

KEEPING
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Connections

Senior Care Past, Present and Future



Joan Luster
Manager,
Senior Care

Since its inception in 1987, Senior Care has developed a set of innovative and unique programs for serving seniors in this region. The case management and education outreach programs have touched countless community members here on the Eastside. Additionally, two senior clinics emerged from the program and now operate independently. As 2010 begins, I invite you to join me in taking a moment to reflect on changes over the past year, and to look ahead at what's on the horizon for Senior Care.

As many of you know, Overlake's Senior Care program works to improve health, reduce hospital readmissions and emergency room visits, increase independence and enhance quality of life for seniors in our community. Last year, Senior Care received more than 800 referrals from Overlake Hospital's discharge planners, emergency department, physicians and community organizations. Our case managers fielded more than 800 information and assistance calls and approximately 100

people were direct beneficiaries of intensive case management support. Medical services were also provided by our Nurse Practitioner to patients living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

With the economic downturn, our case managers have been receiving more urgent calls from seniors and their families who need assistance from community resources or help in applying for financial assistance programs. Overall, cases have increased in complexity and difficulty. Patients we see typically have needs that encompass both healthcare issues and functional problems that negatively affect emotional well-being and quality of life.

In an effort to better address patients' needs across the medical and social spectrums, the Senior Care team is looking to initiate a pilot program of a nationally proven Transitions model that will increase support for patients when they transfer from one healthcare setting to another. Empowering patients to be their own advocates for their health and well-being is one of the major goals. Patients with more complex problems requiring additional time and assistance to resolve issues could then be transferred to the community case management program.

Overlake's community education department put on two very successful senior fairs this past year. Last spring the *Active Senior Fair* drew more than 1,200 participants and more than 50 vendors. Additionally, this fall a new event, called *Home Is Where the Heart Is*, A Housing and Health Fair, provided
(continued on page 6)

January Luncheon

"I Can't Take Another Step!"

Sponsored by Overlake Terrace & Overlake Hospital Foundation

Over the course of a lifetime, the feet bear a weight equal to several million tons so it is not unusual for people to experience pain. The American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons conducted a survey and found 66 percent of those surveyed stated they experience foot pain on a regular basis. Many foot problems, however, can be prevented with proper care. Douglas Ichikawa, DPM, of Bellevue Podiatric Physicians will review common problems and their treatments.

Wednesday, January 27

Noon – 2 p.m.

Overlake Park Presbyterian Church, Fellowship Hall
1836 – 156th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA

For Connections Members Only. Free Parking.

Reservations Required; see RSVP card on the back cover of this newsletter.

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Overlake Hospital Medical Center
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Overlake Hospital Medical Center is a nonprofit, non-tax-supported hospital providing advanced medicine to the Puget Sound region. The Connections Newsletter is published six times per year by Overlake's Senior Care/Connections Department. It is distributed free of charge to Connections members.

If you would like to be removed from this newsletter mailing, have an address change, would like to receive an electronic copy, or know someone who would like to become a member, please contact Senior Care at 425-688-5800 or e-mail seniorcare@overlakehospital.org.

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Medical excellence every day[™]

Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor
425-688-5806

2009 Connections Volunteer of the Year



Susan Posten

Susan Posten says she never taught anything before becoming a coach for Overlake Senior Care's *A Matter of Balance* class. Her willingness to try something new for a cause she believed in, along with her undeniable energy, have made her not only a great balance coach, but also the 2009 Connections Member of the Year.

Susan had recently retired from her job as a marketing manager with McFarland Cascade in Tacoma and she was looking for ways to fill her time and give back to the community. She saw Overlake was recruiting instructors for its new *Matter of Balance* class, an eight-session program aimed at helping seniors build confidence and prevent falls. Susan's mother had broken her ankle in a fall and Susan understood how important fall prevention could be in helping seniors maintain physical strength and independence. Even though she didn't have teaching experience, she signed up to be in the first cohort of coach trainees, and two years later, she's still helping lead the class.

