



"Our Family Helping Yours"
(925) 240-5570

The HomeLife

SUMMER 2016

Connection

Serving all of East County, Tracy and Rio Vista!

CAREGIVER PROFILE



Caregiver of the Quarter
Margarita Vasquez

Our caregivers are totally committed, highly qualified and carefully selected individuals who are personally and thoroughly screened, bonded and insured.

Most importantly our caregivers are dependable and extraordinarily caring of others. In addition to their previous experience, our caregivers receive continuous training that includes a specialized curriculum exclusive to The Senior's Choice that results in them becoming Certified Companion Aides™. These highly qualified and trained caregivers are ready to help you and your loved ones with a variety of daily activities such as:

- Caring companionship
- Meal planning and preparation
- Incidental transportation
- Running errands
- Light housekeeping
- Medication reminders
- Assistance with bathing and grooming
- Assistance with bill paying
- Information and referral services

Our personalized and affordable services are available 7 days a week and can range from a few hours a day to 24 hour and live in care.

Welcome to the Summer 2016 HomeLife Connection

Welcome to our Summer 2016 HomeLife Connection! We wish to congratulate our Caregiver of the Quarter, Margarita Vasquez!

Margarita Vasquez has been a caregiver with HomeLife Senior Care since October 28th, 2013 and has been a pleasure to work with since joining the HomeLife team!

Margarita has a compassionate heart for caregiving and shows this by her commitment to her client. She has a genuine personality and great communication skills. Margarita is always in excellent contact with the office staff and is quick to update us so that the care team she is a part of is well informed. She familiarizes herself with her clients' circumstances so that she can provide the best care.

She is very reliable and dependable and gets along well with everyone she works with. Margarita typically works twenty-four hour shifts which often times requires a caregiver to have a lot of patience

and adaptability. It is not easy to leave one's own family for long hours and put another before herself but she does this without complaint and has done so for several years now.

Margarita proactively and regularly participates in caregiving trainings to further develop her caregiving skills and to increase her understanding of the ailments affecting the seniors in her care.

The HomeLife staff and Margarita's clients cannot say enough good things about her! We are fortunate and proud that Margarita is a part of our HomeLife family!

— Felicia Buack
Human Resources Administrator

Best wishes,
Angela DiNicola,
Owner
HomeLife Senior Care



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FINANCE & CONSUMER RESOURCES

The Benefits of Social Media for Seniors (and Family)

Seniors are jumping on board Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and more as they realize it is fun and provides real benefits.

Are your senior loved ones participating? Here are five ways social media is beneficial for seniors.

1. Social Media Keeps Families Close

"I wish I heard more often from my children/grandchildren" is a common refrain of seniors. You'd think that with seemingly everyone carrying their own phone, calls to senior loved ones would be more common than ever. However, those phones are used less for making phone calls than for connecting by other means, particularly social media.

More and more seniors are realizing that going where their family members are going, most frequently Facebook, makes it easier to link up and keep up with what is going on in the lives of loved ones. It also makes for more frequent and comfortable conversations between generations than most would experience through calls.

2. Family Photo and Video Sharing

With the overwhelming majority of photographs now digital, sharing of memories is now easier than ever through social media. Increasingly, pictures are shared every day by users of Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and other social media sites. Grandparents can go online now and see pictures taken just moments before by their grandchildren, creating a feeling of closeness that was never possible with mailed photos.

Home movies have always brought family memories to life even more than photos, but video sharing took effort and saw delays, even with video cameras and VCRs. With many phones now coming with a video camera, even more videos are being taken by family members and, like pictures, being quickly posted online.

Seniors are now getting fresh "home movies" on YouTube, Facebook and other sites.

3. Online Coupons & Other Discounts

Everyone likes saving money, not just seniors, though for many older Americans on fixed incomes getting a deal is essential and not just a fun thing to do.

Social media provides access to many opportunities to save money, whether we're seeking discount offerings by companies on their Facebook pages, coupons shared between Twitter users, or the deals offered in many communities on Groupon and like sites, just to name a few.

Not only can going social be fun for our senior loved ones, but provide savings as well!

4. Family Peace of Mind

Seniors and their families often live far apart today, which can lead to anxiety on both sides, particularly when the elder family members are living on their own.

Social media gives seniors and their family caregivers a convenient way to check in daily, or on whatever frequency is desired, creating peace of mind on both ends of the communications.

5. Community Engagement and Belonging

The importance of socializing as part of a community cannot be overstated, particularly for seniors spending much of their time living isolated at home. It can be critical for those unable to get out of the house to be with others.

Social media provides the opportunity to have and be a friend, to congregate without leaving the house, to never be alone, even when you are the only one in the house.

