

Connections



Debbie Anderson, Director

Dear Connections Members,

In 2007 we celebrated over 20 years of building relationships and partnering with you and your physician to solve problems, find services and discover resources. This service assures that you as a Connections member are kept informed, involved and in charge of your healthcare. During the year our talented team of physicians, social workers, pharmacists, nurses, nurse practitioners and education specialist accomplished the following:

- Served 2,344 persons through classes, special events and luncheons.
 - Answered 1,000 information and assistance calls.
 - Served over 200 clients in Community Case Management and Resource Coordination.
 - Distributed over 20,500 pieces of resource information.
 - Made 1,000 visits to Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Facilities.
 - Provided over 10,500 appointments at the Bellevue and Mercer Island Senior Health Centers.
- Loyal and committed volunteers provided guidance and counseling on:
- Medicare supplemental plans.
 - Estate planning.
 - Benefits check-up and prescription drug coverage.

We also began to provide more focused education around medication issues and fall prevention. Falling and medication misuse are the two most avoidable reasons persons 65 and older are admitted to emergency departments. In 2008 we will be offering *The Matter of Balance* class on a regular basis to help older adults with overcoming the fear of falling and increase their strength and balance. Look for details about the classes and times in the class section of the newsletter. The Medication Tracker and Medication Safety brochures are readily available on our web site www.overlakehospital.org/seniorcare as well as through our office and at both senior health centers.

In 2008 we look forward to rolling up our sleeves and partnering with you and other healthcare providers on the Eastside to make headway on an issue which at first may seem obscure but is actually a challenge to all: transitions in care from one healthcare setting to another. Often, important healthcare information does not follow the patient during transitions.

This can result in miscommunication and even serious medical errors.

To assist with your healthcare transitions we are introducing the *Personal Health Record*. The record will assist in collecting your essential medical information. It is a modest 10-page booklet that can be mailed to you at no cost (call Senior Care at 425-688-5800). It is also available at both Senior Health Centers and will be sent to all new

January Luncheon "You've Gotta Have Heart"

Sponsored by Overlake Terrace & Overlake Hospital Foundation

From 1950 to 1999 the death rate from heart disease has decreased by almost 60 percent. The advancements in various heart treatments and an increase in prevention education has been noted for the decrease in deaths related to heart disease. Join Ronnier Aviles, MD, cardiologist, Overlake Internal Medicine Associates, will discuss risk factors, detection, prevention, and the latest treatment options related to heart disease.

Wednesday, January 23

Noon to 2 p.m.

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

Reservations Required; See RVSP card on the back cover of this newsletter.

Support for this issue was generously provided by:

Bellevue Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic
Sound Hearing
Hearing Aid Specialist

Emerald Heights
Life Care Community

Fedelta Home Care
Personal Care Services

Kirkland Lodge
Senior Housing and
Assisted Living

Overlake Terrace
Independent/Assisted
Living/Memory Care

Sonja Potter
Auxiliary

2003
National Mature
Media AwardsSM
Winner

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If you would like to be removed from this newsletter mailing, have an address change, or know someone who would like to become a member, please contact Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Periodically, we send communications to friends and neighbors in our health care community that describes the health care services and products we offer. If you would prefer not to receive communications like this from our organization in the future, please call 425-467-3548.



Charlene Raunio, Newsletter Editor
425-688-5806
Debbie Anderson, Connections Director

2008 Connections

Member of the Year

It's a theme that comes up again and again when you're talking with Ginny Bither – she enjoys people. “If you take the time,” Ginny says, “people always have interesting stories to tell.”

Ginny's gracious, considerate manner through decades of volunteering has been a great boon to the Overlake community and is certainly one of the reasons she has been selected as Connections *Member of the Year*. For more than 20 years Ginny greeted visitors



Ginny Bither

in the hospital lobby, answering questions and helping people find their way. She has also worked in the Cancer Resource Center, served as a peer volunteer visiting seniors in the community and helped out at special events including the Active Senior Fair. Currently, she spends four hours each week in the Senior Care office assembling packets, applying labels, stuffing envelopes and doing whatever needs to be done.