Susan says she enjoys learning from class

participants who share their stories with each other. For her part, she often tells the class about how being part of a group of regular exercisers helped her cope with the stress of her long commute and demanding job in Tacoma. Senior Care Manager Joan Luster, who has occasionally coached alongside Susan, is impressed with the way Susan connects with participants. "She's so committed to it. She's very organized and she cares and people really respond to her," says Joan.

When she's not leading *A Matter of Balance*, Susan also works four hours a week in Overlake Hospital's human resources department, filling in at the front desk for Coordinator Michael Allen. Michael appreciates Susan's ability to handle a wide variety of problems. "She's very warm and welcoming and she's very capable of handling any task I throw at her," he says.

On top of the hours she gives to Overlake, Susan still has time to devote to other community work. She is currently tutoring a young woman working toward her High School GED (General Equivalency Diploma). Susan also knits, loves to read and regularly attends an early morning aerobics class. As fellow *Matter of Balance* coach Shirley Lumry says, "She is a very busy woman.... She has a passionate interest in current events and loves to learn."

Overlake is lucky that Susan's talent for learning new things has contributed so much to the success of Senior Care and the *A Matter of Balance* program. We'd like to thank and congratulate Susan – our 2009 Connections Member of the Year.

Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction

Cost: Under 5: FREE
Ages 5-10: \$5
10 and older: \$8

For tickets and further information,
call 425-688-5526 or e-mail
Auxiliaries@overlakehospital.org.

Bring the entire family and enjoy an evening together at the Overlake Hospital Sonja Potter Senior Care Auxiliary's Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction, **Friday, March 5**, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Westminster Chapel of Bellevue. There will be delicious food, great entertainment, including the Mariner Moose, and unique silent auction items for all ages.



*What is the
difference
between grief,
bereavement
and depression?*

According to the Merriam Webster's dictionary, "Grief is emotional distress caused by or as if by bereavement," and "Bereavement is the state of sorrow suffered over the death or departure of a loved one." Depression can be the state of feeling sad, but also a "psychological disorder marked especially by sadness, inactivity, difficulty in thinking and concentration and feelings of dejection."

Grief is a natural response to loss. It's the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. You may associate grief with the death of a loved one, and this type of loss does often cause the most intense grief. But any loss can cause grief, including loss of health and mobility, loss of financial stability, a loved one's serious illness, death of a pet, retirement or loss of a job, moving from a home or community or loss of control and decision making. Among older adults, a painful loss can often trigger memories of past losses accumulated over a lifetime.

Grieving is a personal and highly individual experience. It can be affected by many factors, including your personality and coping style, your life experience, faith and the nature of the loss. The grieving process takes time. Healing happens gradually; it can't be forced or hurried and there is no "normal" timetable for grieving. Some people start feeling better in weeks and months. For others, the grieving process is measured in years. Be patient with yourself and allow the grieving process to naturally unfold.

In real life, grief is a roller coaster, not a series of stages. It is best to think of the grieving process as full of ups and downs, highs and lows. Like many roller coasters, the ride tends to be rougher at the beginning, the lows deeper and longer. The difficult periods should become less intense and shorter

as time goes by, but it takes time to work through a loss. We think of grief as a strictly emotional process, but it often involves physical problems, including fatigue, nausea, lowered immunity, weight loss or weight gain, aches, pains and insomnia.

The single most important factor in healing from grief is having the support of other people. Sharing your loss makes the burden of grief easier to carry. Wherever the support comes from, accept it and do not grieve alone. Turn to family and friends, draw comfort from your faith, join a support group and/or talk to a therapist or grief counselor.

Suppressing grief and trying to avoid feelings of sadness and loss only prolongs the grieving process. Unresolved grief can lead to complications such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse and health problems. Express your feelings in tangible or creative ways. Write about your loss in a journal. Write a letter to your lost loved one, saying things you never got to say, or write poetry, or make a scrapbook or photo album celebrating the person's life.

A constant feeling of emptiness or despair is often a sign of depression. If one feels intense, pervasive guilt, thoughts of suicide or a preoccupation with dying, feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness and an inability to function at work or at home, it could be clinical depression. Clinical depression requires treatment and a person should start by visiting their primary care physician.

