

Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

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*Partnership to Preserve Independent Living
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and the generous contributions of our readers!

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**....and @ www.Vitalco.net
24 hour a day—EVERYDAY
Information and Resources**

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION TO HELP US MEET OUR DAILY CHALLENGES AND AGE MORE SUCCESSFULLY.....

How to TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HOME ELECTRIC USE

It's difficult to take control of our power usage until we understand how the use of individual appliances and electrical devices affects our total use and expense. How much does it cost to watch television for an hour? How much does it cost to run the air conditioner?

The answer is based on the amount you are charged for each kilowatt-hour (kWh), which is found on your electric bill— "694 kWh x **\$0.14157**" - in this case, 14 cents.

<u>Appliance or Device</u>	<u>Time Used</u>	<u>@ .10/kWh</u>	<u>@ .12/kWh</u>	<u>@ .14/kWh</u>
Central air conditioner	1 hour	60 cents	72 cents	84 cents
Window air conditioner	1 hour	12 cents	14 cents	16 cents
Evaporative cooler	1 hour	7 cents	9 cents	11 cents
Fan (furnace, box or oscillating)	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents
Ceiling fan	1 hour	1 cent	1 cent	1 cent
100 watt bulb	1 hour	1 cent	1 cent	1 cent
Electric stovetop @ medium	1 hour	7 cents	8 cents	9 cents
Slow cooker	8 hours	16 cents	19 cents	22 cents
Microwave oven	1 hour	15 cents	18 cents	21 cents
Toaster oven	1 hour	4 cents	4 cents	4 cents
Range oven	1 hour	12 cents	14 cents	17 cents
Refrigerator with top freezer	Per day	45 cents	54 cents	63 cents
Refrigerator, side-by-side	Per day	49 cents	59 cents	69 cents

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Appliance or Device	Time Used	@ .10/kWh	@ .12/kWh	@ .14/kWh
Freezer (automatic defrost)	Per day	43 cents	52 cents	61 cents
Electric water heater—hand dishwashing	Per batch	8 cents	9 cents	11 cents
Electric water heater—dishwasher	Per load	29 cents	35 cents	41 cents
+ dishwasher—drying unit on	Per load	10 cents	13 cents	14 cents
OR dishwasher—drying unit off	Per load	6 cents	7 cents	8 cents
Electric water heater—bath	Per use	39 cents	47 cents	55 cents
Electric water heater—shower	Per use	32 cents	39 cents	46 cents
Electric water heater—washing machine	Per load	20 cents	24 cents	28 cents
+ Washing machine operation	Per load	4 cents	4 cents	5 cents
Electric clothes dryer	1 hour	4 cents	4 cents	4 cents
Vacuum cleaner	1 hour	6 cents	8 cents	10 cents
Clock	Per month	15 cents	18 cents	21 cents
Television	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents
VCR	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents
Computer with monitor	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents
Stereo/Radio	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents
Hair dryer (hand held)	1 hour	10 cents	12 cents	14 cents
Sewing machine	1 hour	2 cents	2 cents	2 cents

[SOURCE: Riverside Public Utilities ENERGY COST CALCULATOR]

Meeting the Challenges

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The cost of operating some of the appliances and devices is surprising! ...only 2 cents per hour to watch television!

By comparing the cost of alternatives, we can now make decisions that can save us money!

For example (using .12/kWh), if we normally run the central air four hours per day, thirty days a month, we can estimate the cost for the month to be \$86. [.72 x 4 hours x 30 days]. So now, if we are able to cut that down to three hours per day by running two ceiling fans for seven hours each, we can estimate

we will save about \$32 for the month.

If we use an evaporative cooler for a full 8 hours a day, instead of central air, we can estimate (again using .12/kWh) an expense of \$22 for the full month, or a savings of \$64 from the expense of using the air conditioner just 4 hours a day for the same period.

There are other ways to make our homes more efficient, such as keeping the blinds drawn to keep the sun out in the middle of the day and improving weatherization. Also see the related article, "Help with the Expense of Electricity" on Page 6. ■

SIMPLE AND EASY THINGS TO DO TO HELP KEEP YOUR HOME COOLER.....

- Close all blinds and shades prior to mid-morning.
- Open windows and shades after the sun goes down, to create a cool cross breeze.
- Avoid the use of washing machines, dryers, dish-washers and ovens from 10am to 6pm
- Use fluorescent light's wherever possible, - they give off far less heat, are more efficient than incandescent lights, and last 10 times longer.
- Use area or whole house fans.
- Also, cool misting systems, are available in most shopping centers, and home improvement stores, for affordable costs beginning at \$19.95.

The smaller systems attach to any garden hose, and are very easy to move around to accommodate your needs. The larger systems may be attached to any patio roofing or your main roof close to any doorway. ■

THANK YOU everyone who sent us donations to help us meet the expenses of publishing and distributing Meeting the Challenges!!!!