Senior Care administrative assistant Joanne Padgett says, “Ginny is very low-key, steady and gets her work done – she's a really reliable volunteer.” As a senior herself, Ginny says that working along with Joanne provides a welcome opportunity to learn about the wealth of programs – support groups, classes, transportation information and other resources – that Senior Care has to

offer. But most of all, she likes the ambiance. As she says, “I love to work for them – it's a very pleasant office.”

Ginny and her husband Bob are longtime residents of the Eastside, having moved here from California in 1970 when their youngest child, a daughter, was still in high school. While Bob pursued his career at Darigold, Ginny eventually started working as a receptionist in a dentist's office, a job she held for 15 years until she retired in 1987 – in part to help her daughter take care of her own growing family. As Ginny began to think about volunteering she was attracted to the Overlake environment. “Overlake is a good hospital,” she says. “I like the atmosphere and over the years, I've gotten to know a lot of people there.”

When not volunteering, Ginny stays busy reading, walking with a neighbor three times per week in a nearby mall, and maintaining the home in Somerset Woods that she and Bob have lived in for 35 years. Ginny and Bob both work in the yard, taking the opportunity to get things done when the weather is nice. They also enjoy concerts at Benaroya Hall and are devoted Mariners fans. At the beginning of the season they buy tickets for all the Sunday afternoon home games. On game days they meet friends, take the bus from the Eastside and spend the afternoon at the ballpark. “We love it,” Ginny says. They also look forward to visits from their son who lives in Kauai and make regular trips by train to see their daughter and her family who now live in Cashmere, WA.

Everyone who works with Ginny appreciates her warmth, loyalty and the long-term commitment she has made as a volunteer. The Senior Care office and the Overlake community have truly benefited from her years of dedication and we are honored and delighted to recognize her as the *2007 Connections Member of the Year*.



Submitted by:
Regina Bennett, MSW
Social Worker,
Bellevue Senior Health Center
425-688-5807
Regina.bennett@overlakehospital.org

Love is the most important health tonic we have, and pets are one of nature's best sources of love.

Q: With the recent death of my spouse and increasing health problems of my own, I need to move to a community where I can receive more assistance. My family, while very helpful with the transition, tells me that I need to get rid of my dog. I love my dog. Should I refuse or listen to them?

A: That depends. First of all literature abounds with information on the healing power of pets, especially for the elderly. Per Pet Corner, nbc.com "Many researchers are finding that the most serious disease for older persons is not cancer or heart disease – it's loneliness. Love is the most important health tonic we have and pets are one of nature's best sources of love..." We read that pets lower blood pressure and pulse rate, that there is less depression in elderly pet owners and it encourages a more active lifestyle as well as social opportunities for seniors. Erika Friedmann, MD from Brooklyn College, New York, studied heart disease patients after their discharge from the hospital. The study found this: "The presence of a pet was the strongest social predictor of survival...not just for lonely and depressed people, but everyone – independent of marital status and access to social support from human beings." This is powerful proof for keeping your dog. Yet, if you are moving into a retirement residence, you will learn that not all accept pets. However, most Eastside facilities accept a pet that weighs under 20 or 25 pounds. You must have proof that the pet is licensed and its inoculations are up-to-date. All residences require a dog to be leashed while walking through common areas of the building, and most facilities require a non-refundable damage deposit. Some facilities will allow staff to care for the pet while a person is in the hospital or receiving rehab, but the majority will make it clear in the initial contract that a family member or friend must take on the responsibility of the pet while the resident is ill.

If it is not possible to bring your pet into a retirement community and you must face the heart-wrenching task of finding another loving home for your pet, know that some retirement homes have community dogs or cats, often both. There are also many certified therapy pets that are regularly brought into retirement residences and nursing homes on a weekly or monthly basis.