While the terms are often used interchangeably, bereavement often refers to the state of loss, and grief to the reaction of loss. Depression, however, needs to be treated as a serious illness by a professional. Call the Senior Care office, 425-688-5800 to receive information on Support Groups in the area.



*Submitted by: Regina Bennett, MSW
Social Worker, Bellevue Senior Health Center
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Senior Care Community Classes

Unless otherwise indicated, these classes are held at Bellevue College, North Campus, 10700 Northup Way, Bellevue (corner of 108th Avenue NE and Northup Way).

Advance registration is required; call 425-688-5800.

A Matter of Balance

Have you cut down on a favorite activity because you might fall? Or turned down a chance to go out with friends or family because you were concerned about falling? The fear of falling can be just as dangerous as falling itself. Often, people who develop a fear of falling begin to limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, that increases the risk of falling, which in turn can lead to greater isolation and depression. A *Matter of Balance* can help improve quality of life and help a person remain independent. The class is designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to set realistic goals to increase activity, make changes to reduce fall risks, and learn simple exercises to increase strength and balance.

Date: **Wednesdays and Fridays, January 13 to February 5; or Tuesdays and Thursdays, February 9 to March 4**
Time: **1 to 3 p.m.**

Cost: **\$15 for eight-week session**
Includes workbook and free water bottle. Scholarships available; call for information.

Seniors Making Art – Pastels

Come explore a playful exposure to the medium of pastels with artist Bruce Edwards. Helpful demos and experimental techniques will be presented. This class will be suitable for beginners as well as those wishing to hone their skills. Sponsored by Betty and Kemper Freeman, Craig Shrontz, and Lynn Ristig.

Date: **Mondays, January 25 to March 15 (7 sessions)**
No class February 15

Time: **11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Cost: **FREE**

Class limited to the first 15.

Exercise to Improve Your Balance

Learn to strengthen key muscle groups and improve use of the core muscles that keep your body in balance. Build a balanced, elegant posture, gain confidence in your stability and move with grace and agility. Practice simple movements to improve overall coordination for daily activities to walk steadier and help prevent falls. Classes lead by exercise physiologist Mia Barbera.

Date: **Thursdays, January 14, 21, and 28; or Wednesdays, February 10, 17, and 24**

Time: **1 to 2:15 p.m.**

Cost: **\$25**

Exercise to Improve Your Balance Refresher

A refresher class for those who participated in the Exercise to Improve and Maintain Balance series. Attend this one-time class to refresh and stay on track.

Date: **Thursdays, January 26**

Time: **1 to 2:30 p.m.**

Cost: **\$15**

NEW CLASS

Therapeutic Yoga to Maintain Balance

The Yoga Barn offers this breath-oriented practice that will help increase your circulation, release tense muscles, strengthen core muscles and help to keep each muscle and joint flexible and strong.

Date: **Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 12 to 28; or February 2 to 18; or February 23 to March 11**

Time: **11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**

Cost: **\$69**

Walk for Life

Join this free ongoing walking program to exercise safely and effectively. Meet friends and benefit from expert staff who are on site for information, advice and monitoring.

Date: **Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday**

Time: **8 to 9:30 a.m.**

Place: **Bellevue Square, enter at Skybridge 4**

Cost: **FREE**

No registration required. For information call 425-688-5800.



Bellevue Senior Center

Call 425-452-7681 and mention the class number.

4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue.

Mondays, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Advance registration required.

Cost: \$6 for Bellevue residents

\$7 for non-residents

The Sneak Thief of Sight - Glaucoma

After the age of 60 you are six times more likely to have glaucoma and it is considered the second leading cause of blindness. The vision loss happens gradually over a long period of time, damaging the eye's optic nerve. Learn the keys to early detection and new developments in treatments of the disease.

Date: January 25

Class Number: 45559

Getting to the Heart of the Matter

The heart is a complex muscular organ and key to our survival, yet we often take it for granted. Learn the risk factors associated with heart attacks and discover steps you can take to help to prevent weakening of the muscle. Also learn the newest detection and treatment methods used to combat heart disease.

Date: February 22

Class Number: 45565

Bellevue YMCA

Call 425-746-9900

14230 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue.

Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Advance registration required.