If you have not yet made your donation to help us, it's not too late! Please send us a donation of whatever amount you can afford.....we appreciate your support and could not do this without you!!

Please send your donation to:

Partnership to Preserve Independent Living
Meeting the Challenges Together
 6292 Rivercrest Drive, Suite K
 Riverside, CA 92507

Contributions to The Partnership are tax deductible under section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code, so keep a record of your donation here and save it with your tax records:

DONATION AMOUNT _____
 CHECK NUMBER _____ DATE _____

Thanks for your help!

NOTE FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

We are also very pleased, and grateful, to announce that we have received a **grant from the Desert Community Foundation**, to help support increased distribution of *Meeting the Challenges* in the Coachella Valley during this program year.

The Desert Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization that oversees funds set up by individuals and companies to make charitable grants. Sort of like a United Way and money manager, the Foundation pools the funds it receives and invests them in a way that will help the money grow to provide ongoing benefits in the communities they serve.

If you would be interested in establishing a charitable fund in your name, please contact them at (760) 674-9080 for more information. ■

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

KEEPING YOUR COOL—Understanding Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

by Gail Graham

Heat exhaustion occurs when a person's core temperature increases to dangerous levels. Normally, evaporation of perspiration from the skin cools the body and blood. High humidity can interfere with the cooling process and problems can also arise when we don't drink enough fluid.

High risk individuals are those with pre-existing conditions, like heart or lung disease. Also a person who is overweight will store extra heat in the body longer than those who are less heavy. As we age, our bodies become less effective at regulating internal temperatures and young children are more at risk because their bodies have not yet developed an effective thermoregulatory system.

To avoid heat related problems, we all should:

- Drink plenty of water [a minimum of 6 to 8 glasses each day].
- Not drink alcohol or caffeine as they contribute to dehydration.
- Stay out of the sun.
- During protracted heat, go to air-conditioned environments (like malls or libraries), as possible.

If there is trouble, the first sign will usually be heat cramps and may include twitching in a leg, arm or abdominal muscles. If you experience heat cramps, get out of the heat, immediately, if possible, and drink plenty of fluids. Not dealing with heat cramps can lead to a very serious condition called *heat exhaustion*.

The symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Faintness
 - Nausea/Vomiting
 - Pale, Cold and Clammy Skin
 - Rapid Heartbeat
 - Dilation of Pupils
- If a person has heat exhaustion, it is important to act quickly:
- Get the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned location.
 - Lay the person down and elevate the feet slightly.
 - Loosen or remove the individual's clothing.
 - Provide cool water (not iced) to drink, or an electrolyte sports drink.
 - Cool the person by spraying with cool water and fanning.
 - Monitor the person carefully—heat exhaustion can quickly become heat

stroke, which can be deadly.

If fever, especially greater than 103°F, fainting, confusion, or seizures occur despite treatment, Dial 911, or call for emergency medical assistance.

The symptoms of heat stroke include:

- An extremely high body temperature—above 103°F
- Rapid strong pulse.
- Throbbing headache.
- Dizziness.
- Nausea.
- Confusion.
- Unconsciousness.

Heat stroke is a life threatening emergency that can lead to death and must be treated immediately:

- Ask someone to call 911 emergency.
- Get the victim to a shady area.
- Cool the victim as quickly as possible, using whatever methods are available. For example: Immerse the victim in a tub of cool water, or place in cool shower, spray with cool water from the garden hose, or sponge with cool water. If the humidity is low wrap the victim in cool wet sheet and fan vigorously.
- Monitor body tempera-

ture, and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102 F.

DO NOT give the victim alcohol to drink.

Sometimes a victim's muscles will twitch uncontrollably as a result of heat stroke. If this happens keep the victim from injuring himself, but do not place any object in the mouth, and do not give fluids.

If there is vomiting, make sure the airway remains open by turning the victim on their side.

If emergency medical personnel are delayed, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.

[SOURCES: www.Vitalco.net; www.mayo.edu; www.Drkoop.com; www.medicinenet.com; www.seas.smu.edu; mayohealth.org.]

Protecting Pets and Animals from Heat Injury

Dogs are unable to perspire, so they are prime candidates for heat stroke, and the temperature does not have to soar for your pet to be at risk.

- Never leave your dog in the car while you run errands or shop or whatever. In a few short minutes the temperature inside

your vehicle can turn deadly.

- Dogs, Goats, Horses, Lambs, all types of livestock, tied up to posts or trees, are also at high risk. As the sun moves, the animal often cannot follow the shade, or gets tangled in their rope. So don't forget make sure that your animals can reach the shade safely.
- Here is another trick — place a water filled plastic container in the freezer overnight and then, in the morning, place it in the cage or pen with the animal. It will help absorb the heat and provide cool drinking water.
- Horses, if supplied with some sort of shade area and drinking water, usually will cope with the heat. However, only exercise your horse in the earlier hours of the morning or early evening. If the horse is overheated, after the exercise, walk the horse and rub it down to cool it before providing feed and water.
- Cats, are usually self sufficient, as long as they have access to shade, food and water. Do not put them outside in cages in the summer heat.