It would be ideal if you could keep your dog. If for some reason this is not possible, know you will likely have a community or therapy pet to love.

To receive a listing of the Eastside Retirement and Assisted Living providers that accept pets, call Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

ACTIVE SENIOR FAIR 2008



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, March 1

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Westminster Chapel of Bellevue
13646 NE. 24th Street, Bellevue**

Don't miss this fun, free day-long event that features enjoyable live entertainment, featuring a fashion show, a variety of entertainers, seminars, and screenings. Stroll through vendor exhibits highlighting a wide variety of Eastside businesses and organizations, all geared to the active senior. Call 425-688-5800 for more information.

Overlake Conference Center

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

Beginner's Therapeutic Seniors Yoga

Come and rejuvenate your body with gentle yoga. This five-week series is adapted to our mature students who are new or relatively new to therapeutic senior yoga. The classes build gradually with lots of individual attention to help stretch and strengthen your body while learning basic poses, breathing and relaxation techniques. This is an excellent way to keep both body and mind, healthy and strong.

Date: **Tuesdays,
January 8 to February 5
or February 12 to March 11**
Time: **1 to 2:15 p.m. or
2:30 to 3:45 p.m.**
Location: **The Yoga Barn,
660 Gilman Blvd, # C-6,
Issaquah**
Cost: **\$50**

Registration required. Call The Yoga Barn at 425-427-0038 for class availability, evaluation and registration.

Therapeutic Senior Yoga

This five-week series is for previous students to the Therapeutic Seniors Yoga classes. The breath-oriented practice will help to increase circulation, release tense muscles, tone muscles and renew energy.

Date: **Mondays,
January 7 to February 4
or February 11 to March 10**
Time: **1:15 to 2:30 p.m. or
3 to 4:15 p.m.**
Location: **The Yoga Barn,
660 Gilman Blvd, # C-6,
Issaquah**
Cost: **\$50**

Registration required. Call The Yoga Barn at 425-427-0038 for class availability, evaluation and registration.

A Matter of Balance

Have you cut down on a favorite activity such as walking, 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 that develop a fear of falling begin to limit their activities, which can result in physical weakness, making the risk of falling greater. *A Matter of Balance* class can help improve quality of life and allow you to 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: **Mondays & Wednesdays,
January 21 to February 13
or February 20 to March 17**
- Or -
**Tuesdays & Thursdays,
January 22 to February 14
or February 19 to March 13**
Time: **10 a.m. to noon**
Cost: **\$15 for four week class.**

Includes workbook and free water bottle. Scholarships available; call for information. Registration required. Call Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Surviving the Symptoms of Alzheimer's Disease

The local chapter of The Alzheimer's Association along with Overlake Hospital Medical Center is offering an educational class that will provide families and caregivers practical hand-on tools. The class will cover the basics about dementia, deciphering difficult symptoms, discuss communication challenges and provide ideas for planning for the future. Free educational handouts and materials, with information on how to get referrals and resources for other services. The class targets the needs of family members, friends, and healthcare providers. Not appropriate for the memory-impaired person.

Date: **Thursday, January 24**
Time: **6 to 9 p.m.**

Registration required. Call Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Income for Life

Learn some creative solutions for your long term income needs so your money lasts as long as you do. Pam Hottinger, a financial advisor with Waddell & Reed will discuss how to plan for a comfortable future.

Date: **Tuesday, January 29**

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

Registration required. Call Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Living Wills

Does your family know your wishes? It is important to plan ahead to make sure everyone understands what your wishes are. Retired Overlake chaplain John Shaw, Ph.D., will discuss how to develop your own advance directive for healthcare through a workbook for living wills, durable power of attorney and value statements.

Date: **Wednesday, February 6**

Time: **10:30 a.m. to noon**

Registration required. Call Senior Care at 425-688-5800.

Support Groups

Family Caregiver Support Group - Bellevue Senior Health Center

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 with support and information as they navigate the twists, turns, and responsibilities.

