

Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

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Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

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On-Line @ www.LivingPartnership.org

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24 hours a day—EVERYDAY
Information and Resources

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

LONG DISTANCE CAREGIVING.....

by Roberta Wertenberg, Coordinator, Fifth District Care Team

The telephone might ring at any moment, informing you that your elderly parent needs your help. That telephone call has already come for 47% of the work-force. The call might be initiated by an acute care hospital, an Adult Protective Service social worker calling from another state, or another concerned family member. You may also become aware of the need for your care through your own telephone conversations with your loved one. Once you determine that a trip to help your loved one will have to be made, there are some important steps to take in advance to maximize the time that you have available.

Knowing that you may need to take time away from your job, you may wish to begin by checking with the employee benefits department for your employer to determine if you are covered by the Family Leave Act (FMLA). This act entitles eligible employees to take up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave. If you have sick time or vacation time due you, you may also receive those benefits. Be sure to ask about the supplemental benefits available in your state of residence.

Before you leave, utilize your telephone and internet to identify resources in the immediate area of your loved one. If you wish to maintain a loved one in their community of residence, it is vital to rely on the resources provided in that specific location. Make appointments with your elderly parent's social worker, physician, lawyer, or accountant ahead of time. Be sure and take copies of the important pa-

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If You enjoy this publication and find the information it provides to be useful, please consider a donation to the non-profit Partnership to Preserve Independent Living.....

Continued funds to publish Meeting the Challenges are not guaranteed.....

....If you haven't contributed in the last year, please send your donation, in any amount, to:

Partnership to Preserve
Independent Living
6296 Rivercrest Drive, Suite K
Riverside, CA 92507

Thank you!!

Meeting the Challenges

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pers you hold for that loved one, such as Power of Attorney, Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, and Living Trust. If you have the time, consider speaking with friends, neighbors, or the religious leaders in the community. Their observations and suggestions may be helpful in creating an ongoing plan of care for your family member.

Upon arrival, be prepared to ask your loved one some really tough questions. This step is important in establishing the wishes of your loved one, in the event they become incapacitated. Have they executed a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare, Durable Power of Attorney, or Living Trust? Do they wish to receive "heroic measures" such as CPR? Have they considered appointing a surrogate decision maker for healthcare or financial matters?

In the event that a loved one no longer has capacity for decision-making, it may be necessary to locate any documents that the person has executed and filed with the county recorder, a physician, lawyer, or alternate family member.

Going to the home of your loved one is an important step in evaluating their continuing ability to live independently. Use all your senses

to assess the living conditions of your family member:

- Are their unusual odors or evidence of an inability to bath or dress?
- Are grab bars and non-slip mats installed?
- Is there a nutritious and adequate food supply in the home?
- Does the person appear to be eating meals and taking medications regularly?
- Has mail accumulated, have bills gone unpaid, are accounts overdrawn, or has there been a fraud victimization?
- Is the loved one visited regularly by friends, relatives or church members?
- Is transportation available?
- How far away is the nearest neighbor?

Assessing these issues will help you determine what supportive services need to be in place to ensure the safety and comfort of your family member.

If it has been recommended to you that your loved one be placed in a facility, you may wish to work with the discharge planner or social worker to facilitate the move. Whether you are looking at an assisted living or residential care facility, review their latest survey, visit the facility, and plan on maintaining ongoing communication with staff and

friends who visit regularly. You may wish to schedule a time when you can call either your family member, or a facility staff member (social service designee or activities director are good), to obtain regular updates on the person's condition and current needs.

Realize that other family members, or even your loved one, may express resentment rather than appreciation of your effort. Build a support system among other caregivers, a clergyman, or counselor. Whenever possible, have a family meeting to discuss how things are working. Share any recent changes in your caregiving role, such as increasing fiscal or emotional responsibilities. And don't be afraid to ask for help. Know that even the best caregivers feel a sense of guilt, believing that they have "failed to do enough."

**ALL OF THE FOLLOWING INTERNET RESOURCES ARE EASILY AVAILABLE AT
VITAL CONNECTIONS** <www.vitalco.net/Caregiver.htm> :

Administration on Aging: Extensive links to local agencies on aging.

AARP: Caregiving articles, online store, legal assistance.

Alzheimer's Association

Family Caregiver Alliance

Federal Citizen Information Center: Request the "Your Guide to Choosing a Nursing Home" publication and informational pamphlets on other subjects.

Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation: Talking With Your Parents About Medicare and Health Coverage

In Home Medical Supplies: Various products.

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys: Non-profit provides a resource of information, education, networking and assistance to those who must deal with the many specialized issues involved with legal services to the elderly and disabled.

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers:

Locate a professional care manager near your loved one.

