area. Her friend encouraged her to give it a try and Marilyn felt as if she had been "called to caregiving." Marilyn really enjoys working with the people she cares for. She loves the stories that they share and just taking good care of them.

The wisdom that Marilyn would like to share with new caregivers, or folks considering caregiving as a profession is, "always listen to your client, be observant and do your best to meet their needs." But above all, Marilyn reminds us that "*it's all about them.*"

When Marilyn isn't providing care for humans, she likes to care for "Happy," her Border Collie and "Bebe" her Staffordshire Terrier/Pit-bull. She cares so greatly for her dogs that in addition to walking them and brushing them, she actually cooks for them too!

Marilyn is also very active in her church as a greeter, coffee-maker, Power Point Presenter and Sunday School Secretary.

Caregiver Services is proud to have Marilyn on the registry, and we congratulate her fabulous efforts as a Caregiver.

Michelle Guthrie is Resource Specialist and Training Coordinator for Caregiver Services

Using Your Medicare Drug Plan

If you changed your Medicare drug plan in November or December last year and you have not yet received your new drug plan card, you can call the drug plan and ask for the following:

- Your Drug Plan ID #
- RX BIN #
- PCN #
- RX Group #

If you have these four numbers, and your Medicare card, your pharmacist can bill your drug plan.

If you have Medi-Cal or the Extra Help Program for Medicare drug plans and you are enrolled in:

- AARP Saver Plan
- CIGNA Healthcare Value Plan
- Humana Standard Plan
- Wellcare Signature Plan

you will have to pay an additional premium cost this year. You can either: 1) stay with the plan and pay an additional premium cost every month; or 2) change to one of the 9 plans that accepts Medi-Cal/Extra Help as full premium cost in 2008.

You have the right to change drug plans one time per month if you have Medi-Cal or Extra Help.

If you changed drug plans for 2008 and one or more of your drugs are not on the new plan's formulary:


- You have the right to a one month transitional fill of any medication in January
- After January, you can ask the plan for an Exception to cover your medication

If you need help with Medicare drug plans, Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare supplements or Long Term Care insurance you can call HICAP, a free counseling program of the Area 1 Agency on Aging at 444-3000 or Toll Free at 1-800-434-0222.

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

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*, 434 7th Street, Suite B, Eureka, CA 95501. You can also e-mail us at: caregiver@a1aa.org

Caregivers' Celebration & Resource Fair



National Caregivers' Month kicked off with the 4th Annual Caregiver Celebration. The party was a great success with over 300 people in attendance for the "star" filled event! In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority and the Area 1 Agency on Aging put on the Annual Caregivers' Celebration and Resource Fair, October 25th, at the Adorni Center in Eureka. Caregivers and their guests visited with 23 service providers. St. Vincent de Paul served a delicious buffet dinner and many wonderful donated door prizes were awarded. What a party!

Caregiving and Depression

Depression is an all-too silent health crisis for caregivers. The Family Caregiver Alliance estimates that 20% of family caregivers suffer from depression. Caregivers experience depression at twice the rate of the general population. Caregivers often deny their own needs in order to provide the best possible care for their loved one. This self denial can result in feelings of anger and frustration. Sacrificing one's own physical and emotional needs can bring about feelings of sadness and guilt. The holidays are also a time of extra physical and emotional stress. The most common symptoms of depression include:

- Frequent feelings of sadness and hopelessness
- Problems sleeping including sleeplessness or excessive sleeping
- Poor concentration or finding it difficult to make decisions
- Fatigue and low energy levels
- Self-blame, feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt
- Recurring thoughts of death

Usually several symptoms need to be present in order to suspect depression. If you find that you are experiencing some of these symptoms, it is important to be seen by your primary care physician for an accurate diagnosis and to seek support. There are a number of Caregiver Support Groups throughout Humboldt County. Contact Caregiver Services at (707) 443-4363 or toll free: (877) 977-1604 for information on support groups, locations, days and times.

(Continued Page 3)

Caregiving and Depression (Continued from Page 2)

The National Institute of Mental Health offers the following recommendations to help combat depression:

- Set realistic goals. Assume a reasonable amount of responsibility.
- Break large tasks into small ones, set some priorities, and do what you can, as you can.
- Try to be with other people and to talk with someone.
- Participate in activities that may make you feel better, such as mild exercise, going to a movie or ballgame, or attending a religious, social or community events.
- Expect your mood to improve gradually, not immediately. Feeling better takes time.
- People rarely “snap out” of a depression, but they can feel a little better day by day.
- Remember, positive thinking will replace the negative thinking.

