



# Beatitudes Center DOAR

DEVELOPING OLDER ADULT RESOURCES

Support Services for the Caregivers of the Elderly

# Generations

January & February 2009

Vol.13. No. 1

### From Donna's Desk---

Happy 2009! It seems like only yesterday that we were all afraid that computers would crash and the world would be thrown into technological turmoil when we hit 2000. None of that happened. However, the various wars around the world, and the economic turmoil we face today make 2000's concerns seem pale by comparison. But we will survive – perhaps wiser and with more faith in our ability to survive.

I spent the holidays with my granddaughters in Minneapolis. As the plane was descending, the pilot announced that the temperature in Minneapolis was “a balmy 8”! But with hat, scarf, and mittens, I made it through. We had a simple celebration – opening gifts Christmas Eve while watching the “Yule Log” on TV. We had squid soup, the dish my son-in-law's late mother always made to honor her Italian heritage. The girls made stuffed neck pillows for everyone on the family's new sewing machine. (Mine is a pink print with Elvis on it) Christmas dinner was wonderful homemade pizza. Their parish is the Church of the Incarnation, so, of course, it was splendid with lights, trees, and poinsettias. And my son Mark gave me the great gift of becoming engaged to his wonderful girlfriend Liz. And there was lots of snow! All in all, a lovely time. Then I came home.

For many people, 2009 will be a year of challenges. Caregivers know all about challenges. They face them every day. But each day is a new day, and we face it with faith, hope, and a lot of love. We may need to ask for help, and we do that, We may need to make a tough decision, and we do that. We may even be called upon to say “good by” to a loved one and we do that with grace and courage. Life truly is wonderful, though sometimes it may bring more challenges than we would like and caregivers know that.. But we make it. We always do. We survive.

I think 2009 will be a good year, because we as a country maybe forced to get back to basics, work together for the common good, and look at what really matters in life.

I hope that the coming year is a good one for all of us.

Donna Heppermann, Generations Program Director

### GENERATIONS

*Generations* coordinates support groups and workshops and provides information for persons concerned about aging loved ones.

This program assists caregivers by helping them manage caregiver stress, exploring the emotional aspects of caregiving, resolving family tensions, managing long-distance caregiving and accessing community resources.

### || ALL THAT JAZZ ||



|| Our annual Jazz Cabaret fundraiser will be held on Sunday, March 15, 2 p.m., at the Arizona Biltmore in Phoenix. This year's concert features the “Jazz Divas” – Nancy Gee, Margo Reed, Sherry Roberson and Delphine Cortez. Also featured will be our silent and live auction. Come join us for a wonderful afternoon of music, wine, great food, and opportunities to bid on donations of wonderful prizes. Proceeds from the event will allow Center DOAR to continue to serve homebound adults, family caregivers, grandparents raising grandchildren, and the health concerns of faith communities. Cost for the event is \$85. Call the Center DOAR office to reserve a ticket or make a donation for the auction.

# Support Group News.

The February Center DOAR **Parkinson Group** will feature a presentation on spirituality and how it can enhance our lives.

The January **Caring Friends** meeting at Thunderbird Baptist is entitled "Resources and Reminiscing". In February, John Durbin will speak about "Normal Memory as We Age."

		**Alzheimer's Caregiver Conference**		
		The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Alzheimer's Caregiver Conference will be held at the		
		Chaparral Suites Hotel in Scottsdale on Friday, February 6, from 8 a.m.		
		to 5 p.m. This year's conference is entitled: "Alzheimer's Disease:		
		Embracing Today, Anticipating Tomorrow". Speakers include: Dr.		
		Marwan Sabbagh, Susan Kilby, RN, David Coon, Ph.D., and Emily		
		Kile, ESQ., among others. There will be information on research,		
		behavior issues, caregiver wellness, nutrition, legal issues, etc.		
		Registration cost is \$75. Call the Alzheimer's Association, 602-528-		
		0545 for more information.		

## Health Issue

The golden years are often tarnished with health problems. Many of the conditions can be avoided, prevented, or made less catastrophic.

Those that might be avoided are falls, heat exhaustion, dehydration, and over exertion.

Educate yourself.

Take inventory of your home and eliminate potential hazards such as clutter, loose rugs, and hard to reach items.