Date: **Thursdays
January 10, 24, February 14, 28**
Time: **3 to 4:30 p.m.**

Location: **Bellevue Senior Health Center
1750 - 112th Ave. NE, Suite A-101,
Bellevue**

Cost: **Free**

Call Regina Bennett, MSW, 425-688-5807 with any questions.

Caregiver Support Group - Mercer Island Senior Center

Do you provide care for an older adult? Are you concerned about a parent or spouse who needs your help? Then you are a caregiver and it is important to also get support for yourself. Come meet and talk with others who are dealing with similar issues.

Date: **Tuesdays, January 8
and February 12**

Time: **3:30 to 5 p.m.**

Location: **Mercer Island Senior Center
7707 SE. 27th Street, Suite 110,
Mercer Island**

Cost: **Free**

Call Karin Miller, MSW, 425-688-5637 with any questions.

Bellevue Senior Center

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

4063 148th Ave. NE, Bellevue.
Mondays, 1 to 2:30 p.m.
Advanced registration required.
Cost: \$6 for Bellevue residents
\$7 for non-residents

Incontinence and the Aging Woman

It's estimated that over 12 million Americans suffer from urinary incontinence with the majority of them being women. Urinary incontinence does not have to be accepted as a part of growing older. Join an Overlake urologist to learn more about the different types of incontinence along with the latest treatments.

Date: January 28
Class# 25522

Keep Your Memory Healthy

Is there a way to improve the memory? The best way is to keep your memory working well is to actively use it and to stay healthy. Regina Bennett, MSW, will give tips and exercises to keep concentration and memory skills sharp.

Date: February 25
Class# 25523

Bellevue YMCA

Call 425-746-9900

14230 Bel-Red Rd., Bellevue.
Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
No registration required.
Cost: \$5 for non-YMCA members

Taking a Stand Against Brain Attack

Significant advances have been made in treatment for strokes, the third leading cause of death in the United States. Overlake stroke coordinator Carole Hardy, RN, will discuss the risk factors, detection and treatment for strokes, and will offer ideas of how to reduce your risk.

Date: January 9

Is It Alzheimer's Disease or Normal Aging?

The Alzheimer's Association education coordinator, Roger Holbrook, will cover the basics about dementia, deciphering difficult symptoms, discuss communication challenges and provide ideas for planning for the future.

Date: February 13

Redmond Senior Center

Call 425-556-2314

8703 160th Ave. NE, Redmond.
Wednesdays, 10:15 a.m. to noon
Advanced registration required.
Cost: FREE

NEW DAY!

Do You See What I See?

As adults age, most people are aware of changes in their vision. Older eyes are at greater risk for problems from cataracts to macular degeneration. An Overlake ophthalmologist will review normal changes in the eye and when there are changes that could signal problems.

Date: January 16

G.I. Blues

Common gastrointestinal complications can be uncomfortable and worrisome. An Overlake specialist will review the diagnoses and treatments of common digestive problems.

Date: February 20

Issaquah Meadow Creek Office Park

Call 425-688-5800.

22510 SE 64 Pl, Suite #120, Issaquah
Advance registration required.
Cost: \$5

Senior Smiles: Neglecting Dental Care Can Be Risky

The eyes may be the window to the soul, but the mouth mirrors a person's health and well-being throughout life and into old age. That is because oral diseases and conditions can affect many other aspects of an individual's general health status, and have an impact on emotional and psychological well-being through speech, laughter and social expression. Oral health and general health are inseparable, experts agree. Mark DiRe, DDS, will discuss the aspects of oral health and how dental health can impact overall health.

Date: Tuesday, February 19
Time: 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Columbia Athletic Club, Juanita Bay

Call 425-821-0882

11450 98th Ave NE, Kirkland
Thursdays, noon to 1 p.m.
Advanced registration required.
Cost: \$5

Understanding the Cholesterol Mystery

Do you understand all the jargon about good and bad cholesterol, HDL and LDL? How does it all affect the heart and does it really matter? Overlake physician Chester Gall, MD will explain the significance of the terms, the importance of being tested and discuss ways to manage your cholesterol.

