

# Caregiver Quarterly

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

Winter 2004-05  
Volume 2 Issue 1

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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**

**(707) 443-4363**

Toll Free:

**877-977-1604**

FAX: (707) 443-8946  
caregiver@a1aa.org

**Willow Creek:**

**(530) 629-1139**

FAX: (530) 629-1148

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**Eldercare**

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Caregiver Services and Eldercare are located at 808 E Street in Eureka.

(Mail Address:  
3300 Glenwood Street  
Eureka CA 95501)

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**Take care**—the articles in this issue are about taking care—of yourself, your family, your home and the people you serve as a caregiver. We at **Caregiver Services** and **Eldercare** wish all of you a peaceful, warm and comforting holiday season.

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## Feeling Holiday Stress? You Are Not Alone!

By Lucy Ingrey

As we rush around trying to get everything taken care of for the holidays, we often forget to take care of ourselves. If you are a caregiver, this can be an especially stressful time. We already know that caregiving can be an isolating experience. When it is just you and the people you care for day after day, you may feel that there is no one who understands what you are going through and no one to turn to when you have questions. Sometimes you may wonder if you are doing it right at all!

Now add to that a few holiday-visiting family members who may question your caregiving, and your stress level intensifies. But there are places to turn to for relief – support groups.

Support groups for caregivers provide a safe space to vent frustrations and a place to learn about community resources. They offer a way to discover new solutions to problems, and a place to meet your fellow caregivers who understand what you are going through. There are also support groups

*(Continued on page 2)*

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## Be Warm; Be Careful

By June Crym

Brrr! It's winter – time to turn up your furnace thermostat, stack the wood and stoke the woodstove. Staying warm, even on our mild-weather North Coast, can be a real challenge. Is it wise to keep a slow-burning woodstove fire going overnight while you sleep? Are there general fire safety rules that might help you? Yes, the Eureka Fire Department has a few tips.

**Heat & Smoke Detectors:** More than half of all fatal home fires happen at night, when people are asleep. Inexpensive home smoke detectors will sound an alarm, alerting you to fire. You should at least install a battery-operated smoke detector in each bedroom and in the hallway outside the bedrooms. Special detectors that flash a light in addition to sounding an alarm are available for people with hearing loss. Test your smoke detectors every month and install new batteries at least once a year, when you change your clocks for Day Light Savings Time. Replace any smoke detector that's more than 10 years old.

**Heating Safety:** Heat radiated from a wood-burning stove or furnace next to a combustible wall or material is a common cause of house fire. Be sure to store your

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Minor Home Modifications Are Important

By Julie Sessa

Most Californians say they prefer to spend their senior years in their own homes, but they often live in older homes not built for aging in place.

The Area 1 Agency on Aging has limited funding to provide assistance with Minor Home Modifications to:

- ◆ caregivers of any age who are taking care of a senior (over 60); or
- ◆ to a senior who is caring for a minor child in the senior's home.

The modifications can be for the caregiver's or the senior's home, with the goal of supporting the caregiver in their work.

Typically, there are three areas in the home that present barriers to safety and independence: steps and doors in and out of the home, stairs inside the home and the bathroom. The home can be modified to make it safer, more comfortable and easier to carry out such daily activities as cooking, bathing and climbing stairs.

Minor modifications can be as simple as installing grab bars, hand-held showerheads, door grips and railings.

Call Julie at 442-3763 for more information.

*Julie Sessa is Special Projects Coordinator for Area 1 Agency on Aging's Information Services.*

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](mailto:caregiver@a1aa.org)

# Holiday Stress (Continued from page 1)

for people who are affected by certain diseases and conditions that help them cope. Many studies show that people who attend support groups are better able to handle their situation, whether it is caregiving or dealing with an illness.

Support groups usually have an open format for discussion or they may have guest speakers. There are many support groups offered throughout Humboldt County covering a wide range of conditions, diseases and caregiving.

For a list of support groups, call Caregiver Services, 443-4363. If attending a group does not appeal to you, perhaps an online group might help. Try [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org) for more information.

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

# I Need to Shop But How Do I Get There?

By Lucy Ingrey

With the holidays fast approaching, most of us have some shopping to do. Getting to where the stores are is not always easy. Many requests come through the Registry from people looking for caregivers to provide transportation. However, we cannot always make referrals for transportation. We would like to remind everyone that most communities have the alternative of public transportation available.

There are three bus systems that serve our area, allowing you to ride from Scotia to Trinidad and out to Willow Creek. Riding the bus is cheaper than hiring someone to drive. Buses can accommodate people with disabilities, offering "kneeling" features, where the front of the bus lowers, and wheelchair lifts. If you would like to practice getting on and off the bus with a wheelchair, call the Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) to schedule some practice time.

Another alternative is Dial-A-Ride/Lift, a door-to-door shared transportation system for people who cannot ride the regular bus system due to a disability. Service is limited to Eureka, Arcata and McKinleyville. There is no age limit for Dial-A-Ride, but you must fill out an application and be certified by a doctor.