Don't let yourself become over tired. Drink plenty water, especially in summer time. Don't stay in the sun too long and wear protective clothes.

Prevention is the key to many diseases and health problems.

Be sure to get an annual flu shot, a pneumonia shot as advised by your doctor, and you might ask for a shot for shingles..

Eating a balanced diet and exercising properly is an important factor in keeping healthy.

Do not smoke and limit alcohol consumption.

Have an annual check up. Be sure to let your doctor know about any health problems that seem to be prevalent in your family, such as diabetes, cancer, allergies, heart or a genetic disease.

A sudden heat attack or stroke is catastrophic.

Follow your doctor's orders, take your medication regularly as prescribed, eat and exercise adequately for your age group you maintain a healthy body.

Be aware of warning signs of stroke or heart attack.

Don't ignore extreme headaches, dizziness, and vision problems that may only last a short time.

Weakness or numbness in your arm or face.

Trouble speaking, confusion or difficulty understanding.

An alert button might save your life. These are connected to your telephone system or an alarm system. Recommended for the elderly who live alone.

## GROUP MEETINGS

**For Caregivers of Elderly**  
**Alzheimer's Meeting**  
Church of the Beatitudes  
 555 W. Glendale Ave.  
 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 12:30 p.m

**Parkinson Meetings**  
Church of the Beatitudes  
 555 W. Glendale Ave.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, 1:30 p.m.  
 Special presentation at February mtg.

Skyway Church of the West Valley  
 14900 W. Van Buren, Goodyear, AZ  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

## General Caregiver Groups Phoenix

John C. Lincoln Cowden Center  
 2<sup>nd</sup> St. & Sunnyslope  
 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.  
 602-870-6374

Beatitudes Center DOAR, Rm 15  
 555 W. Glendale Ave.  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

Paradise Valley Community Ctr.  
 "Coffee & Caring Group"  
 17402 N. 40<sup>th</sup> St.  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**Scottsdale**  
Via Linda Senior Ctr.  
 10440 E. Via Linda  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, 10:00 a.m.  
 480-312-5810

**Glendale**  
 "Caring Friends"  
Thunderbird Baptist Village  
 13617 N. 55<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
 See support group news for special programs



For more information, call Donna at:  
 602-274-5022 ext. 43  
 Friends are quiet angels who lift  
 us to our feet when our wings  
 have trouble remembering how  
 to fly.

## From the Bookshelf

Animals are therapeutic



Animals can transform human's lives through their personality.

It is a known fact that animals are therapeutic for people. They bring love, laughter and companionship to us. Companion animals are recommended by doctors, social workers, home care workers and nursing homes to help make lives healthier, and offer more independence and hope. Loneliness seems to be the most serious condition an elderly person can face. Love is the most important health attribute we have and pets are one of nature's best sources of love.

Nikki, a Golden Retriever Opens a Friends Heart.

Nikki is a typical 2 year Golden, full of life. She brings pure gold to friends. Nikki was certified as a therapy dog, just after she became one year old. Nikki and her owner visits in a home called "Fields of Gold Manor".

A shared story by Nikki's owner

On my fourth visit with Nikki to the home, the director, Dorothy noticed that one of the residents was watching Nikki closely out of the corner of her eye. Dorothy whispered to me "Why don't you go over and show her Nikki". Well, I wasn't really too thrilled at the prospect. I have observed this patient, Helga, during the last three visits.

She is mean. Really! She lies in her chair; she is old with grey hair and a constant scowl on her face. Anyone who comes near her or tries to talk with her gets a tongue lashing. So I kept away from her. And now, Dorothy asked me to take Nikki to her.

It is a good thing that dogs do not have preconceived ideas like we do. Nikki stood beside her chair, leaning in, anxious to visit. The lady slowly looked down at Nikki, and the biggest smile came over her face. She was instantly transformed from an old lady with grey hair into a warm friendly looking person. "Oh, my baby, my beautiful looking dog" she crooned. "How beautiful you are and so soft" she whispered. Nikki must have sensed what was happening because she was calm and very still, leaning into the chair even more. She gave Helga the "Nikki look", her head bent down slightly, her eyes looking up at you, full of love and warmth and acceptance.