Just Scratching the Surface

There are even more reasons if those five are not enough for you to get your senior loved ones engaged with social networks and the world available to them there.

What are YOUR reasons for being on social media, if you are? If you're not, you might just find there are benefits for you as well as your loved ones!

Let's keep helping our senior loved ones get connected, too!

by Barry Birkett

<http://seniorcarecorner.com/5-benefits-of-social-media-for-seniors>



ROTATING TOPIC:

Creating a Legacy for Your Parent

A common regret of adult children who have lost their parents is the wish that they had asked and understood more about their own family history. This is particularly true for family caregivers, whose focus on the present is necessitated by the practical concerns of getting through the day. Taking time to learn more about the past seems like a luxury for many caregivers.

But taking that time may be beneficial to those we love and care for and provide an important opportunity to redefine and enhance our familial connections. An essential challenge for our loved ones as they approach old age is to relinquish the need to exert control and to harvest the meaning of their lives through imparting legacy. Part of facilitating this important life review is to bear witness to memories, which form the very foundation of identity and can serve as an intangible link in a powerful chain that connects us to generations that came before us.

As our parents struggle to come to terms with their losses, to recapture fragments of memory and to hold on to what remains, they are engaged in an effort to shape and understand their legacy – to reflect on the meaning of their lives and the memories that will live on with future generations after they die.

Helping a parent reflect on their life story can be a tremendously healing process. As we all must eventually confront our own mortality, may we do so with the comfort that perhaps our children will take the time to learn our stories, pass on our history, and continue our legacy through honoring and understanding the past.

Here are four tips to help the senior in your life create their own legacy:

Film Their Stories. Use a digital recorder to record a parent's advice, memories, playful moments or laughter. Upload them and share with the whole family. Get your social-savvy generation

Continued on page 3

Have Great Posture As You Age

SENIOR HEALTH & LIFESTYLES



Having good posture minimizes stress on your back by keeping your muscles and bones in their natural positions as well as making your movements more fluid and efficient. Poor posture, on the other hand, can create a variety of health problems. It can impede breathing, blood circulation, digestion, organ functions and overall alertness. Slouching creates 10 to 15 times extra pressure on the spinal cord. It can generate neck pain, headaches and limited joint movement. Problems may even result in the legs and feet.

Here are 8 helpful tips to keep you standing tall at any age.

1. Open up

Now that many of us spend our days hunched in front of a computer, "it's very important for us to be able to stretch and open up and improve our range of motion," says Jonathan F. Bean, MD, MS, MPH, an assistant professor in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Harvard Medical School in Boston.

2. Easy exercises

To stay limber, try to get up for a couple minutes every half hour and stretch, walk, or stand. Try this exercise: Lie down on the floor and make slow "snow angels" with your arms for two or three minutes.

For an extra challenge, roll up a towel and put it on the floor underneath your spine. Many gyms have half foam rollers—a tube cut in half lengthwise—that you can use for even more of a stretch. Do these stretches slowly and stop if you feel anything more than mild discomfort or pain, says Dr. Bean.

3. Sit straight

When you do have to work at a desk, "sitting up with good, tall posture and your shoulders dropped is a good habit to get into," says Rebecca Seguin, PhD, an exercise physiologist and nutritionist in Seattle. This can take some getting used to; exercise disciplines that focus on body awareness, such as Pilates and yoga, can help you to stay sitting straight, Seguin says. Make sure your workstation is set up to promote proper posture.

4. Strengthen your core

Pilates and yoga are great ways to build up the strength of your "core"—the muscles of your abdomen and pelvic area. These muscles form the foundation of

good posture, and a strong core can have many other benefits, from improving your athletic performance to preventing urinary incontinence.

5. Support your spine

After menopause, women may have more weakening in the muscles around the spine than aging men do, Dr. Bean says. Exercises targeting the back extensors, neck flexors, pelvic muscles, and side muscles are crucial. Trainers at gyms can help; there are even special machines that target these muscles. Endurance in the spine and trunk muscle groups is important too, according to Dr. Bean; "that's what allows us to stand up for long periods of time without our back hurting us."

6. Lift weights

The vertebral compression fractures that subtract from our height—and can lead to the "dowager's hump" in the upper back that's a hallmark of old age—are due to the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis. We can prevent these changes with weight-bearing exercises, like walking, stair climbing, and weight lifting. "People who walk regularly through their whole lives tend to have better bone density than sedentary people," Seguin explains.

