

Pulse of the Center...

A Message from Our Director

Finally....Spring is here and we are loving it. We have spent several afternoons on the patio enjoying refreshments, reminiscing about summer fun and planning our May calendar. We have planned several outings in May including a trip to Longwood Gardens on the 4th, our monthly trip to the SPCA to donate our homemade dog biscuits and other goodies, a trip to the Tyler Arboretum and of course our Lunch Bunch trips. Those choosing not to attend an outing can rest assured that we will have fun and interesting programs planned at the center as well. I will be sending an informational letter to each family regarding the details of our outings.

I am pleased to say that we had a very successful Pennsylvania Department of Aging state inspection in April. This was our first comprehensive inspection and all was found to be in good order.

Thank you to those who have

returned the satisfaction survey. We value your opinions and feedback. I realize that we are all very busy and it takes time to complete the surveys but please know that we use the information collected in a variety of ways with the ultimate goal of pro-



Stephanie and Vicki pose with the pansies they planted.

viding the very best services, programs and support possible.

In the last couple of weeks, we have received several inquiries from friends, coworkers and acquaintances of our current families. Thank you so much for spreading the word about SarahCare.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Thomas Graham at Graham Neurological Associates in Paoli for writing this month's article on Recognizing and Managing Safety Issues. Thank you for your insight and expertise on such an important topic. If you would like to speak with Dr. Graham, he can be reached at 610-644-6251.

My door is always open so feel free to stop by or give me a call. Again, thank you for the opportunity to get to know and care for your loved ones.

Karen Miller
Executive Director

Nurses Notes...

Laughter is good for the body and soul. It can thwart stress, boost the immune system and help protect against the flu and even cancer. In a study people, who knew in advance that they would be watching a funny movie, had elevated levels of growth hormone and more betaendor-

Laugh it Up!

phins (feel-good brain chemicals that block pain and help with relaxation). These levels held steady throughout the hour of viewing, as well as afterwards, for up to 24 hours. A mere 30 minutes of comic relief may be all you need for similar health benefits.

So go ahead, laugh often and do it out loud. It's you...and your friends', family's and cronies' best medicine!!

Jeanne Lutzvitch, LPN
Wellness Nurse

Special points of interest:

- *Dr. Thomas Graham shares his experience with safety issues around the home and Alzheimer's Disease.*
- *SarahCare of Great Valley passes first comprehensive inspection by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.*
- *We are looking for volunteers who have a desire to share their special talents with seniors.*

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Heartbeats...

Newsletter Tidbits

Lori Mason, our beautician/barber is scheduled to come to SarahCare on Tuesday, May 29th and Tuesday July 3rd. If your family member is not regularly scheduled to have service but you would like to schedule a service, please let me know a few days in advance. Also, if your family member does not attend on Tuesdays, I can make arrangements with Lori to come on other days with advance notice. A list of services and pricing is available at the center. Charges for services are simply added to the monthly bill.

Mark Your Calendar

SarahCare has partnered with MacElree Harvey LTD to present an evening program on **“Advanced Health Care Directives and other Estate Planning Tools... What’s New”**.

The program will be held on Tuesday, May 22nd from 5:45 PM until 7:30 PM at SarahCare. The evening will begin with a wine and cheese reception from 5:45-6:30pm followed by a light supper and the program. Respite care for our participants can be provided with advance notice. Please RSVP by May 20th to Karen at 610-251-0801.

Volunteer Search

We are currently looking for volunteers that have a desire to work with our participants in a variety of ways.....music, sing-alongs, art, gardening, wood working or whatever you might have a special talent in. Maybe your church or social group would like to provide outreach. Over the summer months we would love to have kids who need community services hours, rank advancement service hours for scouts or those who just love to be with

seniors. For more information please call Karen at 610-251-0801.

SarahCare Outreach Programs

So many of you have told us how happy you are with the programs and services at SarahCare and that you wish you would have known about us sooner. We are working hard to educate the community in a variety of ways about what Adult Day Services are and what SarahCare is all about. If you belong to a social, business or church group or club and would like us to talk about what Adult Day Services means and what SarahCare does, just let us know. We will be happy to make all of the arrangements.

Alzheimer’s Support Group

Join us on May 9 at 12:00 for this month’s support group meeting. Please RSVP.

SarahCare® Family Moments

Ceramics Group

Our new ceramics group is underway. Everyone selected a ceramic piece to paint and decorate. Next, we’ll seal them with a polyurethane coating and then they are ready to take home for all to admire. Great job everyone!!!



Pretzel Making

Always willing to try something new, Sam and Stephanie tried their hand at pretzel making.



Morning Exercise Group

Each morning everyone gets a chance to do some stretching and chair exercises. Sometimes we hear great jokes and stories and even dance during this time.





Professional Corner...

INDIVIDUALS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: Recognizing and managing safety issues

Among the many management and treatment issues that arise in the care of individuals with Alzheimer's disease, safety issues are a prominent concern. These issues often mirror the generally puzzling manifestations of this disorder. As can be true for the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease in general, safety problems will not only change over the months and years that the disease progresses, but can fluctuate from day-to-day and even hour-to-hour as patients demonstrate greater or lesser impairment or insight into their condition. The individual who was careful, cogent, attentive, and steady of gait in the morning may become agitated, impulsive, or even combative in the evening. Therefore, as a general measure, it can be best to consider the patient to be potentially at their worst at any given time, recognizing that this may sometimes result in greater oversight than needed. Although the patient may be resistant to excessive attention, this approach will more reliably provide for the necessary levels of safety a patient requires.