If you find your pet

has suffered some type of heat injury, it is important that you act quickly:

- Get them to a Vet immediately. If not possible, you must cool the pet down. For smaller animals, place them into a bathtub of cool water. For larger animals, drape them with cool wet towels and continue to pour cool water over the towels, until there is a significant reduction in temperature. Ice packs, in any form - e.g.: bag of frozen vegetables behind the back of the head will also help a great deal.
- Check your pet's temperature every five minutes, and once it reaches 103°F, take your pet out of the water, and towel dry.

At this point, it is not uncommon for pets to have problems regulating their temperature, so continue to keep an eye on your pet, remember a simple cooling off is not a guarantee of survival. There are other complications that can arise sometimes days later, such as kidney failure, so if you are still concerned, contact your Vet. ■

[SOURCES: www.all Sands.com; dogs.about.com/pets/dogs/library/weekly/aa082100a.htm]

Help With the Expense of Electricity

Assistance with utility bill payments.....

Department of Community Action – Utility Assistance

Seniors and persons with disabilities may be eligible for a one-time payment of a utility bill. Funding is limited and not all income-qualified individuals will be assisted. The application process, from receipt of application to payment, takes approximately 6-8 weeks, during which time the applicant must continue to pay their bill (in certain emergency circumstances, other arrangements are sometimes possible). If approved, payment is sent directly to the utility company. Application for Utility Assistance can be made at Community Action offices or at Energy Assistance Clinics across the County. Call the Department of Community Action (toll free) at 1-800-999-5584 for more information about the program, the next Energy Assistance Clinic in your area, for eligibility criteria, or to request an application form.

Community Access Center – Payment Negotiations

Persons with a disability can call Andy Learner of the Community Access Center at (909) 637-6900 and request assistance with negotiation of an outstanding bill. Sometimes negotiations are successful in reducing the amount of the obligation.

Rebates, rate reductions, etc.....

SCE – Discounted Rates for Low-Income Customers

SCE works with the state of California to provide discounted electric rates to low-income residential customers. Under Schedule D-CARE qualifying customers will receive a 15% discount off the standard residential rate. To qualify, household income must be less than \$18,200 for up to a two-person household. Additionally, the Edison bill must be in your name, you cannot be claimed as a dependent on another person's tax return, and the bill must be for your primary residence. Call SCE (toll free) at 1-800-736-4777 to request a D-CARE Application.

SCE – Rebates

SCE offers rebates to residential customers for the following appliance categories: Re-

frigerator replacement, installation of Central Air Conditioners, or a qualified Central Heat Pump, qualified Room Air Conditioners, purchase of a Whole House Fan, installation of an Evaporative Cooler, installation of qualified Thermostats, installation of Attic Insulation, Wall Insulation, and High Performance Windows, installation of a Water-Saving Showerhead, for Water Heater Pipe Insulation. In order to qualify for these rebates, customers must call SCE in advance and receive a "rebate reservation". Call SCE (toll free) at 1-800-736-4777 for a current list of Energy Star® qualified products and rebate amounts, to receive your rebate reservation, and to request a rebate application.

State of California – 20/20 Rebate Program

The 20/20 Program is a voluntary conservation program. The program will provide rebates to customers who reduce their Summer 2001 electricity usage versus last year. Customers will achieve a rebate worth 20 percent of their total Summer 2001 electricity bills if they reduce electricity consumption by 20 percent or greater.

Customers will receive a credit for each billing period from June 1 through September 30, 2001, in which they cut their electricity use by at least 20 percent. The credit will appear on bills mailed from July through October 2001.

Energy conservation assistance.....

SCE –Free or Low-Cost Conservation Services for Low-Income Customers

Customers may qualify to receive free fluorescent bulbs, for the installation of evaporative coolers to replace functioning air conditioners, for weatherization through attic insulation, weatherstripping/caulking, low-flow showerheads, electric water heater blankets, and for replacement of refrigerators that are more than ten years old with new energy efficient models. Call SCE (toll free) at 1-800-736-4777 for more information on these services.

Department of Community Action – Energy Conservation and Weatherization Programs

Seniors and persons with disabilities may be eligible to participate in Energy Conservation and Weatherization Programs to help make the home more energy efficient and reduce energy costs.

