

KEEPING
SENIORS
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INVOLVED,
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Connections



Volunteering: The Art of Reinventing Yourself

Many of us allow our jobs or our daily roles to shape our identity throughout our lives. Our work is often our primary source of meaning and purpose. As roles change throughout a person's life – such as retirement from a job or children growing up to lead independent lives – a new opportunity emerges that often includes “reinventing” oneself to embark on the next chapter of life. This can include a process of self-assessment, determining where your talents lie, and transferring skills and passions into new areas.

To reinvent yourself, it is important to look beyond the familiar and consider

other avenues for meaning and purpose besides those already fulfilled. In some cases, you may return to a lifelong interest and acquire skills or training you've always wanted. After a career in a particular industry, you may choose to volunteer your time in an entirely new arena. In other cases, you may choose to utilize your talents and wisdom gathered over the years by mentoring someone in a field where you've had a lot of experience. You get to decide whether you want to draw on your skills or develop new ones.

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May Connections Luncheon CELEBRATING NATIONAL OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

“Reducing the Risk – Avoiding the Fall”

Sponsored by Aegis Living: Redmond, Bothell, Bellevue and Kirkland

More than 30,000 Americans over the age of 65 are seriously injured in a fall each week. In addition, over 20 to 30 percent of those who fall experience a debilitating injury they will deal with the rest of their lives or develop a fear of falling. The fear can cause people to limit their activity level, which in turn reduces their mobility and leads to an even increased risk of falls. Kathy Golic, PT, Overlake Outpatient Services, will discuss what can be done to avoid falling situations and review some simple exercises.

**Wednesday, May 26
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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Sonja Potter
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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.



Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor
425-688-5806

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But change can be scary! Reinvention is change; changing what you do, changing your routines, changing who you are or how you feel about yourself. Reinvention is a process of change that can bring on a period of uncertainty in the beginning. Uncertainty is not easy for anyone. For most of us, it is much easier to stick with what we know and who we know rather than forge into new areas, and many people fall into what is most comfortable rather than branch out and find what interests them. After all, who wants to be a beginner again? But if you think of it in terms of making this second half of your life a gift of time, then you

can embrace the opportunity to re-invent yourself and uncover new endeavors that can be extremely rewarding.

Keep in mind that as with any changes we make in our life, reinvention requires time for adjustment. When you are first learning new skills or trying out a new role, it can be awkward and uncomfortable. Remember, it's normal to feel this way initially. If you understand this and allow yourself time to adjust to this new life cycle, you'll have a much better chance of seeing it through and even enjoying the process.

You also don't need to take on too much at first and overwhelm yourself. Just start with small steps. Spend some time researching subjects that interest you. Talk to people in the community and get a feel for what you may want to pursue. Volunteering in an area that interests you is a great way to get your feet wet to see if you are making the right choice for yourself.

Tips for reinvention:

1. Appreciate that it takes courage to re-invent yourself! Give yourself credit from the start.
2. Seek help from friends or professionals in defining the skills and talents that you'd like to apply.
3. Look for volunteer opportunities that would give you a chance to try out your new field.
4. Create a community of people with shared interests for a support network.

People want to be engaged in life, no matter what their age and that's exactly the opportunity that reinvention provides. So no matter where you are today or what you're doing in life, begin thinking about your next life stage. Consider how you'll use your years of experience, well-earned wisdom, and awareness of the value of patience to create a new and rewarding life for yourself through volunteering. You're not just helping others – you're helping yourself.

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Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

offers a full range of volunteer opportunities with thousands of local and national organizations. You choose how and where you want to serve and also the amount of time you want to give. For more information visit: www.seniorcorps.gov or call 206-957-4779.

AARP "Create the Good" Program.

AARP is calling on its members to "Create the Good" in their neighborhoods through this unique volunteer program. This Web site also provides information and articles about volunteering. Visit www.aarp.org or call 206-526-7918.



I don't want to impose on our children but I've heard I should be sharing important information with them. What do you think?

There have been many recent news stories about safeguarding financial information and maintaining privacy in healthcare. What hasn't been discussed is the need to TELL FAMILY MEMBERS important information. Most of us have designated executors of wills and durable powers of attorney. But if you are like most, you have asked your spouse to be that person. Of course, he or she is the most appropriate designee for most of your life, but I suggest that as you age, you may want to consider asking someone younger to be your durable power of attorney. If you are sick, it is likely that your spouse will either be ill as well or will be so consumed with caring for you that he/she will not have the energy to take care of other business. For this reason, I suggest that you discuss these and other issues with your adult children.