More specifically, even relatively early in the disorder, general attention to the living environment can be helpful. Often the best approach is to treat the living environment as though young children were present. An environment that is "childproof" will be relatively more safe for these individuals. Restricting access to stored medications, caustic agents, and, later in the disease, access to sharp implements and heated cooking surfaces can be helpful. Attention must be paid to

Dr. Thomas Graham, M.D.

limiting access to stairs, especially at night or when otherwise unaccompanied, and particularly for those individuals who are prone to fall or wander. Likewise, bathrooms, with their multitude of hard surfaces, can be especially dangerous, particularly for those with disturbances of gait who might otherwise be prone to fall in the best of circumstances. Shower seats, handicapped handrails, and tile adherent carpeting can be helpful.

Early in the course of disorders that affect memory, many individuals can remain self-medicating. Still, diligent oversight is required to make certain that medications are being taken appropriately, regularly, and as prescribed. Immediate intervention and direct oversight becomes required when there is evidence or concern for variability in dosing, or potential for double and even triple dosing of medications when patients forget they have taken a dose. Beyond administering medications directly, limiting available doses to a single dose at a time can be useful.

Unfortunately, many older individuals with memory disturbances have other medical problems that complicate management. Gait disturbances that accompany many dementing conditions can provoke falls with resultant fractures and head injuries. Keeping pathways free of obstacles, both

inside and outside the home, can help. For patients using walkers and canes, adequate space within the home is necessary. Given the concern for stairs noted above, one-floor living can sometimes be the best option. Similarly, deafness and vision difficulties cannot only provoke withdrawal, but require greater attention to the environment. Deaf individuals may not be aware of alarms or other audible signals in the home. The visually impaired will be more prone to misidentify medication or misread instructions and are likely to fall over objects not otherwise in their field of vision.

Even in the best of circumstances, recognition and physical management of the environment is not always enough. Some patients will require medications for behavioral management of wandering, combativeness, and other behavioral changes that can impair their safety. Avoiding medications that can contribute to increased risk of falling and worsening confusion is likewise important.

A variety of professionals can be available to assist, including occupational therapists to evaluate the home, professional caregivers to assist in care, and visiting nurses to provide in-home assistance with medications and health needs. It is also important that your physician work in concert with the caregivers. Ultimately, when safety is a moving target, only a regular system of oversight and attention to change can prevent in-home safety accidents.

Activity Highlights for May

Longwood Gardens Trip

As Karen mentioned, we will visit the conservatory in Longwood Gardens on Friday, May 4th. Please be sure your loved one has a jacket or sweater to keep them warm as we will be outside to walk to the building. Lunch will be served earlier on that day at SarahCare in order to accommodate this trip.

Mothers' Day Tea

To honor this day we will have a Mothers' Day Tea Party where we will eat scones, tea breads, and explore different flavored teas. We would love to have you join us on May 11th at 3:00 p.m.

SarahCare Senior Game Day

On May 17, we will participate in various indoor and outdoor games for the 1st An-

nual SarahCare Game Day. Some of the games will be basketball, lawn darts, bean bag toss, bowling and bocce.

Pizza Party Day

May 18th is pizza party day and we will make individual pizzas with various toppings. Each participant will select his/her own favorite pizza cuisine topping and eat it for TGIF.

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SarahCare[®]
Adult Day Services

*Experienced Care,
Delivered with Love*

*The mission of SarahCare[®] is to keep families together,
help older adults stay at home and in their communities,
and enhance the quality of life for each participant
and their family.*

SarahCare[®] of Great Valley

provides adult day programming and services
without regard to race, gender, sexual preference,
national origin, ancestry, religious creed, handicap,
age or ability to speak English.

Caregiver's Corner...

**Advocates for Senior Adults
Project**

May Activities Highlights (cont.)

National Tap Dance Day

Vicki Smith will show us some fabulous tap dancing moves on May 25th. Here's hoping we can pick-up some great dance ideas!! After the demonstration, we will play a lively game of balloon volleyball, then end that day with TGIF.

Joke Day

May 31 is Joke Day, so we will brighten our senses with lively jokes and funny stories. Send in some of your favorite jokes for us to share with everyone.

Picnic Lunch

Weather permitting, on June 1st we will have a picnic lunch at East Goshen Township Park and we will do some walking on the trail in the park. We will also sit and enjoy the beautiful scenery and weather.

Our experience shows that Adult Day Ser-

vices are the perfect alternative for many families who wish to enable their loved ones to remain at home as they age. Adult Day Services have been available in our community for more than 20 years. Even so, as you well know, it remains one of the best kept secrets in town. The Advocates for Senior Adults Project, known as ASAP for short, was recently created to raise awareness of Adult Day Services in the community and to provide grants to individuals

ASAP

who need financial assistance to enable their families to

take advantage of these services. ASAP is a non-profit Congressional District Project administered through the National Heritage Foundation. If you feel that Adult Day Services are a valuable part of the community, please consider making a tax deductible contribution to help us fulfill this mission. You can learn more by contacting ASAP by email at info.asap@comcast.net or by telephone at 610-255-0787.