Weatherization services are provided on an on-going basis year round, but work is scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. Application for Energy Conservation and Weatherization Programs can be made at Energy Assistance Clinics, which are held throughout Riverside County. Call the Department of Community Action (toll free) at 1-800-999-5584 for more information about the program or the next Energy Assistance Clinic in your area, for eligibility criteria or to request an application form. ■

[SOURCES: State of California <http://www.flexyourpower.ca.gov> website; Southern California Edison <http://www.sce.com> website; Riverside County Department of Community Action; Community Access Center – Independent Living Centers in Riverside County.]

SCE's Medical Baseline Program

The medical baseline program is for residents who require continuous oxygen through a concentrator or other life support machines. Applicants must follow specific guidelines to participate.

The program offers discounts on service (lower rates on more electricity). Lifeline program processing

time is approximately one month.

Also, Edison will notify Lifeline users 1 to 3 hours ahead of their area black-outs.

Most medical supply companies do not routinely advise their clients of the Lifeline programs available through their electric company, although their technicians may tell the family about the program as a courtesy.

There are two basic categories of Durable Medical Equipment possibly affected by a power outage:

Oxygen Concentrators- Medical supply companies routinely send backup oxygen tanks to provide a backup supply of 24 – 72 hours.

Ventilators/Respirators have a built-in battery backup that lasts one hour and come with a Marine Gel Battery that can last a minimum of 8 hours up to 72 hours depending on the size of the battery.

Every Medical supply company that furnishes these breathing assistance devices also provides 24-hour emergency service.

For more information, call Southern California Edison at (800) 655-4555. ■

[SOURCE: HICAP]

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR WALLET OR PURSE IS LOST OR STOLEN ?

All of a sudden you've got big problems! Your driver's license, your social security card, your credit cards, your ATM card, your Medicare or other health insurance card, and maybe your keys – all gone and *in somebody else's hands!*

This can be a very serious and dangerous problem. Someone else could use your credit card and leave you with the bills! Someone could steal your identity, apply for bogus loans in your name and ruin your credit for years to come. They could empty your bank account. They could even pretend to be you and change your address so Social Security checks go to them instead of you!

But there are steps to take to limit your exposure and liability—Prevention is of course best!

- ▶ Keep minimal documents in your purse or wallet.
- ▶ Print minimal information on personal checks.
- ▶ Do not write your PIN personal identification number on your ATM card or on anything else in your wallet!

- ▶ When traveling, consider using a money belt.

If your wallet or purse is stolen, there are several things that you should do. The following things are suggested by the Federal Trade Commission:

- ▶ File a report with the police immediately and ask them for a copy of the report for your bank, credit card companies or insurance company.
- ▶ Report the loss or theft of your credit cards IMMEDIATELY – most have 24-hour toll-free numbers to call (If you report the loss before the cards are used, the Fair Credit Billing Act says you cannot be held responsible for unauthorized charges! If a thief uses your cards before you report them missing, you will only owe for \$50 of unauthorized charges per card.)
- ▶ Cancel each credit and charge card that was stolen and get new cards with new numbers. Call the fraud departments of the credit bureaus and ask them to place a “fraud alert” on your account and add a “victim's statement” to your file

that requests creditors to contact you before opening any new accounts in your name. (Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; Experian: 1-888-397-3742; TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289)

- ▶ Also, call your bank and notify them immediately of the loss of your ATM card or checks – The Electronic Fund Transfer Act limits your responsibility for unauthorized withdrawals to \$50 if you have reported the loss of your ATM card within two days.
- ▶ Cancel checking and savings accounts and open new ones – place stop payments on stolen checks – get a new ATM card, account number, and personal identification number (PIN).
- ▶ Report your missing driver's license to the department of motor vehicles.
- ▶ Change the locks on your home and car if your keys were taken.

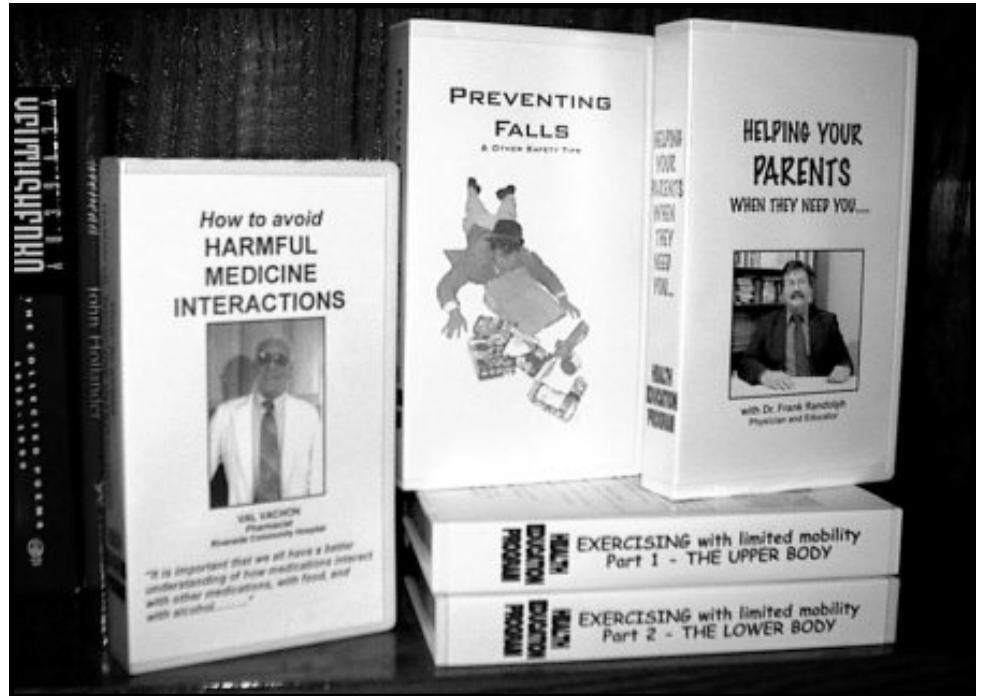
According to the Social Security Administration, you cannot get a new Social Security Number unless you can prove the you are “being disadvantaged because someone used your Social Security number”. There are recom-