Date: February 21

Letter from the Director

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Connections members. We appreciate the support of the Overlake Auxiliaries for underwriting these booklets.

If you'd be interested in helping to shape and direct the Senior Care/Connections program of the future, we welcome new members to serve on our Community Advisory Board. If you're interested, call our office (425-688-5800) and ask for an application. Together we can make a difference!

Let me close by sharing this wonderful quote from William Thomas, MD, a well-loved geriatrician and pioneer in the aging field:

"Let go of youth. It is but a flower. To know old age is to dive deeply into the very roots of life. This is what is real, what is hidden from the young, what enriches and sustains us. Old age is not something that happens to us, it is who we are, embrace it – and be made whole."

Please consider Senior Care your partner while embracing aging and welcoming 2008!

Kind regards,
Debbie Anderson
Director, Senior Care Connections



Charlene Raunio, Senior Care's education coordinator, was named Overlake Employee of the Month at a celebration with her co-workers. From left to right: Debbie Anderson, Charlene Raunio, Regina Bennett, Jeanne Morrow, Joanne Padgett and Aaron Frey.

Senior Art Show

The Bellevue and Mercer Island Senior Health Centers exhibited an artist's work entitled *Landscapes of Amy Juul*. Juul's artwork was exhibited from the first of October and will conclude at the end of December.

Juul, a Connections member, began her studies at the University of Mexico City and transferred to the University of California, Berkeley. She later studied oil painting under Robert Hebrant and Edward Rizallah in Brussels, Belgium. She continued painting in Paris at the

Académie de la Grande Chaumière and at the Volks Kunst Schule in Dusseldorf, Germany. Her artwork has been exhibited internationally and many of her paintings are in private collections in France, Belgium, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Uruguay, El Salvador, and the United States.

We'd like to thank Amy for allowing her artwork to be displayed in the two Senior Health Centers and to Elana Kellogg, curator of the Senior Health Center's art collections, for arranging the exhibit.



Senior Care Welcomes Joan Luster

We are pleased to announce Joan Luster, MSW, joined Senior Care as the new Resource Coordinator in October. Joan received her masters in social work from the University of Washington in 2004. Prior to joining Overlake she worked in a variety of outpatient settings that served seniors. Joan says, "I enjoy problem solving and helping Connections members find services they never knew existed." As a Mercer Island native, she is pleased to be working in

the area where she grew up. After a few months on the job Joan says, "It's fun and every day is different." Please join us in welcoming Joan to Senior Care!

Thanks to Sonja Potter Auxiliary and The Seattle Foundation

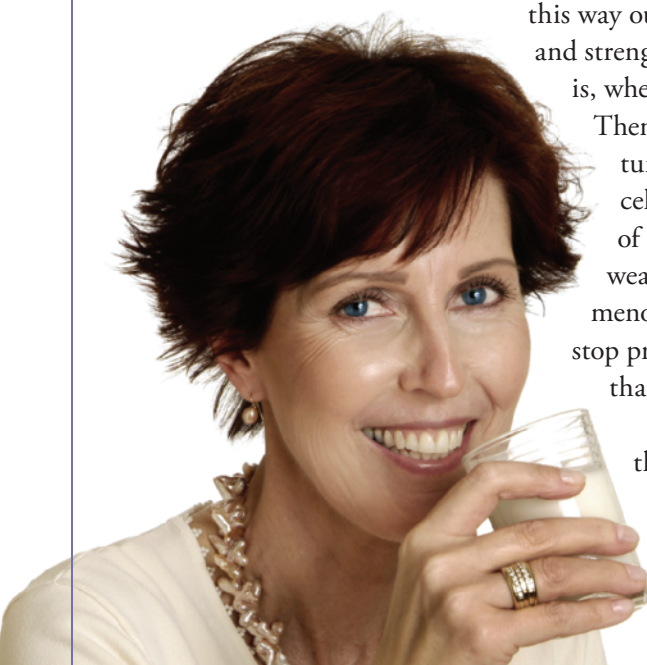
The Sonja Potter Auxiliary recently voted to contribute \$10,000 to Senior Care to help underwrite the Connections Newsletter, Caresharing Newsletter and many of the educational materials provided free to the community.