National Council on Aging's Benefits Checkup

National Meals on Wheels Foundation: Locate organizations that can provide service for individuals.

Mail Order Medical Supply: Various products.

Medline Plus Health Information: A service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health.

Other resources are also available throughout the non-profit *Vital Connections* information and resources web-site @ www.vitalco.net

MY EXPERIENCES WITH LONG DISTANCE CAREGIVING.....

by Cis LeRoy

Another problem is that the phone may never ring! My mother and

her husband both have dementia and a host of physical problems. When I call them, they tell me they are both fine. When I speak with rela-

tives living in the area, I'm told they're "fine!". Then, I visit, only to discover a filthy house, smelly parents, moldy food in the refrigerator, severe loss of weight, piles of newspapers all over the house, feces rubbed into

the carpet, broken dishwashers and laundry machines, mite infestations and dirty dishes in the pantry.

Changes can be very gradual, and therefore not noticed by those who visit fre-

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Riverside County ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES1-888-960-4477

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quently. Often, relatives come to visit and chat, and really don't look around the house; they're too busy 'visiting'. Visiting once or twice a year, I see many things that are not noticed or thought to be important.

I've learned several important things: When you visit, LISTEN and WATCH. Take some 'down time' and pretend to read the newspaper. Then observe their routine activities. Is your mother opening the same mail several times a day? Does your father ever get out of his chair in front of the TV? Does your father's incontinence happen at the same time every day? What do they discuss? Are they worried about anything? Are they taking medications as prescribed? Do they understand what medications are for? In a recent visit, I discovered his incontinence only because I watched my mother wash 2 pair of pants each day. I also discovered that she didn't like to use soap because it 'ruined' the water.

Also, LOOK AROUND. Are there any wet towels in or near any bathrooms? Has your mother worn the same clothes all week? What is in her wallet? Where are their medications? What is in the

refrigerator? Are any cans about to explode in the pantry? Where are their house keys? Who cleans the house? To whom are they writing checks? How much cash is in the house? What are they eating? Who does the grocery shopping? I took my mother to the grocery store to buy milk and she kept asking "Is \$20 enough?"

Talk with them. Discuss their legal and financial situation. Have the Power of Attorney signed well before you need it. Help them find an attorney to draw up a will or living trust. Find out their internment wishes. Then ask them how you can help. In my case, they have a living trust that they have amended 5 times and even their own lawyer can't figure out what is what.

Then, develop your network. First, visit or write the doctor and follow-up by telephone to ensure you know when doctor's appointments are, what medications are being prescribed, the weight of your parents, and any other potential medical problems. Let the doctor know you are involved and that you need to be kept informed of their condition. Talk with the doctor after each medical appointment. After you leave the first message with the doctor,

with each subsequent message, tell the person "this is the 2nd, 3rd, etc., message I have left". Experience has taught me that guilt helps them return phone calls.

Talk to the neighbors and be sure they have your telephone number. Have them call you if your parents suddenly have new 'friends'. Talk to the local police department; sometimes they have 'registration' programs that list phone numbers to call in case of emergency, medications prescribed and health conditions. Let them know if you feel potential abuse of your parents and they may be able to help. I was able to arrange for the local police to drive by a few times per day and take note of any vehicles parked in the driveway.

Talk to the state's division of aging. Sometimes they know of local scam artists and can arrange to visit periodically. In my case, they scared off the relative of a neighbor who had been scamming them of \$3,000 in one month. That, combined with the police cruising by the house, was a simple solution to a potentially dangerous situation.

Visit the bank. On one recent visit, several women approached me to tell me that my mother was cashing several checks a day. They even

followed her outside to see who was bringing her to the bank. But, because she hadn't been declared incompetent, they could do nothing. However, they did agree to call me in the future if the situation did not stop.

Visit the pharmacy. My folks have had the same pharmacist for many years, and on a recent visit, I discovered they were having prescriptions filled several times because they kept losing the medications. Give the pharmacist your phone number and ask him to call you when medications are lost.

Hire a geriatric care manager. The *National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers* is a registry of agencies with expertise in social work, nursing and a host of other related fields. Their phone number is: (520) 881-8008. They will 'visit' your parents periodically and report back to you. They will let you know if the house needs cleaning, perhaps medications need changing, or perhaps they need ongoing assistance in the home to assist with activities of daily living. They can help interview and screen caregivers and can be your independent set of eyes to ensure all is well. Talk to

them at least once weekly.

Don't just rely on everyone telling you they are 'fine'. They may need help but are afraid to ask or are afraid they will be placed in a nursing home. Find out what you can do to ensure they are safe and healthy. If necessary, hire caregivers and speak with them at least once weekly. Discuss nutrition, bathing, medications, house cleaning and shopping. Prepare a checklist for the caregiver to complete each day. Have it readily available for review by care managers. Have them mail it to you each week.