mended ways to avoid these problems in the first place:

- ▶ Don't carry your Social Security Card in your wallet or purse (or other documents that have your SSN on them)!
- ▶ Review your earnings record annually to make sure that it is complete.

If you need to replace a lost Social Security card or request a replacement card, you need to complete Form SS-5 (which you can download from the Social Security website available in the Government Resources section of Vital Connections <http://www.Vitalco.net>). Or you can call 1-800-772-1213 or visit your local Social Security office. To get a replacement card, you will usually need to present one of the following identifying documents, which must be an original – not a photo copy: Driver's license; marriage or divorce record; military records; employer ID card; adoption record; insurance policy; passport; or a health Insurance card (not a Medicare card).

You may also file a complaint of identity theft with the Federal Trade Commission by calling (202) 382-4357 / TDD (202) 326-2502. ■



2001 Health Education Program V I D E O S
available now at public libraries
 and senior centers across Riverside County

The Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, in association with the Riverside County Office on Aging, has been making educational videos for three years now. This year's productions bring the total number of videos produced by the program to eighteen.

The new subjects are:

- ◆ *Preventing Falls & Other Safety Tips* - made in cooperation with Healthier Communities
- ◆ *Helping Your Parents When They Need You...*

- ◆ *Exercising with limited mobility* (in two parts: Part 1—the Upper Body; Part 2—the Lower Body)- made in partnership with Blindness Support Services
- ◆ *How to Avoid Harmful Medicine Interactions*, made in cooperation with the Generations of Addiction Committee of Riverside County.

In addition to being available at libraries and senior centers, also watch for broadcast on AT&T Broadband's Community Access channels across the County. ■

CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY: INTERVENING WITH CARE AND COMPASSION

By Mary McGraw, M.A., CADC

Is my loved one chemically dependent? How can I help? Am I affected? Intervening in someone's addiction does not require a scientific background nor expertise in the field of addictions. However, having some accurate information about chemical dependency can support a person getting the help he/she needs. A simple formula for assessing the extent of a problem can include the following questions developed by the American Society of Addiction Medicine <www.asam.org>:

- Have you ever tried to CUT down on your drinking?
- Do you get ANNOYED when people talk about your drinking?
- Do you feel GUILTY about your drinking?
- Have you ever had an EYE-OPENER? (a drink first thing in the morning)

This test can be taken by an individual and then followed by a visit to a professional with experience in addictions treatment. Although we have progressed in reducing the shame and increasing awareness in our

culture of the subtle progression of addiction, there often is a "silent compliance" with the disease. Those around the addicted person make excuses for the drinking or drugging, cover up for the person, support them either emotionally or financially and join in the "no talk" rule of addiction by not voicing concerns to other members of the family or to friends. If the older adult is also on prescription drugs (a common occurrence), the family or friends may unintentionally support the disease out of fear, lack of knowledge about chemical dependency and its progression, or fear of the consequences of speaking up and losing the relationship.

This fear of speaking up is a "symptom" of addiction called denial. Denial is simply sincere delusion (lying to oneself) on the part of the alcoholic/addict and the friends and family. It is an inability to see the reality of the negative impact of alcohol and drugs on the alcoholic/addict's personal, family and social life.

The scientific research has shown that addiction is a primary, progressive, chronic

and fatal illness characterized by a compulsive use of alcohol (or other drugs) despite negative social, physical, familial, job, and/or legal consequences. Addiction is a "brain" disease in which a certain percentage of the population becomes addicted and scientists have identified that there may be a genetic predisposition to the disease. It often runs in families.