"I had a dog just like you once". "I miss her so; I really loved my dog" Helga stroked Nikki speaking only to her. "Ask her some questions" Dorothy nudged me, "See if she will talk with you".

"Helga, what was the name of your dog?" I asked quietly, not wanting to disturb her thoughts.

"Maxie." "I loved my Maxie so much but he is not here any more". Tears ran down her cheeks as she stroked Nikki.

"Helga, would you like me to bring Nikki back to visit you?" "O yes! Please, it would be so nice. I love Nikki" "I have no one else; I am all alone you know."

<http://www.squidoo.com/loving-paws-visiting-the-elderly> is a web site with many stories shared about how dogs are therapeutic to the elderly.

Continued...Animals

Cats are not without some therapeutic qualities and they can require less care, making them a better companions for a homebound person.

A very popular book, *Dewey*, the story of a cat, has recently reached the bookshelves.

Dewey was a people cat. One cold January day in the little town of Spencer, Iowa, someone dropped a tiny kitten into the library return book depositor. Nearly frozen and hungry, the librarian and many friends nursed him to health. He became the library cat.

He touched the whole town, state and world. Dewey loved everyone. It was first noticeable with the elderly patrons, who often come to the library to flip through magazines or browse for books. Once Dewey started spending time with them, they showed up more frequently and stayed longer. A few seemed better dressed, with more care given to their appearance. They had always given the staff a friendly wave or good morning, but now they engaged the staff in conversation, and it was usually about Dewey.

One older man in particular came in at the same time every morning, sat in the same big, comfortable chair, and read the newspaper. His wife had recently died, and he was lonely. He didn't seem to be a cat person, but from the first moment Dewey climbed into his lap the man was beaming. Suddenly he wasn't reading the newspaper alone. "Are you happy here, Dewey?" the man would ask every morning as he petted his new friend. Dewey would shut his eyes and, more often than not, drop off to sleep.

Look for the delightful book, *Dewey*, written by Vicki Myron,

You can find it at the library (waiting list of 80) or a local book store.

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### Mark Your Calendar!



Two special events are coming up, so mark those new 2009 calendars.

**Caregiver Retreat:** April 25 & 26 at the Franciscan Renewal Center.

**Un Descansito:** Late March or early April – date and location TBA

There will be more information about these events in the next Generations newsletter.

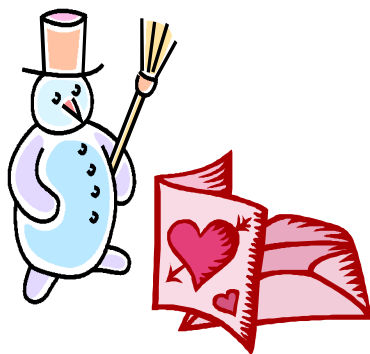


**Generations Program**

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**LET'S TALK... GENERATIONS MAKING DECISIONS TOGETHER**

How many adults want to be parented?

That's how it can feel to elders when adult children make decisions without their input. It's something no one wants, but few do anything to keep that from happening. There is a better way. Families need to clearly talk about a variety of topics, including some on the sensitive side. Beatitudes Center DOAR has planned a conference for people age 40, 100 and everywhere in between about a whole range of decisions that need to be made and how to get the conversation going. Join in this important conference! Cost includes breakfast, lunch, and materials (\$35 - or \$60 for two from a family). "Let's Talk" takes place on Saturday, Feb. 7, from 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. at First Christian Church, 6750 N 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Call Beatitudes Center DOAR at 602-274-5022 for a registration brochure, or visit [www.centerdoar.org](http://www.centerdoar.org).

**Beatitudes Center DOAR (Developing Older Adult Resources)**

Is a nonprofit, interfaith organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for older adults and their families. Founded in 1981, Beatitudes Center DOAR promotes health and well-being through a broad range of community-based services that assist caregivers, homebound adults, grandparents raising grandchildren, and congregational health programs.

Programs include Generations, Nurse & Health Ministries Network, Project GrandCare and VICaP Faith in Action.

Call 602-274-5022 or visit [www.centerdoar.org](http://www.centerdoar.org) to request assistance or learn how you can join our efforts. We welcome your support and participation!