Cost: FREE

Taking a Stand: Keeping Your Feet Healthy

Many people accept foot pain as a fact of life, but many foot problems can either be prevented or helped through proper care. A podiatrist will review sources of foot pain and discuss treatment options available.

Date: January 13

My Aching Shoulder

Pain in the shoulder can be bad enough to keep you from doing even the simplest of tasks. An Overlake orthopedic surgeon will discuss the common causes of shoulder pain and various treatment options available.

Date: February 10

Redmond Senior Center

Call 425-556-2314

8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.

Wednesdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.

Advance registration required.

Cost: FREE

Portion Control for Weight Loss

One of the single most effective ways to promote lasting weight loss is through portion control. Overlake Wellness Dietitian Peggy Swistak, RD, will review how to eat well-balanced meals while using portion control to maintain or lose weight.

Date: January 20

Hypertension: Should I Be Concerned?

Hypertension or high blood pressure affects one in four Americans and usually has no symptoms, but it can have serious medical consequences. An Overlake physician will review the risk factors, discuss prevention and treatment options.

Date: February 17

Support Groups

Caring for a loved one is a difficult job. It is well documented that if family members want to continue providing care, they cope better when they are armed with support and information as they navigate the twists, turns and responsibilities of caregiving. Meet and talk with others who are dealing with similar issues. Two support groups are offered to help meet the needs of caregivers.

Family Caregiver Support Group – Bellevue

Dates: 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month

Time: 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Bellevue Senior Health Center

1750 – 112th Ave. NE, Suite A-101, Bellevue

Cost: FREE

For questions, call Regina Bennett, MSW, 425-688-5807.

Family Caregiver Support Group –Mercer Island

Dates: 2nd Tuesday of each month

Time: 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Location: Mercer Island Senior Center

7707 SE. 27th Street, Suite 110, Mercer Island

Cost: FREE

For questions, call Karin Miller, MSW, 425-688-5637.

(continued from page 1)

information on housing and in-home services and offered seasonal flu shots and an array of free health screenings. The turnout was impressive for a new event with well over 400 people attending and more than 60 vendors.

Preventing falls continues to be a major focus of the Senior Care program. Since the start of the Matter of Balance

program in 2007, a multitude of participants have explored fears of falling and learned exercises and techniques that helped them improve their strength and balance. This popular class, offered monthly, is taught by committed and knowledgeable volunteers. In response to a high number of requests from participants, we recently began offering an exercise class that focuses

on improving and maintaining balance for seniors. Additionally, health classes continue to be offered around the community.

In partnership with Evergreen Hospital, Senior Care's 2010-2012 Resource Guide is now available. The Senior Care staff worked long and hard to update and reorganize the guide to make it more user-friendly. A free copy can be obtained by calling Senior Care at 425-688-5800. This Resource Guide, as well as all other publications produced by Senior Care, can also be viewed and downloaded on our Web site:

www.overlakehospital.org/seniorcare.

Finally, we are deeply grateful and appreciative of the work done by Overlake's Foundation and Sonja Potter Auxiliary to raise money to help underwrite the expense of running this program. Their diligent efforts enable Senior Care to continue to offer services to the community free of charge.

The future of Senior Care holds much promise because of Overlake's continued support and commitment to the ongoing success of the program. Most of all, Senior Care would not be alive and well without the support of all of you. We look forward to a continued partnership with our Connections members and wish you all good health and well-being in 2010.

Happy New Year!
Joan Luster

Eastside Vitality

OVERLAKE HOSPITAL
MEDICAL CENTER'S
COMMUNITY HEALTH **FAIR**

FREE health screenings including cholesterol, osteoporosis, glucose, stroke and skin cancer.

FREE lectures from leading health experts on **Living a Healthy Lifestyle, Preventing Cancer, Coping with Menopause, and Heart Health.** Plus, expert advice, resources and more!

Saturday, January 23
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
PACCAR Education Center
Overlake Campus

FREE Admission and FREE Parking

www.overlakehospital.org/EastsideVitality



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday,
March 13
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Westminster Chapel
of Bellevue
13646 NE 24th St.,
Bellevue



**2010 Active
Senior Fair**

Enjoy this fun, **FREE**, day-long event that features enjoyable live entertainment including a fashion show and a variety of entertainers. Attend mini-seminars and stroll through vendor exhibits highlighting a wide range of Eastside businesses and organizations. Take advantage of a variety of free health screenings. The entire day is geared to the active senior.