The Seattle Foundation awarded a \$15,000 grant that will help underwrite the general operating expenses of Senior Care.

These generous financial contributions will allow Senior Care to continue to provide its high quality services.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, some 10 million Americans suffer from osteoporosis, a disease in which bones weaken and become highly susceptible to breaks. What's more, an estimated 34 million Americans age 50 and older suffer from low bone mass, which puts them at a heightened risk of osteoporosis. Within both categories, 80 percent of the people affected are women, and although most of them are older, osteoporosis can strike at any age.

Are you doing all you can to build and maintain strong bones?



Maintaining an active lifestyle and getting enough calcium can help strengthen bones at any age.

Many of us think our bones are static once we reach adulthood, but they actually continue to change throughout our lives, simultaneously losing old cells and adding new ones. During our late teens and 20s, healthy women amass new bone cells at a rate that outpaces cell breakdown. In this way our bones accumulate density and strength – until about age 30, that is, when bone density tends to peak.

Then the natural aging process turns the tide, and the rate of cell loss begins to exceed that of cell growth. This progressive weakening accelerates greatly after menopause, when a woman's ovaries stop producing estrogen, a hormone that keeps bone loss in check.

A bone-healthy diet is one that includes adequate calcium and vitamin D. The amount of calcium a person needs changes with age, but the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends 1,000 milligrams a day for healthy women between the ages of 19 and 50. Good sources of calcium include dairy products, spinach, broccoli, sardines and almonds. In conjunction with adequate calcium, 400–800 international units of vitamin D per day is recommended.

Vitamin D is equally important in preventing osteoporosis because it acts as an intermediary on behalf of calcium, allowing the body to absorb and regulate

it. (In contrast, both alcohol and caffeine prevent the body from absorbing calcium when they are ingested in large amounts.) Our bodies manufacture vitamin D after exposure to the sun. The vitamin is also found in saltwater fish, egg yolks, and fortified dairy products and cereals.

Exercise is vital in preventing osteoporosis because bones, like muscles, are living tissues that increase in strength through appropriate physical activity. Both weight-bearing exercises (walking, running, or playing a sport) and resistance exercises (weight lifting) can put positive stress on bones, stimulating growth of new bone cells.

Diet and exercise are as important after a woman turns 30 as they are earlier in life. Maintaining an active lifestyle and getting enough calcium can help strengthen bones at any age. The National Institutes of Health recommend that older women who may have trouble getting enough calcium or who are taking interfering medications take a supplement.

Because osteoporosis is painless (until a bone is so weakened that it breaks), it is important to be aware of your risk factors for the disease and ask your doctor about screenings and preventive medications. Risk factors include thin bones, family history of bone fractures, anorexia, heavy smoking or drinking, a sedentary lifestyle, and medications such as glucocorticoids or some anticonvulsants. Make no bones about it: With proper care, you can prevent osteoporosis.

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 16 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 *"You've Gotta Have Heart"* on Wednesday, January 23, 2008.

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

Name(s) _____

Phone Number _____

Exciting Volunteer Opportunity! Become a Volunteer Leader

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and having to restrict their activities. *A Matter of Balance* is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels.

By attending a two-day training session offered by an Overlake Hospital Master Trainer, a Volunteer Leader will be provided the information and materials to teach *A Matter of Balance* class to seniors.

The next training will be held in March. If you are interested in more information about volunteering, call Debbie Anderson, Senior Care director, at 425-688-5801.

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