You will be on the telephone a lot. But, hopefully you can be better prepared if the telephone rings with an emergency. As long as you let everyone know that you may be 2,000 miles away but also only a phone call away, they may actually pay attention to what they're doing. ■

"Worrying does not empty tomorrow of its troubles,But it empties today of its strength."

-Seen hanging on the office wall at the Lake Elsinore Unified School District's Ortega High School
by John Nelson.

A Short History of NUTS

Everyone's favorite, the cashew, is cousin to poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak. A native of the Americas, the cashew tree is an amazingly hearty evergreen tree, which can grow up to 50 feet high. Cashew nuts are lower in fat than most other nuts and supply fiber as well as protein and B Vitamins.

Almonds, mentioned in the Bible as one of the world's oldest cultivated foods, are really a fruit, related to peaches, plums and cherries. They were brought to California by the Franciscans who planted almond trees at their missions.

The walnut is probably the oldest nut. Remains of walnuts have been found in the Shanidar Caves of Iraq where people were living about 50,000 BC. Walnuts are rich in omega3 fatty acids, benevolent fats that combat heart disease.

Jars of peanuts were found ancient Inca graves, where they were left with the dead to provide food in the afterlife. In Brazil, a tea made from peanuts is considered a nerve tonic and is thought to have a calming and relaxing effect.

[SOURCES: www.foodmuseum.com; www.almonds4u.com; & www.aboutpeanuts.com]

For Information on how your organization can become a Driver Corps unit, call Gail at 1-800-510-2020

American Heart Association: EAT FATTY FISH

Omega-3 fatty acids benefit the heart health of healthy people, people at high risk of cardiovascular disease and patients with cardiovascular disease.

The American Heart Association recommends eating fatty fish, like mackerel, lake trout, herring, sardines, albacore tuna and salmon, at least two times a week.

Plant sources of omega-3 fatty acids are tofu and other forms of soybeans, canola, walnut and flaxseed oils.

Voters Approve Measure A: 69% FOR

As a result, transportation programs and services, in Riverside County, including special services for seniors and persons with disabilities, are now assured of funding through 2039.

Unlike in most other counties, Riverside County's Measure A is a comprehensive program that incorporates funding for freeways, streets and roads, public transit, commuter rail service and provides funds to meet the special transportation needs of seniors and persons with disabilities.

WHAT IS "HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE" AND WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU HAVE IT?

High blood pressure, also referred to as "Hypertension", occurs when blood vessels narrow causing more pressure inside the vessel, according to Jody McCluskey-Scully, R.N., at Precision Ultrasound in Palm Springs. She says, "Although you can't feel this extra pressure, over time it can cause damage to your blood vessels and organs and this can cause a heart attack, kidney failure or stroke."

According to McCluskey-Scully, optimal blood pressure for cardiovascular health and stroke prevention, is less than 120 over 80. The top number measures pressure when the heart contracts and the bottom when it releases between beats. "Normal" is considered to be below 130/85 and "High Normal" is between 130/85 and 139/89.

Two factors determine blood pressure: the amount of blood the heart pumps and the diameter of the arteries receiving blood from the heart. When the arteries narrow, they increase the resistance to blood flow. The heart works harder to pump more blood to make sure the same amount of blood circulates to all the body tissues. The more blood the heart pumps and the smaller the arteries, the higher the blood pressure.

Also, the kidneys control the fluid volume of blood, either by retaining salt or excreting salt into urine. When kidneys retain salt in the bloodstream, the salt attracts water, increasing the fluid volume of blood. As a higher volume of blood passes through arteries, it increases blood pressure.

McCluskey-Scully says that losing as little as 10 pounds can make a difference in the average person's blood pressure. Reducing fat and cholesterol in a diet by limiting total fat intake to 25-35% of total calories, and limiting salt to 1 teaspoon per day, are also recommended. Avoiding alcohol and stopping smoking will make a big difference too. And last, but not least, walking at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week, or other moderate exercise is recommended, though you should check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

[ADDITIONAL SOURCE: MSN Encarta, Learning and Research]

What Every Victim and Witness of Crime Should Know.....**Information from Riverside County Victim/Witness Assistance**

Victim/Witness Assistance Centers, in every county, have trained staff to assist the victims of crime. These "user-friendly" centers can provide an array of services to help you understand how the system works and keep you informed about your case.

In Riverside County, assistance centers are located in:

Banning.....(909)922-7136
 Blythe.....(760)921-7883
 Corona.....(909)739-4872
 Hemet.....(909)766-2385
 Indio.....(760)863-8408
 Perris.....(909)443-2900
 Riverside.....(909)955-5450

The toll free phone number for the California Victims of Crime Resource Center is 1-800-842-8467.