Call 425-688-5800 for more information or visit www.overlakehospital.org/activeseniorfair.

Don't miss this fun-filled event!



Is Joint Pain Keeping You from Enjoying Your Life?

How to Find Out if it is Time for Surgery

One of the most frequent questions I receive from prospective patients experiencing long term pain in their knees or hips, is, “How do you know when it’s the right time to decide to have surgery?” This is a hard decision and one that each person must make for themselves. However, there are some ways to make that decision a little bit easier. The following questions provide good information to help you make your decision.

- Have I tried just about every conservative treatment out there to help with my pain and discomfort? Conservative treatments include: glucosamine, ibuprofen, physical therapy, ice and heat, acupuncture, bracing and others.
- Have I gotten to the point where none of these are really helping with pain anymore?
- Have I been on Advil or other pain medications for such a long time that I worry about the impact on my body?

- Is pain disturbing my sleep at night?
- And most importantly, am I starting to greatly limit the things I like to do because they cause me too much pain?

I mention limiting activities as being one of the most important questions because it has a huge impact on the quality of your life. Human beings are meant to move. We are meant to walk, play, dance and be active. The activities and

**Motion
is life**

movements that bring you pleasure vary from person to person. Favorite activities can range from golfing or gardening, to simply walking your dog. But you

may find the simplest pleasures are no longer enjoyable because they just hurt too much. Pretty soon you might find yourself making excuses to avoid the activities you love and declining invitations to be with your friends because you know you’ll be in too much pain afterward.

If any of these situations are happening to you, its time to seriously consider your quality of life. There is no a reason you shouldn’t be able to enjoy the pleasure of movement in your life. A former patient who, at 85 years of age had both hips replaced as well as a shoulder, was asked how she decided to have her surgery. She stated that she felt she shouldn’t have to give up all of her favorite activities and just sit at home. When asked what her favorite activities were, she answered without a beat, “Dancing and bowling.” She stated she was already back doing those activities and she said she just didn’t feel like being old yet.

Deciding to have joint replacement surgery for a knee or a hip is a big decision for anyone. It’s a decision that can be helped by asking yourself the questions listed above and meeting with a skilled joint replacement surgeon who can help you gather information, discuss options and solutions with you. The decision will always be yours and if you take the time to really gather information, you can feel confident in your decision.

If you would like to talk through some of these questions, need a referral for an orthopedic surgeon who is an expert in joint replacement surgery or want more information about the Joint Center at Overlake Hospital, just give me a call and I am happy to discuss where you are in the process. Take good care of yourself, enjoy your life and feel good.

*Submitted by:
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

January Luncheon RSVP

To reserve your place at the January luncheon, please fill out this form and send it along with your check to: **Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center.** Payment must be received with reservation. **Mail by Wednesday, January 20 to: Senior Care/Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center, 1035 116th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004.** To receive a map, call 425-688-5800.

January Luncheon Reservation Form

Yes! I/We would like to make reservations to attend
 "I Can't Take Another Step!" on Wednesday, January 27.

Number of people attending at **\$12 each**: _____. Total enclosed: \$ _____.
 (Please make checks payable to Overlake Hospital Medical Center.)

 Name(s)

 Phone Number



Senior Care welcomes our newest social worker, Andy Linn Nelson. She was born and raised in Honolulu, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Family Resources from the

University of Hawaii. She went on to earn a Masters of Social Work from the University of Michigan.

Andy has worked in healthcare, primarily with seniors, in a variety of hospital settings and skilled nursing facilities. She moved to Washington in 2001 and was an Evergreen Senior Health Specialist for four-and-a-half years until she joined Senior Care in October 2009.

She is married and has two cats, Lani and Kona. She enjoys traveling, spending time with friends and family, movies, good food, listening to music, and attending educational opportunities to further her growth as a social worker.

We are excited to have Andy join the Senior Care team and know you will enjoy meeting and working with her.