7. Vitamins and Minerals

A healthy diet is essential for providing

strong bones and muscles that allow for ideal posture. In particular for bone health, getting the optimal daily dosage of Vitamin D and calcium is essential. The recommended dietary intake for vitamin D is 600 IU a day for women up to age 70 and 800 IU for women older than 70. For calcium, Women 19 to 50 years old should take 1,000 milligrams daily. Women over 50 should take 1,200 milligrams.

8. Consider medication

Your doctor will be able to tell you whether you need a bone mineral density scan to detect osteopenia or osteoporosis. Although Seguin says that activities like progressive resistance training can halt or reverse bone loss in some cases, medications may also help. These include bisphosphonates like Boniva, Reclast, and Fosamax. (Although safe, such drugs can increase the risk of rare fractures.) Hormone-based medications that can help build bone density include Evista (raloxifene), calcitonin, and parathyroid hormone.

by Anne Harding, www.health.com

<http://www.health.com/health/gallery/0,,20446224,00.html>

Creating a Legacy for Your Parent *(Continued from page 2)*

to comment and ask more questions online. Share all the feedback with your parent so he or she feels the love.

Tell a Love Story. Sort through Mom's handwritten keepsakes and piece together the love notes, birthday cards and photos that tell her story. Paste them into a large coffee-table-type scrapbook to make your whole family swoon.

Frame Their Phrases. Sort through the saved notes, emails, birthday cards and letters your parents have sent you, your siblings and each grandchild. Make a photocopy of each and physically cut and paste favorite phrases into a book or on a collage. Compile with some of your favorite images and display.

Transcribe Their Memories. Sit down with a computer and ask your parents all the questions you can think of. Start with Mom's childhood or how Dad first asked her out. Ask Dad about his first car or the lessons he learned from his own father. Type with no agenda—just let it all unfold. Consider using a Dictaphone for better backup. Make sure to ask your family for the questions they'd love to know. Don't worry about publishing the content, just make sure you have it saved.

By Jody Gastfriend
Senior Care Expert, Care.com

www.care.com/a/moving-forward-looking-back-creating-a-legacy-for-your-parent-1104211130



SPOTLIGHT ON CAREGIVERS

2015 Study on Family Caregivers: Who They Are and What They Do

Caregiving in the U.S. 2015 is a joint study by the National Alliance for Caregiving and the AARP Public Policy Institute that provides recent insight into the state of family caregivers in the U.S. According to this study, nearly 44 million adults in the U.S. are now providing personal assistance for family members with disabilities or other care needs. That's more than one out of every six adults. More than 34 million care for frail elders and nearly 4 million help children with disabilities. About 6.5 million care for both.

The typical family caregiver is a 49-year-old woman who is assisting a parent or in-law and working at a paid job. She provides about 24 hours-a-week of personal assistance such as bathing or dressing or helping with activities such as shopping or rides. Almost six in 10 perform nursing or other complex care tasks, such as giving oral medicines or injections, wound care, or operating medical equipment. The typical caregiver has been helping a parent or spouse for four years.

Most work full-time but six in 10 report that caregiving has affected their ability to do their jobs. About half say they've had to take

occasional time off, 15 percent have taken leaves of absences, and 14 percent have had to reduce work hours or change jobs as a result of their caregiving.

About half of all those caring for adults say they get help from other relatives or friends. But only about one-third say their loved ones have aides, housekeepers, or other paid assistance (some report both paid and unpaid help). A third of family caregivers say they do it alone—they get no help from anyone.

The typical care recipient is a 69-year-old woman, though nearly half of caregivers say they are aiding a loved one who is 75 or older. Half live in their own home and a third live in their caregiver's homes. Only 5 percent lived in nursing homes and 3 percent in assisted living. About 60 percent have some long-term physical condition, one-third have a short-term acute illness or injury, and almost one-quarter have memory problems. About half were hospitalized in the past year.

While the "typical" profile was a 49-year-old daughter in this study, there were notable differences among those supporting their relatives. For

instance, 40 percent of caregivers were men. And while caregivers spend an average of about 24 hours-a-week helping relatives or friends, nearly one-quarter say they provide more than 40 hours-a-week of care. Those doing the most hours reported higher levels of financial, physical, and emotional stress, and were more likely to cut back on their own paid work.

Older adults caring for spouses or partners face the biggest caregiving burden. They provide an average of nearly 45 hours-a-week of care, nearly twice the average. Caregivers who are themselves 75 or older are less likely to have paid help, more likely to act as medical advocates, and more likely to be managing their family finances than younger caregivers.

This report provides a valuable resource in understanding the burden that caregiving imposes on families, where the vast majority of people with functional limitations live at home, and nearly all of them rely on family members and friends for support.

Study statistics compiled by Caren Parnes for the Senior's Choice

Get the report at:

www.caregiving.org/caregiving2015/