As a victim of a crime, you have the right to:

- Be protected from intimidation and harm
- Be informed about the criminal justice system and the status of your case
- Be informed of social services and resources available in the community
- Have help in dealing with the system and be accompanied to court for support

- Have your opinions considered at the sentencing and parole phases of a criminal case
- Be compensated for injuries, wage loss, and funeral expenses.

The job of the Victim/Witness Assistance Centers is to answer your questions and assist you to get the help and services to which you are entitled.

A program, called California Victim Compensation Program (VCP), provides financial help for out of pocket expenses. This program is funded from fines and fees paid by offenders, not California taxpayers.

The following losses may be paid for those who qualify:

- Medical/dental expenses for the victim
- Mental health treatment or counseling
- Wage or income loss
- Financial support loss for dependents of a deceased or disabled victim
- Funeral and/or burial expenses
- Job retraining for a disabled victim
- Home or vehicle renovation or retrofitting for a permanently disabled person

son

- Home security installation or improvements
- Moving/relocation expenses.

The amount of payments allowed for each loss is limited.

Those eligible for assistance include:

- A person who suffers an injury or the threat of injury as a result of a crime in California
- A California resident who suffers an injury or the threat of injury as a result of a crime or terrorism wherever it takes place
- Parents, siblings, spouses, and children of persons who suffer an injury or are threatened with injury during a crime or die as a result of a crime may be eligible
- Other family members of a victim, including the victim's fiancée, if he or she witnessed the crime
- A person living in the victim's household at the time of the crime or who had lived with the victim for at least two years in a relationship similar to a spouse, child, parent or sibling of the victim
- Someone who becomes

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Other CAC locations: ...Indio (760) 347-4888 ...Banning (909) 922-0153 ...Perris (909) 443-1158

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the primary care taker of a minor victim after the crime.

In order to qualify for services: you must cooperate reasonably with law enforcement and court officials; you must cooperate with VCP representatives; your behavior cannot have contributed to the incident; and you must first submit your expenses to your HMO, insurance company, and so forth. VCP will pay only expenses that cannot be covered by some other source of funding.

Also, you must file a VCP application within one year of the crime (or three years if good cause for the delay can be shown). ■

How to Know If You Should File a Tax Return..

Is your taxable income, not including Social Security, less than \$8,550 if you are single and over the age of 65? (Or under \$15,650 if you are married, both over 65, *not including Social Security*?) If so, you are not even required to file a tax return!

According to AARP, a common, but untrue, belief is that you have to file a tax return every year until you die and then someone has to file a "final" return for you. Many people spend a lot of money just to find out that they are not even required to file a tax return.

There is a way to find out first if you need to file a return and, if you do, to have

your return prepared at no cost. It is called "Tax-Aide". Tax-Aide is an IRS Stakeholder Partnership Program with AARP and IT IS FREE.

To find the Tax-Aide site near you, call your local Senior or Community Center. In California, most of the Tax-Aide sites are at these centers. If that doesn't work, you can call AARP at 1-888-227-7669, give them your zip code and they will tell you the location and days of operation of your nearest Tax-Aide site.

Once again, the service is free and you do not have to be an AARP member to use the service.

This information was provided by Richard Lutzenhiser, California-5 Communications Specialist, AARP Tax-Aide Program. ■

FOOD STAMPS.....

Food Stamps are America's primary form of nutrition assistance, providing coupons to purchase nutritional foods.

A person doesn't have to be on public assistance to receive food stamps. In fact, an individual can have a job and be eligible for them. Recipients include working families, single parents, elderly, or disabled individuals who need a little help stretching their monthly income.

To apply, simply pick-up an application at one of the following offices:

BANNING
63 S. Fourth Street

BLYTHE
1225 W. Hobsonway

CATHEDRAL CITY
68615 Perez Road, #9

HEMET
541 N. San Jacinto Ave.

INDIO
47950 Arabia Street

LAKE ELSINORE
575 Chaney Street

LA SIERRA
11060 Magnolia Ave.

MORENO VALLEY
23119 Cottonwood Ave.

NORCO
3178 Hamner Ave.

PERRIS
2055 N. Perris Blvd, #B

RIVERSIDE
4260 Tesquesquite Ave.

TEMECULA
43264 Bus. Park Dr., # B-1

Get answers to questions about raising grandchildren, call WarmLine at 1-800-303-0001

Are You A CareGiver Who Uses Internet Resources?

Our non-profit VITAL CONNECTIONS website <www.vitalco.net> has been designed to provide many sources of information and assistance for everyone who is committed to living an informed and healthy life.