Many people do not use public transportation, because they are unfamiliar with how to use it. I have an inspiring story to share about a senior who needed a ride from Eureka to Fortuna for a doctor's appointment. She couldn't find anyone to take her, so she took the bus for her first time. She made it to her appointment fine. She is blind. If she can do it, maybe you can, too!

For more information about Dial-A-Ride or the bus system, call Humboldt Transit Authority at 443-0826. Schedules for Redwood Transit System, Eureka Transit System and the Willow Creek bus can be found online at [www.hta.org](http://www.hta.org). Arcata and Mad River Transit schedules can be found at [www.humboldt.edu/~nvk2/bus/](http://www.humboldt.edu/~nvk2/bus/) or call 822-3775.

## Be Warm *(Continued from page 1)*

logs and kindling a good distance away from the fireplace or wood burning stove. Never store flammable liquids like cleaning agents and paint supplies near furnaces, hot water heaters or any other heating unit. Never use any type of flammable or combustible liquid to start a fire. This includes gasoline, kerosene, lighter fluid and other such flammable liquids. Never leave a fire unattended in the fireplace. It is definitely not a wise choice to stoke up your woodstove fire to simmer overnight. Better to start anew in the frosty am than risk a fire while you're asleep.

**Alternative heating sources** such as kerosene heaters and lanterns have greater danger risks. Space heaters should be kept at least three feet from drapes, upholstery, walls or anything that might catch fire. Never use a space heater to dry clothes. Make sure you have good ventilation when using a lantern or kerosene heater because the carbon monoxide they produce can cause serious illness or prove fatal. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, deadly gas. Seriously consider installing a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector along with your smoke detectors.

These tips were taken from several free fact sheets available at the Eureka Fire Department's main office at 6<sup>th</sup> and C Streets.

June Crym is Caregiver Services' Program Assistant.

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***Lucy Ingrey shares with us below one of her favorite winter recipes. Butternut squash is a good source of dietary fiber and potassium.***

## Butternut Squash, Easy

### Ingredients:

1 butternut squash, peeled and diced into 1/2 inch cubes  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
Salt & pepper, to taste  
1/4 to 1/2 Cup shredded Parmesan cheese  
1 Tablespoon Olive Oil  
Butter—**or** Olive Oil—**or** Oil Spray for baking dish

1. Pre-heat oven to 425°. Lightly coat a 9" x 13" glass baking dish with butter, **or** Olive Oil, **or** oil spray.
2. Place cubed squash in a large bowl. Toss with 1 Tablespoon Olive Oil, minced garlic, salt and pepper.
3. Place squash mixture in baking dish. Sprinkle 1/4 to 1/2 Cup shredded Parmesan evenly over top of squash mixture.
4. Bake uncovered 40 to 45 minutes, until squash is tender. The Parmesan cheese will melt down into the squash mixture.

## Your Last Chance to Get \$600 Credit for 2004 Rx Costs

By Anne Antoville

You must enroll in the Medicare Discount Card Transitional Assistance Program by December 2004 in order to get \$600 credit towards prescription costs. You must have Medicare to get this card.

You can get this help if you are:

- ◆ Single and your income is \$1,047 per month or less; or
- ◆ Married and your income is \$1,405 per month or less.

There is no asset test for the \$600 credit. The \$600 credit cannot be counted as assets for any federal program.

You can get this \$600 credit if you apply for a Medicare discount card and use the Transitional Assistance Application. You can use the Medicare website [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) to choose a discount card or you can contact HICAP for free assistance.

If you sign up for Transitional Assistance this year, you will automatically get the \$600 credit for 2005 as well. If you don't use all the \$600 credit by the end of December, it will roll over for you to use next year.

The applications take about two weeks to process and must be processed by December in order to get the credit for this year.

You can call HICAP if you have questions or need help with the Medicare Discount Card. Call 443-9747 in Humboldt and 464-7876 in Del Norte.

**Anne Antoville is  
HICAP Program Manager.**

**In-Home Care Provider Training**  
**Saturdays**  
**January 22nd through February 26th, 2005**  
**9 am to 3:30 pm**

**33 hours—cost \$15—sliding scale**  
**Eureka Adult Day Health Services building**

**Pre-registration required.**  
**Call Laura Patterson at 443-4363 (toll free: 877-977-1604)**  
**as soon as possible. Space is limited.**

## **Caregiver Celebration & Resource Fairs**

In observation of National Family Caregivers Month, the Area 1 Agency on Aging collaborated with the In-Home Supportive Services Advisory Board and IHSS Public Authority to present three Caregiver Celebration and Resource Fairs in Eureka, Garberville and Willow Creek in November.

IHSS and Registry Caregivers were sent special invitations. Local service providers displayed information materials at tables, and a great time was had by all.

Thank you to everyone who helped organize these three events. Thank you, IHSS Advisory Board and IHSS Public Authority, for making this possible. Thank you, caregivers!

***The Caregiver Services and Eldercare offices will be closed  
for the holidays on Thursday, December 23rd; Friday,  
December 24th; Monday, December 27th;  
Thursday, December 30th, and Friday, December 31st.***

## **Be A Relief Caregiver**

We have had a good response from caregivers who want to be a part of our Relief list. We still have more caregivers who want to use the list than want to be on it!

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.

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