There is help and hope, however. All levels of care are possible. "Inpatient Treatment" is residential detoxification followed by a structured therapeutic process of care. "Intensive Outpatient Treatment" is a structured program in the evenings while patient maintains daily life along with abstinence. "Extended Care" is structured care in a residential sober living community, involvement in 12 step groups (AA, Al-Anon, NA), and individual counseling with an addictions specialist - or any combination of these treatments.

Compassion and concern coupled with knowledge about the disease of addiction are powerful in-

terventions. Knowing who to call or where to get support is also a key element in the recovery process for the individual as well as the family. Speaking your truth to a friend or family member with compassion and kindness can be the deciding factor in that person seeking help. In the case of addiction, silence can kill!

Mary McGraw, M.A., CADC has provided education, prevention and treatment services in a variety of settings for the past 17 years and is currently at the Betty Ford Center, Rancho Mirage, California. Mary began her association with the Betty Ford Center as an Outpatient Counselor, providing primary care and program development in an intensive outpatient setting and recently accepted a position as Business Development Representative for the Center.



The Betty Ford Center's Mission is to provide effective alcohol and other drug dependency treatment services. Betty Ford Center offers a variety of Inpatient and Outpatient services for women, men and families as well as a new program for professionals – Professional Recovery Program. For more information, call Mary McGraw (760)773-2985 or Jerry McDonald (760)773-4318 or visit the Betty Ford Center website at www.bettyfordcenter.org ■

WarmLine — There to Help ***If You Are Raising Your Grandchildren!***

Through unexpected illness or injury, or some other unforeseen event, we can, all of a sudden, find ourselves **starting over as a parent again!** For most, this is no easy task!

Certainly the times have changed since we raised our own family, but there are many more complications to assuming this new parenting role:

- ◆ The children can be experiencing an emotional crisis
- ◆ There is the added financial responsibility
- ◆ Practical obstacles, like food, clothing, and school
- ◆ Legal and custody issues
- ◆ Medical services
- ◆ Not knowing where to go to get the assistance we need!

The Grandparents Program of the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, which is called "WarmLine", can help! Call

them at 1-800-303-0001 for the following services:

- ◆ Referrals to free/low cost legal service
- ◆ Referrals to free/low cost childcare providers
- ◆ Referrals to food & clothing assistance
- ◆ Referrals to guardianship, adoption and/or foster care services
- ◆ Referrals to organizations addressing the educational needs of the child and/or the caregivers
- ◆ Referrals for psychological assistance
- ◆ Referrals to medical organizations
- ◆ Referrals to other public or private social service organizations
- ◆and more!

From anywhere in Riverside County it is a toll free call to WarmLine at 1-800-303-0001 — get answers to your questions about raising your grandchildren. ■

ALSO, WATCH FOR THE RELEASE OF THE NEW VIDEO.....

Becoming the Parent of a Grand-Child !

.....from the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force of Riverside County.

This newest production, in the Health Education Program video series of the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and persons with Disabilities, is scheduled for late summer distribution to senior centers and public libraries across Riverside County.

For information and referrals to SENIOR SERVICES, call HelpLink first at 1-800-510-2020 !

CareGiving Can Bring Out the Best— and the Worst in Family Members.....

Often it is the daughter living closest who assumes primary caregiving responsibilities when parents begin to require assistance. Initially, this may be more frequent visits, special errands, maybe help with shopping or other transportation, and also the inclusion of mom and dad in family events. Other sons and daughters mostly maintain their contact with visits on special holidays, gifts and phone calls.

When a health crisis, or other traumatic event, occurs, everyone may spring

into action for a variety of reasons, which often includes non-constructive competition for a parent's affection. Often this translates into conflict among the children and confusion in the important decision-making that is necessary.

In the ideal solution, children need to set aside past issues, support the primary caregiver, establish communication that involves everyone, and recognize and put to use the special skills of each child in a cooperative manner. ■

[SOURCE: CareGiving Solutions Newsletter]

Cell Phone Collection

Office on Aging has begun accepting donations of new or used cell phones. Used phones must be able to hold a charge for at least one day and your donation must include the phone's charger unit. Phones that were mounted in a vehicle are not eligible for donation.

If you have a phone to donate, you may call Annette or Ted at the Riverside County Office on Aging's Senior HelpLink 1-800-510-2020—Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm. ■

New Program in the Coachella Valley Intends to Prevent Tragedy from Blackouts!

The *LifeSaver Program*, in the Coachella Valley, pairs community volunteers with seniors and persons with disabilities who may be at risk of death or who would face major health risks in the event of a rolling blackout in the hot Desert area. At risk individuals include anyone on life support equipment, individuals with a chronic illness or who otherwise are vulnerable to heat exposure. Volunteers are being trained to assist at risk individuals with enrollment in assistance programs, performing daily telephone checks, referring them to the needed services of social agencies, helping them participate in senior center activities and, in the event of a blackout in their area, will assist them with their immediate survival needs.