For many of us, caregiving for loved ones is, or will be, a very important part of what we do everyday. VITAL CONNECTIONS is used by many caregivers as an essential and convenient link to helpful information

and assistance.

The Oregon Health and Science University is currently conducting a study of family caregiver internet use and experiences. If you are 18 or over, have been providing care for a family member who has been ill for at least three months and would like to participate in their study, you can access their website at:

<<http://www.familycaregiverinternetstudy.net>> ■

IF YOU ARE FILING TAXES THIS YEAR.... PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO MARK THE LINE ON YOUR CALIFORNIA TAX RETURN TO HELP SUPPORT THE CALIFORNIA SENIOR LEGISLATURE. - THANKS

"There is a time in the life of every problem..... when it is big enough to see, Yet small enough to solve."

- Mike Leavitt

NEWEST SPONSOR OF VITAL CONNECTIONS

SENIORS HELPING SENIORS provides in-home services of all kinds including: meal preparation, personal care, light housekeeping, grocery shopping, companionship, running errands, accompaniment to medical appointments, assistance with transportation, and more.

Rates are low, but all caregivers have received background checks and are bonded. There are no minimums and no contracts.

You can access their website through Vital Connections at www.vitalco.net or call 909.681.5720 for more information.

Do You Need a Computer But Cannot Afford a New One?

The Calimesa Breakfast Lions Club would like to help you get that computer. They have refurbished computers available for a suggested donation of \$150.

They will deliver your computer and help you set it up in your home, church, senior center, or wherever seniors, adults and children will benefit from having the use of a computer. Deliveries are grouped and scheduled together in outlying areas of Riverside County.

These computers are mainly Pentium 100's with either Windows 95 or Windows

98 operating systems. They come complete with a monitor, keyboard and mouse.

If you, or your organization, would like to request a computer, you may call Lion Laura Palmer at 909.335.9713 and leave a message, or you can send your request and donation to the Calimesa Breakfast Lions Club, P.O. Box 312, Calimesa, CA 92320.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lions Clubs are service organizations that are committed to giving back to their communities. Their motto is "We serve."

Inland CAREGIVER RESOURCE CENTER..... 1-800-675-6694

Is Your Loved One Receiving Proper Care?

by Michael S. Goryan, Director of Education, RFCE (Resources for Continuing Education)

How do you know if your loved one, in a care setting, is receiving proper care? California's Assembly Bill 1690 mandates that all care employees receive elder abuse training, but it's important that you also know the signs of improper care. Simply, you need to be observant and inquisitive.

Look at your loved one's skin, hair, mouth and lips, toes and fingernails, and genitals:

- Is the skin loose? "Pinch" the skin and see how fast (or slow) it returns to normal. If it's slow, then the individual may not be getting enough fluids or food.
- Are there scabbed-over wounds? Skin tears occur especially if the individual has a history of taking steroids, but several scabs may also indicate needless grabbing or pulling.
- Do you observe "breakdown" (bedsore) on the buttocks, heels, ears, back of the head, shoulder blade, low back, inside the knees or ankles? This shows that the individual has not been out of bed enough, been sitting too long in a wheelchair, or not turned every two hours (standard procedure). Bedsores can quickly advance into a condition that requires surgery to heal.
- Is the resident's hair combed or matted? Is it clean or flaky? Does it appear greasy or too long? These can be signs of neglect.
- Look at the lips and mouth. Does it appear that the teeth and gums have been brushed? Are the lips cracked, or the roof of the mouth cracked or bleeding? These are signs of poor care, including failure to provide liquid or the mouth has not been

moistened. This frequently occurs when the individual breathes through their mouth.

- Are the nails overgrown, cracked, discolored or dirty?
- Although examining your loved one's genitals may not be something you feel comfortable doing, it is necessary to examine for redness, sores, urine or feces odor, cuts or bruising. Finding any of these things might indicate abuse and neglect.

Being inquisitive means to look at weight records. Has there been a steady decline? This may indicate loss of appetite, not taking the time to assist, or not being fed at all. Check all records regarding a "feeding schedule" and eating percentages. Perhaps visit during meal times to help or to observe how much attention is given to feeding or assisting.

Look at blood pressure records, staffing records, and read nurses notes (any recent falls or events). Reports of injuries are required to be sent to the Department of Health Services (nursing homes) and the Department of Social Services (residential care). As a family member you have the right to be notified of all incidents that may affect the individual's health, welfare and safety.

Look, too, at medication records to see if medications are being given as ordered by the doctor. Were any medications missed and, if so, why?

Finally, use your nose. Heavy use of air fresheners or a strong smell of disinfectant may indicate that the facility is not utilizing good care techniques to keep its occupants clean, dry and changed as often as necessary.