I understand that it is hard to address these matters with your children. However, no matter how much we love and admire our adult children, we do not like to burden them with more work.

Countless people have said to me, "My children are wonderful but are so busy with their lives that I do not want to ask them to take on more." I suggest to you that it is a gift to ask your children for help. You are allowing them to give back to you some of what you have given them. In fact, you are allowing them to be kind and helpful, the virtues you taught them. You are also modeling effective care-giving from generation to generation. To trust your adult children with important and personal information, I believe you must see them as independent adults and separate individuals. This is difficult to do when you are the person who taught them to tie their shoes and know all of their strengths and weaknesses. I believe in a "dance of interdependence" to quote Wendy Lustbader, a local social worker, educator and author. Sometimes in life, your children are more dependent

on you and sometimes you are more dependent on them. This may be a time that you need to depend on them. It is important to discuss legal, financial, and healthcare wishes, as well as personal matters. As difficult as it is to discuss financial or legal issues, it is much more difficult to discuss emotionally laden topics.

I suggest that you make a list of things that you want and need to discuss with your children. Send that list to them in a letter or e-mail. Call them and begin talking about these things. Some brave seniors ask for a family meeting, bring all their children together, and talk about it as a group. Regardless of how you begin the discussion, remember that you will have to revisit the conversation many times before everything is discussed and said. Even if you talked with them in the past, I suggest that you do it again now.

Some ideas of what should be discussed:

Financial issues: Where funds are kept? what you want to spend your money on? Where is the listing of your business matters and who helps with these?

Legal matters: Where are all your legal papers kept? Who is executor of the will? Who should pay bills and manage money if you cannot? How do you want your possessions divided up after death?

Medical issues: What are your specific wishes if you cannot make health care decisions? Who will make those decisions and who will help make those decisions if you cannot? Who will care for you if you cannot care for yourself? Who will make the decisions about caring for you if you cannot?

Lifestyle issues: Where do you want to live if you can no longer be independent? What are your thoughts on care for your spouse if you can no longer provide care? Who will make those decisions? What do you want to do with all of your possessions?

Family matters: What is your hope for family get-togethers as you age? What is your hope for family relationships if you are no longer head of the family? What are the things you worry about as you consider people in your family?



by Karin Miller, MSW
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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.

Exercise to Improve and Maintain 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, June 3, 10, and 17
Time: 1 to 2 p.m.
Cost: \$25

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, making the risk of falling greater, leading 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, May 5 to 28; or Mondays and Wednesdays, June 7 to 30
Time: 10 a.m. to noon
Cost: \$15

Scholarships available; call for information.

Introduction to Therapeutic Yoga to Maintain Balance

Introduction to *The Yoga Barn's* breath-oriented practice that will help to increase your circulation, release tense muscles, strengthen core muscles and help to keep each muscle and joint flexible and strong. *Yoga is done in a seated position on a chair with exercises adapted to each individual's abilities.*

Date: Tuesdays, June 8 to July 13
Time: 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Cost: \$69 for six-week session

Therapeutic Yoga to Maintain Balance

Continuation of *The Yoga Barn's* breath-oriented practice that will help to increase your circulation, release tense muscles, strengthen core muscles and help to keep each muscle and joint flexible and strong. *Yoga is done in a seated position on a chair with exercises adapted to each individual's abilities.*

Date: Thursdays, June 10 to July 15
Time: 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Cost: \$69 for six-week session

Seniors Making Art – Watercolor

Come explore a playful exposure to a simple version of watercolor that uses fewer brush strokes. Taught by Jan Wurn. Helpful demos and experimental techniques will be presented. Sponsored by Betty and Kemper Freeman, Craig Shrontz and Lynn Ristig. Class limited to 15 participants. New students have first priority. Call and leave a message. You will be called if you are in the class.

Date: Tuesdays, May 4 to June 15 (seven sessions)
Time: 10 a.m. to noon
Cost: FREE

Posture and Balance Clinic Refresher

A refresher class for those who participated in "Exercise to Improve and Maintain Balance" series. Attend this one-time class to further integrate a stable posture in your life as well as move with enhanced agility.