If you, or someone you know, is ill or has a disability, is confused or housebound, is unable to drive, is struggling to pay summer electric bills, call, or have them **call, the LifeSaver Program: From the west valley - (760) 323-5689 / From the east valley—(760) 347-1100 to register for the assignment of a program "Buddy". Or call the same numbers if you would like to volunteer to be a LifeSaver Program "Buddy"!!**

The *LifeSaver Program* was started by members of ACT1 (Aging Community Team), which is a consortium of almost 100 businesses and organizations that serve the aging adult populations of the Coachella Valley. ■

To Find Out About Transportation Availability (in Riverside County)... HelpLink 1-800-510-2020

What's Next for Shawn Casey O'Brien ?

by Richard Smith

Shawn Casey O'Brien was born in 1956 with Cerebral Palsy. The last 9 years he has been the Executive Director of the Unique People's Voting Project (UP) – a voter registration and education project for disabled citizens. He is a certified Paralegal and Mr. O'Brien is also the host of the radio talk show "Access Unlimited", which airs every Tuesday at 2 p.m. on KPFK radio.

The former singer songwriter has just finished a novel based on his experiences with grassroots organizing and participatory democracy, called *For the Love of Long Shots*. An excerpt from the novel will appear in a City University of New York anthology of stories due out this fall that will deal with the impact that the Americans with Disabilities Act has had on people's lives.

And now, Mr. O'Brien has decided to run for the office of California Secretary of State in 2002! O'Brien says that he wants to make democracy work...for everyone, and he thinks that "Running may be the quickest way to get California's 3 million disabled citizens, of voting age, registered and voting." According to Mr. O'Brien, his campaign will appeal to millions of voters because he says that he will "simply tell voters the truth on the issues of the day." He says that this "principled approach" to politics means that he will "not need media advisors, spin doctors or focus groups."

If Shawn Casey O'Brien is elected in 2002, he will be the first person with Cerebral Palsy to serve in the Executive Branch of California's State Government. In fact, to our knowledge, no one with a discernible disability has ever before served in the Executive Branch of California's State Government. We asked Mr. O'Brien how he thought having CP might affect his job performance as Secretary of State. He responded, "As one who has been blessed with great durability as well as mobility, I see little, if any, chance that my disability will adversely effect my ability to do the job." He continues, "I believe that the sense of empathy and tenacity that I gained from it will serve me well as Secretary of State." Mr. O'Brien already has a website at www.obrien2002.net. ■

ANSWER TO RIDDLE....

"Heat is energy, the movement of molecules. The hotter something is, the faster those molecules are moving ...temperature measures how fast those molecules are moving. That is important, but equally — if not more— important is how many of those molecules there are in a certain space...the more molecules there are, the more quickly heat is transferred. This is called conduction. In a 500 degree oven, the air molecules are moving very fast, but relatively speaking, there aren't very many of them." Because water is more dense, with more molecules in a similar space, it transfers heat more quickly and the result is a big "ouch" if we put our hand in boiling water! ■

[SOURCE: "How to Read a French Fry and Other Stories of Intriguing Kitchen Science" by Russ Parsons, Los Angeles Times Food Editor]

NEEDED: Organizations to collaborate with The Partnership to provide volunteer driver-escorts for needy persons in their communities....

—Participating volunteers—

- ◆ Receive mileage reimbursements
- ◆ Receive orientation and training at organization site
- ◆ Are covered by insurance for injury or damage claims arising from volunteer activities.

Call Leatha @ 1-877-301-9702 to register your organization or for more information.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT.....

CAREGIVER NEWS from the Alzheimer's Information Network (Reprinted with permission)**What Keeps Dementia Sufferers Awake at Night**

New research indicates that causes of sleep disturbance may differ in different kinds of dementia. However, for Alzheimer's-type dementia, the problem is associated with increased body temperature.

Dr. David Harper, a research fellow in the department of geriatric psychiatry at McLean Hospital in Massachusetts and at Harvard University, stated, "We and many others have observed that the daily activity and body temperature cycles of men with Alzheimer's were not only more active at night, but they also had a higher body temperature" suggesting that efforts be made to 'reset' the brain's body clock. Suggested strategies include giving patients the sleep hormone melatonin or exposing them to bright light at certain times of the day.

Melatonin is a hormone that's produced especially at night in a gland in the brain. It is released in response to darkness and inhibited by light. Traditionally, these therapies have not always worked for Alzheimer's patients, but Dr. Harper says this is because experts did not realize how severely delayed the sleep/wake clock of Alzheimer's patients was, leading them to

give the therapy at the wrong time of day.

A key concern in attempting to reset the sleep/wake cycles of Alzheimer's patients is that some studies show that the part of the brain responsible for those cycles actually deteriorates because of Alzheimer's disease. It's possible that at some point there will be too few cells left in that part of the brain to respond to melatonin or light therapy.