Caregiving for a family member or loved one is a deeply rewarding experience. It can also be an exhausting one. Remember to take time for yourself. Avoid sacrificing your own physical and emotional needs. Recognize the added strain of the holidays. Let your family and friends help you.

To learn more go to the National Alliance on Mental Health website at www.nami.org.

*Vicki Okey is Resource Specialist and
Tom Collins is Program Manager for
Senior Information & Assistance Program*

Calendar of Coming Events

Free In-Home Care Provider Training

Eureka, Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
January 12 through February 16
Pre-registration is required. Call Michelle at
(707) 443-4363 or toll free at 1-877-977-1604

Willow Creek's "Chow & Chat" Senior Lunch 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month
12 noon to 1:00 pm
Call Michele Swift at (530) 629-1139

Office Closed:

Martin Luther King Day — January 21
Presidents' Day — February 18

THANK YOU for the CAREGIVER CELEBRATION DOOR PRIZE DONATIONS

Thanks to the local businesses for making our
Caregivers feel like stars!

Berlonia Salon & Spa

Mixed bag of men and women' products

Juniper Salon

Gift box of organic hand lotions & bamboo
skin softening gloves

Bella Design

One hair cut

Ky's Hair Designs

Two hair cuts

N Style Full Service Salon

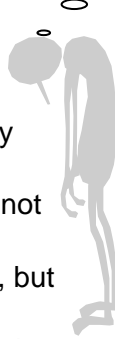
One hair cut

Humboldt County

IHSS Advisory Board

Gift certificates to various local businesses

I feel blah...



Get ready for

The F.U.N. Play Center

Opening day is January 7, 2008

The Area 1 Agency on Aging is collaborating with First 5 Humboldt, The City of Eureka and the Humboldt County Office of Education to give grandparents who are the primary caregiver for their own grandchildren, ages birth to five, a place to call their own. This project addresses grandparent's isolation due to the challenges of caring for young children by giving them a place to socialize with their peers, learn about nutritious meals, and access information and resources that promote healthy active living. The F.U.N. Play Center will be at the Adorni Center Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Look for more information in your mail box or contact Laurie Frasher – Project Coordinator at (707) 442-3763 ext. 223 with questions.

Send your "Favorite Caregiver Story" to
Caregiver Services, 434 7th St., Suite B,
Eureka CA 95501

Or email: caregiver@a1aa.org

Caregiver Quarterly

Area 1 Agency on Aging
3300 Glenwood Street
Eureka CA 95501

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Eureka CA 95501
Permit No. 268



CAREGIVERS' CORNER

Beating the Winter Blues

With less sunlight and more gray skies in the winter months, we can all begin to feel a little blue. Even if you are feeling the need to sleep more, have less energy, eat more or feel sad, resist the urge to hide away and isolate yourself. Use the 10 suggestions below to change your feelings about winter and find ways to “Beat the Winter Blues.”

- 1) Raise the blinds and let the light shine in. Sit by the window and feel the warmth.
- 2) Eat lighter meals, avoiding high fat, starch or sugar content. Cook soups and stews, vegetables, beans and lentils.
- 3) Brave the outdoors! Bundle up and go for a walk. The exercise will stimulate and bring warmth to your body. The added sunlight will help lift your spirits.
- 4) Exercise! Use a video tape or take a class. Any exercise will release your body's mood-enhancing chemicals, boost energy and make you feel better.
- 5) Get involved. Connect with “sunny people.” Volunteer. Reach out to someone else. Take a class. Make a phone call. Write a letter. Don't isolate yourself.
- 6) Bring tropical plants into the house. The greenery will lift your spirits and make you think of sunny days.
- 7) Pamper yourself by giving yourself a home manicure, pedicure or a soak in the bath. Read a good book.
- 8) Burn orange candles. The color is cheering and the candle is warming.
- 9) Simplify your home, room by room. Clean out clutter and donate what you have not used in years.
- 10) Create a winter custom. Prepare and share a meal. Find a new way to bring family and friends together to re-energize during winter's darkest months.

*Suzy Smith is Programs Assistant
for Caregiver Services & HICAP*