(Continued on page 11)

If you suspect that a loved one has been abused, you must take action. First talk with the facility's Administrator about how to correct the care deficiencies. Your next recourse is to call Community Care Licensing (for residential care, board and care, assisted living) for Riverside/San Bernardino Counties at (909) 782-4207. For skilled nursing facilities, call the State's Attorney General's office at (800) 722-0432. ■

A NEW TRANSPORTATION SERVICE IN THE DESERT...

Coachella Valley residents, from as far away as North Shore and Cabazon, now have more travel options to reach destinations in the Valley or in the Inland Empire, thanks to some new *ReadyRides* services of Community Partnerships of the Desert, Inc.'s (CPD) Social Services Transportation Resource Center (SSTRC).

ReadyRides provides shared ride, multi-use van service. *ReadyRides Plus* offers service, through SunLine's *SunLink* to clients requiring medical care at the Riverside County Medical Center in Moreno Valley or the Loma Linda University Medical Center. *ReadyReserve* offers social service agency clients (persons with disabilities or seniors sixty years and over only) customized service within Riverside County based on group size and destination.

For more information, or to schedule a transportation analysis for your agency, you may call Community Partnerships at 343-3456, extension 409. ■

How to Tell the Flu

from the Common Cold.....

The symptoms for a cold are different than the symptoms of influenza. For the common cold:

- Symptoms appear slowly (*flu-sudden*)
- No fever with cold (*flu-high fever*)
- Physical weakness slight (*flu-severe*)
- Cold cough severe or hacking (*flu-dry*)
- Sore throat with cold (*flu-none*)
- No muscle aches with cold (*flu-achy*)
- No head ache with cold (*flu-head ache*)
- Runny nose with cold (*flu-dry and clear*)
- No chills with cold (*flu-chills*)
- Sore throat with cold (*flu-no sore throat*)
- Appetite is normal (*flu-decreased*)

[SOURCE: The Nemours Foundation]

According to the results of a study, reported in the *Ear, Nose and Throat Journal*, a double-blind, placebo controlled trial of an over-the-counter zinc nasal gel (Zicam®), showed this medication to reduce the duration of a cold's symptoms by two-thirds, when the medication is administered within the first 24 hours of a cold's onset. The zinc apparently interferes with the ability of the cold virus to attach to, enter or infect nasal cells. The only side-effects, reported by study participants, was a slight burning or tingling in the nose, which was reported by less than half of those using the zinc gel and slightly fewer of those using the placebo.

According to the National Institutes of Health, treatments for flu include:

- Resting in bed
- Drinking plenty of fluids
- Taking over-the-counter medicine such as aspirin or acetaminophen
- Antiviral medications, by prescription—*antibiotics should not be taken.* ■

RIVERSIDE TRANSIT AGENCY IS NEWEST VOLUNTEER DRIVER CORPS PARTNER.....



TRIP, the Partnership's nationally recognized, transportation assistance program for older adults and persons with disabilities, is thrilled to welcome RTA as its newest *Volunteer Driver Corps* partner.

Tessie Johnston, Customer Service Specialist for RTA and Jim Kneepkens, RTA's Marketing Director, are shown here accepting a certificate of appreciation for RTA's commitment to help meet the special needs of TRIP Program participants.

TRIP's *Volunteer Driver Corps* is sort of like the National Guard of Transportation—serving those who are unable to use other forms of transportation and who would be unable to meet their transportation needs without TRIP's help. Those needing on-going transportation assistance, anywhere in Riverside County, may call 1-800-510-2020 to apply. ■



ARE YOU WEARING THIS PIN?

If you haven't joined the Volunteer Driver Corps of the TRIP Program yet, please consider joining today!

As a volunteer, you can receive up to \$84 each month for each person you help—tax free! There is no risk, since you are also covered by our insurance when helping as a volunteer and you get the special joy that comes from doing something really important.

For more information on how you, or your organization, can participate in this program of critical community support, call Gail at 1-800-510-2020.

**NEW VOLUNTEER DRIVER CORPS PARTNERS INCLUDE:
THE BRAILLE INSTITUTE, RANCHO MIRAGE; THE CHURCH OF TODAY, SUN CITY; HELPING HANDS OUTREACH THRIFT AND ANTIQUE, BANNING;
AND THE RIVERSIDE TRANSIT AGENCY.**

LIVING WITH POST-POLIO SYNDROME.....

Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS) affects approximately 75% of paralytic and 40% of other polio survivors. The symptoms occur about 35 years after the polio virus attack and include muscle and joint pain, muscle weakness, sleep disorders, overwhelming fatigue, heightened sensitivity to hot and cold, increased sensitivity to anesthesia, and also difficulty breathing and swallowing.