Date: Tuesday, May 25 or June 22
Time: 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Cost: \$15

Dealing With Difficult Behaviors of Dementia

As a result of changes in brain function, individuals with dementia can behave in ways that are challenging for family members. Family caregivers may be dealing with repetitive questions or actions like pacing, wandering, anger or irritability, restlessness, suspiciousness, screaming, hitting or hallucinations. We will provide tools for discovering the triggers for these behaviors, as well as coping strategies. This class is not appropriate for the person with memory loss.

Date: Thursday, June 2
Time: 2:30 to 4 p.m.
Cost: \$5

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 is required.

Cost: \$6 for Bellevue residents
\$7 for non-residents.

GI Blues

Common gastrointestinal complications can be uncomfortable and worrisome. Overlake gastroenterologist V. Mohan, MD, will review diagnosis and treatment options available for digestive problems encountered by older adults.

Date: May 24

Class #: 48427

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

Take A Stand Against Strokes

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, however there have been significant advances in treatment. Overlake Hospital stroke coordinator Carol Hardy, RN, will discuss the risk factors, detection and treatment of strokes as well as offer ideas to reduce your risk of a stroke.

Date: May 12

The Aging Eye

Older eyes are at greater risk for problems from minor irritations to cataracts to macular degeneration to glaucoma. An Overlake Ophthalmologist will review what changes are normal and identify signs of problems.

Date: June 9

Redmond Senior Center

Call 425-556-2314

8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.
Wednesdays, 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Advance registration is required.
FREE.

Understanding Peripheral Vascular Disease

Disease of the blood vessels in the legs, Peripheral Vascular Disease or PVD, affects more than 10 million people in the United States with men at a slightly higher risk than women. Over half of the people with PVD do not show any symptoms. An Overlake physician will explain the condition, discuss risk factors and discuss treatment options.

Date: May 19

Incontinence: It Doesn't Have to Be Part of Growing Older

It's estimated that over 13 million Americans suffer from urinary incontinence, and is experienced twice as often by women. Incontinence does not have to be accepted as a part of growing older. An Overlake urologist will discuss the different types of incontinence and the latest successful treatment options available.

Date: June 16

Additional Overlake Community Classes

PACCAR Education Center
Overlake Hospital Campus
1035 116th Ave. NE, Bellevue
Advance registration required.
FREE.

Melanoma Monday – Free Skin Cancer Screening

Overlake dermatologists will be available to provide free skin cancer screening.

Date: Monday, May 3

Time: 5:30 to 8 p.m.

Call 425-688-5259 for an appointment. Space is limited.

Women's Health Screening Day

Free or low-cost breast screening services, including mammograms and breast exams, will be offered to uninsured and underinsured women, ages 40-64. The screenings will include a pap test, clinical breast exam and a screening mammogram. These services are funded in part by the Washington Breast and Cervical Health Program.

Date: Saturday, May 15

Time: 9:00 a.m. to noon

Call 425-467-3594 to see if you qualify and to register.

Brain Attack: What You Should Know about Stroke

Stroke, also referred to as Brain Attack, happens when the arteries leading to the brain are blocked or rupture. Come hear Dr. John Nelson, Director of Overlake Hospitalists, discuss what you can do to decrease your chances of Brain Attack and what symptoms to watch for.

Date: Wednesday, May 19

Time: 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Call 425-688-5247 to register.

SPAGHETTI DINNER FUN



At left, Dottie Calvert, a Sonja Potter Senior Care Auxiliary member, is seen with the Mariner Moose who made an appearance at the Auxiliary Spaghetti Feed and Silent Auction on Friday, March 5.



At right, Randi Leggett, MD, and Hank Williams, MD, helped serve spaghetti to attendees. The money raised will help support the services of Overlake's Senior Care.

JOIN US NEXT TIME!

2010 Active Senior Fair

The 2010 Active Senior Fair was a great success. Held on Saturday, March 13, at Westminster Chapel on a beautiful spring day, the Fair drew between 1,200 to 1,500 seniors through the doors.

Attendees were treated to a fun-filled day. They attended health lectures by a variety of Overlake physicians, strolled through over 65 vendor exhibits that highlighted businesses and organizations geared to seniors, and participated in a number of health screenings. A variety of entertainment was offered including a gardening presentation by Marianne Binetti, a fashion show by Coldwater Creek, and a fantastic musical revue from Wrinkles of Washington.