**Recent studies show Alzheimer's plaque can be removed**

Researchers have shown that the sticky deposits of an abnormal protein called beta-amyloid can be cleared from the brains of living animals. This finding suggests that the human immune system could be trained to help reverse or prevent at least some of the damage this protein does to the brains of people with Alzheimer's disease.

"This was an especially surprising process because it was so rapid. It really took only a few days for what looks to be almost complete clearance of amyloid-beta deposits," according to Brian Bacskai, PhD, a neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Additionally, the study also showed that a new imaging device called a multiphoton microscope could provide images of the

protein deposits in the brains of living creatures. Until now, the only way to confirm the presence of these deposits and to diagnose Alzheimer's with 100% accuracy has been after death, by direct examination of the brain at autopsy.

Beta-amyloid protein forms clumps in the brain known as senile plaques. Researchers do not know for certain, however, if the plaques are themselves responsible for the devastating memory losses associated with the disease, or whether they occur as a result of some other aspect of the disease.

Researchers developed a method for staining the plaque deposits for viewing under the multiphoton microscope. Then they stained antibodies especially designed to fight against amyloid plaques. What they discovered was amyloid protein deposits were destroyed and then surrounded by immune system mop-up cells, suggesting that the antibodies helped to fortify the body's own defenses in the fight against the plaques.

Boosting the immune system with antibodies might be an effective way to prevent beta-amyloid from accumulating in the brain—as well as a way to clear it up once Alzheimer's disease has set in. And the approach could be especially effective in the elderly, who often lack a strong immune-

Partnership Receives Donation From Liberty Mutual Group

Liberty Mutual Group has just completed the transfer of a parcel of land, in the foothills near Banning, to the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities.

Liberty Mutual selected the Partnership to receive this donation as a result of their deep interest in supporting projects for individuals with disabilities, and their wish to assist ongoing Partnership programs.

Founded in 1912 and headquartered in Boston, Liberty Mutual Group is one of the largest multi-line insurers in the property/casualty field, employing 37,000 people in more than 900 offices throughout the world.

The Partnership is honored to have been selected to receive the acknowledgement of Liberty Mutual Group and their support of The Partnership's efforts to help preserve independent living for persons with disabilities through its award-winning transportation and education programs. ■

The comments of reader and Internet user, *Dora Petersen* -

I look forward each quarter to receiving my copy of this newsletter. I can say with all honesty that I read it from front to back and not once have I been disappointed with the timely and newsworthy articles.

I recently discovered another aspect that is as challenging as the name of the newsletter. Are you up to "Meeting the Challenges" of Vital Connections, the Information and Resources website at www.vitalco.net? If you are, you are in for a real treat.

As a relative newcomer to the Internet, from time to time I have "surfed the net" looking for an answer to a question or for a particular piece of information. For reasons unknown, I routinely consulted Yahoo or MSN Search for the information I needed. Actually, I had known about www.vitalco.net's existence for some time. My untested hypothesis was that, true to its purpose, [vitalco.net](http://www.vitalco.net) was a website designed to "preserve independent living for seniors and persons with disabilities." I was a senior, although unwilling to admit it, living independently with no disabilities, and doing well—I thought. "Mother Nature," or was it "Father Time" finally caught up with me and I began to experience a problem that afflicts many persons my age. I needed information and this time I consulted www.vitalco.net. I have been on a "T.R.I.P." ever since.

When first beginning, I was gratified that it was easy to find the information I was looking for. But, why not—it's a website for seniors and persons with disabilities, isn't it? Yes, and no! When you look at the Home Page, there are three columns. The column on the left deals with issues for the senior and disabled, the column on the right is a listing of a host of reputable sponsors whose websites you can visit. However, and this is a big HOWEVER, the center column is where everyone can benefit regardless of age or physical condition.

I could go on indefinitely about the information and the resources I have visited there and how it has added to my fund of knowledge. Instead, I "Challenge" you to visit this valuable website. Spend a few minutes or hours just looking at all the information that is available to you. It is my honest belief that you will become a "user" just as I have. And, if you have a good friend you might tell that friend about www.vitalco.net. It will be your gift to your friend just as this is my gift to you. Happy surfing!

EDITOR'S NOTE: We appreciate the enthusiasm that Dora has for *Vital Connections* and thank her for her endorsement of our efforts. We think she is right! *Vital Connections* is a rich source of information and resources for everyone. ■

Need a number for senior services? ...Office on Aging Senior HELPLINK ...1-800-510-2020

HERE'S A RIDDLE FROM REAL LIFE.....

WHY IS IT ? ...That I can put my hand in a 500 degree oven and not get burned, but if I put my hand in boiling water (only 212 degrees!)

I will be burned badly??? Do you know the answer?

It's inside.....

Summer 2001



Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

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for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities*

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