PPS are diagnosed by excluding all other possible causes for PPS symptoms, as there is no specific test to identify PPS. Generally, PPS symptoms are not life threatening, but polio survivors can experience difficulties waking up from anesthesia and can experience significant breathing problems from something as common as a local dental anesthetic.

PPS is caused by the body trying to do too much with too few damaged neurons. During a polio virus attack, up to 95% of brain stem and spinal cord neurons are damaged and at least 50% are killed. Those that remain "sprout" new connections to muscles and eventually suffer from overuse, fail and die, causing the muscle weakness and fatigue. Overuse of weakened muscles causes the muscle and joint pain.

Exercise is NOT the answer! Muscle strengthening exercise adds to overuse. The Post-Polio Letter Campaign suggests that most polio survivors have significant decreases in fatigue, weakness and pain once they start taking care of themselves and any sleep disorders are treated.

Polio survivors must walk less, plan rest periods throughout the day and stop activities before symptoms start.

The use of appropriate assistive devices,

such as braces, canes, crutches, and wheelchairs, helps a great deal, but the polio survivor must often overcome life long efforts to appeal "normal" and accept the reality of their new condition before they can accept the need to "eat breakfast, use a cane or rest between activities."

Family and friends can help by recognizing that a polio survivor's life style will need to change and accept the physical limitations that appear and the new need to perhaps replace the discarded childhood brace, and reduce daily schedules to manageable levels. Family and friends need to be willing to take on taxing physical tasks, which the polio survivor may be able to do but should not do. ■

FREE BUS TICKETS

The *Transportation Access Program* (TAP), administered by the Volunteer Center of Riverside County, distributes bus tickets to over 160 social service agencies in Western Riverside County.

Persons, who are truly needy, can get free tickets for emergency or urgent travel to medical appointments, job interviews or other needed services. Some of the agencies where tickets can be requested include the Salvation Army offices in Corona, Perris, Riverside and Hemet, the Corona Senior Center and the Perris Senior Center, Blindness Support Services in Riverside, the Inland Aids Project and People Reaching Out in Riverside.

For more information, call the Volunteer Center of Riverside County at (909) 686-4402. ■

Superando Nuestros Re-

¿Está usted recibiendo el Cuidado MediCal que necesita?

Caasi 1 de 7 de nosotros no está cubiertos por ningún seguro de salud, según la Agencia Healthcare Research and Quality. Y, luego, hay aquellos de nosotros que simplemente no vamos al doctor a menos y hasta que algo ya no está bien.

Si no vemos a un médico regularmente para exámenes, no estamos recibiendo servicios de salud preventivos importantes, entre ellos pruebas que ayudan a descubrir problemas potenciales antes de que se vuelvan serios! He aquí algunos exámenes que debemos todos tener regularmente:

1. Examen de presión sanguínea. La presión alta de la sangre puede llevarnos a enfermedades del corazón y del riñón y embolias. La presión alta de la sangre puede controlarse por dietas, ejercicio y medicamentos para prevenir complicaciones más serias.

2. Examen de colesterol. Los niveles de colesterol empiezan a subir con la edad y al subir de peso. Si no se revisa, el colesterol alto puede resultar en enfermedades serias del corazón o cardiovasculares. Se prescriben frecuentemente cambios de dieta, ejercicio y pérdida de peso. En algunos casos, puede necesitarse medicamentos.

3. Niveles altos de azúcar. La diabetes es una enfermedad terrible si no se descubre y no se trata. Puede llegar a pérdida de vista, falla de riñones y mala circulación en las extremidades que resultan en amputaciones. Uno de cada cinco adultos mayores de 65 tienen diabetes y las probabilidades son peores si alguno de la familia la tiene o si está pasado de peso.

4. Exámenes de cáncer. La mayoría de los cánceres de mama ocurren en mujeres mayores de 50. todas las mujeres sexualmente activas tienen riesgo de cáncer. Ambos, mujeres y hombres mayores, tienen mayor probabilidad de tener cáncer de colon.

El cáncer de próstata es muy común en hombres mayores de 50, especialmente afroamericanos, y aquéllos con historia familiar de la enfermedad. El cáncer de la piel es muy curable cuando se descubre tempranamente. Cánceres orales ocurren con frecuencia en personas mayores de 40, que hayan usado tabaco o alcohol.

Usted puede sentirse muy bien pero, si no ha tenido estos exámenes, o si no ha visto a un doctor regularmente, ¡la mejor cosa que puede hacer es planear ahorita mismo para recibir el cuidado de salud que necesita!