If you missed it, be sure to join us next year!



Recognizing a Stroke...Act Fast

“I figured it was an allergic reaction to a new medication I started...”

“I felt like I was getting the flu – felt dizzy and weak...”

“I fell in the parking lot and couldn’t get back up, so I thought I must have injured my leg...”

“I thought it was just a headache, worse than usual, but still just a headache...”

... so I thought I should rest to see if the symptoms would go away before getting help.”

“I hear stories like this from about half of our stroke patients,” says Carole Hardy, stroke coordinator in Overlake’s Emergency Department.

The symptoms of a stroke can mimic the familiar and it’s human nature to seek the familiar and proceed accordingly. For instance, we all recognize the signs of a headache so we might disregard other symptoms, then take some aspirin or ibuprofen and a nap. Last week I had a patient tell me he woke up in the middle of the night with his arm tingling and heavy. He disregarded this, thinking he had been sleeping on his arm. Luckily he woke a short time later with his arm still tingling and heavy, recognized that something else was going on and went to the hospital. He was having a stroke.

Minimizing symptoms is such a common reaction in self care, but it is absolutely the **WRONG** thing to do in the case of a stroke. A nap is prolonging the time your brain tissue is possibly deprived of nutrients and oxygen from normal blood flow.

A study from the National Stroke Association revealed that 33 percent of adults do not recognize even one symptom of a stroke.

“What I’d like to suggest is for our community to learn to look for the rest of the associated symptoms before

concluding ‘it is just a headache,’” says Hardy. Some questions to ask about the headache: Is this your normal type of headache? Did it come on suddenly and severe? We call this a thunderclap headache – often described as the worst headache of your life. Other stroke symptoms can easily be remembered by using the acronym “F.A.S.T.” Perhaps you can even cut out this reference for your wallet or another handy location:

RECOGNIZE A STROKE

- ▶ **F = FACE**
Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- ▶ **A = ARM**
Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- ▶ **S = SPEECH**
Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred? Can the patient repeat the sentence correctly?
- ▶ **T = TIME**
If the patient shows any of these symptoms, time is important. **Call 911 or get to the hospital fast.** Brain cells are dying.

“The other comment I hear from seniors is that they were embarrassed to call 911, or didn’t want to bother the 911 personnel. But this is exactly

why the 911 system was developed: to safely get you to the hospital as soon as possible, to monitor your symptoms until you get there, and to eliminate the urge to drive yourself or your loved one in a crisis situation. Strokes can be treated, but treatment is time-sensitive. Calling 911 allows the paramedics or emergency medical technicians to begin initial treatment as soon as they reach you and notify the stroke team at Overlake. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, **PLEASE** consider it an emergency and call 911,” advises Hardy.

Overlake has earned the Gold Plus Award for stroke care from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association as well as the Joint Commission certification for stroke excellence.

Overlake’s Stroke Program includes a dedicated team of Emergency Department physicians and neurologists along with caregivers who can immediately mobilize all stroke-related resources including diagnostics, interventional radiology, laboratory, pharmacy and neurology, so that patients receive the immediate care needed to prevent brain cell loss and disability.

Learn the symptoms of stroke and teach them to your family, friends and neighbors. Remember, act F.A.S.T. and call 911.

*by Kristine Becker, RN, Director
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May Luncheon RSVP

To reserve your place at the May luncheon, please fill out this form and send it along with your check made payable to: *Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center*. Payment must be received with reservation. *Mail by Wednesday, May 19* to: Senior Care/Connections, Overlake Hospital Medical Center, 1035 116th Ave. NE, Bellevue, WA 98004. To receive a map, please call 425-688-5800.

May Luncheon Reservation Form

Yes! I/We would like to make reservations to attend
 “Reducing the Risk – Avoiding the Fall”
 on Wednesday, May 26.

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

 Name(s)

 Phone Number



Puget Sound Energy Foundation

Overlake Hospital Medical Center and the Senior Care team would like to thank the Puget Sound Energy Foundation for their \$3,000 grant to help fund the Connections newsletter. The Puget Sound Energy Foundation is dedicated to making our region a better place to live by supporting innovative local programs. We greatly appreciate this new partnership – thank you!

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