Los centros de atención familiar del Condado de Riverside o Family Care Centers son de costo bajo y están ubicados a conveniencia. Hay varios planes de pago disponibles:

- Medi-Cal
- Plan para habilidad de pagar (ATP) basado en ingreso, tamaño familiar y servicio proveído
- Se aceptan personas certificadas como médicamente indigentes (MISP)

Llame a la clínica más cerca de usted hoy:

- Banning Family Care Center, 3055 W. Ramsey, Banning, CA 92220 (909) 849-6794
- Blythe Health Center, 1293 W. Hobsonway, Blythe, CA 92225 (760) 921-5670
- Corona Family Care Center, 505 S. Buena Vista, Corona, CA 92882 (909) 272-5445
- Hemet Family Care Center, 880 N. State St., Hemet CA 92543 (909) 766-2450
- Indio Family Care Center, 47-923 Oasis St., Indio, CA 92201 (760) 863-8283
- Jurupa Family Care Center, 9415 Mission Blvd., Riverside (909) 360-8795
- Lake Elsinore Family Care, 30195 Fraser Drive, Lake Elsinore (909) 674-3250

.....***Superando Nuestros Retos***

- Palm Springs Family Care, 3111 E. Tahquitz Canyon, Palm Springs (760) 778-2210
- Perris Family Care Center, 237 N. 'D' Street, Perris (909) 940-6700
- Riverside County Regional Medical Center, 26520 Cactus, Moreno Valley (909) 486-4000
- Riverside Neighborhood Health Center, 7140 Indiana Ave., Riverside (909) 358-6000
- Temecula Family Care Center, 41002 County Center Drive, Bldg. B, Temecula (909) 600-6300

El sitio internet de las Agencias de Salud Comunitarias de Riverside es <http://www.rivcoph.org>

Los Sistemas de Salud Comunitaria operan clínicas de atención primaria a bajo costo y gratis en muchas áreas del sur de California. Los servicios pueden ser provistos por:

- MEDI-CAL and HMOs médicos
- Una escala según la capacidad de pago
- Programas estatales, entre ellos PACT y PE sin costo por medio de subsidios "Expanded Access" para los que califican.

Locales de clínicas de los Sistemas de Salud Comunitaria de nuestra área son:

- *Eastside Health Center*, 1970 University Avenue, Riverside (909) 276-0661
- *Inland Empire County Health Center*, 18601 Valley Blvd., Bloomington (909) 877-1818
- *Fallbrook Family Health Center*, 617 E. Alvarado Street, Fallbrook (760) 728-3816
- Se tiene planeada una nueva clínica de salud familiar en el Complejo Comunitario Mead Valley en enero de 2003. Algunos servicios de exámenes ya están disponibles. El Complejo Comunitario Mead Valley se ubica en 21091 Rider Street, Perris. Su número telefónico es (909) 657-0686. ■

Translation provided by Leopoldo Treviño

Estos Recursos Son Para TI !! Usalos

Transportacion:

- **Sundial Transportacion (Sundial Transportation)** (760) 341-6999 (por el costo de un \$1.00 o un \$1. 50 le pueden proveer transportacion)
- **Transportacion Para Ciegos (Blind Transportation)** (760) 323-4414 (costo de membresia \$25.00 anual y de \$1-\$2 por viaje)

Comida Para El Necesitado:

- **Comida en Necesidad de Distribucion (Food in Need of Distrubution)** (760) 328-3663
- **Caridades Catolicas(Catholic Charities)** (760) 347-1188 Indio; (760) 202-1222 Cathedral City

Otros Recursos:

- **Programa de Diabetis (Diabetese Program)** (760)773-1403
- **Instituto Para Ciegos(Braille Institute)** (760) 321-1111 (locacion en Cathedral City, tiene actividades y provee transportacion)
- **Programa Asistencia En Casa (In Home Support Services)** 1-800-491-7123 (para personas mayor o incapacitadas)
- **Stroke Activity Center** (760) 323-7676 (centro de actividades para personas victimas de un ataque al corazon)
- **Grupo De Apoyo-Alzheimers (Alzheimers Support Group)** (760) 327-2732, (760) 346-3119

Touching Hearts

There's a comforting thought at the close of the day When I'm weary and lonely and sad
That sort of grips hold of this poor old heart And bids it be merry and glad. It gets in my being, and drives out
the blues And finally thrills through and through, It's just a sweet memory, that chants this refrain, "I'm glad I
touched hearts with you."

- author unknown

Winter 2003



Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

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**"Youth is a gift of nature,
But age is a work of art."**

- Stanislaw J. Lec

Inside..... ▶ Long Distance Caregiving and the companion article ▶ My Experiences with Long Distance Caregiving ▶ What Is High Blood Pressure? ▶ How to Know if You Should File a Tax Return? ▶ Is Your Loved One Receiving Proper Care? ▶ Living With Post-Polio ▶ ¿Está usted recibiendo el Cuidado MediCal que necesita?.....AND MUCH MORE!!!!