

# GRACE HOME NEWS

June 2018



## SELF-WORTH IN ELDERS

Is self-worth important in elders? All your life you have had the ability to go to bed at the end of the day with the feeling that today I got a lot done or today I made a difference. Upon arrival at Grace Home, that is suddenly not nearly as accessible. Laundry is done for you, bed is made for you, cleaning is done for you, trash is taken out for you, and meals are prepared for you. What does that leave for you to do? There is no longer a need for you to do anything. Sounds depressing, doesn't it? Well, it is not! Each person, as life begins slowing down or even sooner if you don't want dementia to take it away from you, would do well to find some type of work/hobby that you enjoy. Just about any hobby, once started, can be adapted for arthritis, blindness, hard of hearing, if you will allow it. We cannot hand you a "Get out of depression free" card. If you want to go to bed as an elder, feeling worth something, you need to plan ahead. There is only so much that we as employees can do to give you quality of life in your last years. It is a choice that you have to make whether you will enjoy your life or grumble about the things you have lost.

I have been astounded lately at all the elderly people saying they can't help out. They can't get a group around to sing on C.E. because they are too old. They can't have company anymore because they are too old. The saddest thing I have ever heard is an elderly man say he was too old to have devotions at Grace Home. To me that means either that God doesn't mean enough to share with others or they no longer receive inspirations from God. (I am not trying to put anyone on a guilt trip! Just trying to get to a point.) The most beautiful sight I have ever seen in my life was a dear elder whose hands are gnarled from arthritis, her steps very unsure and her mind not what it used to be, getting up to help someone who could not help themselves.

In my job, I am required to ensure that each elder is meaningfully engaged and if they are not, we have to come up with something that is meaningful to that elder. The hardest ones to do this for are the ones that have no enjoyment in anything. They feel they aren't good at crafts so they can't enjoy doing that. They aren't good at sports so they are scared to join in games. Some of them have never worked so they are scared of work and don't know that feeling of success over a job well done. This type of person has a very hard time with the hours that they are awake wondering what they can do. It breaks our hearts to try to find them something to do when we know there is nothing they want to do and no matter what we give them, it won't help. They have had everything just like they wanted it all their lives and will take nothing less now. That means no adaptive devices.

One day I was pushing an elder in her wheelchair outside when she commented on how beautiful one of the trees growing majestically in front of Grace Home was. I commented back that it surely had a lot of character and I asked her if she knew what caused the character. She thought a moment and did not know so I told her it was old age. Character forms lovely grandpas and grandmas. The older they are, the more beautiful they can become. It is a choice if you will be a beautiful tree with lots of character or an old rotten stump.

We sing that song "There's something for all to do." That is so true. An elderly man with dementia praying in front of employees is a very touching scene and in doing so this man was somewhat passing on the torch. One day, I was having a very, very bad day. An elderly woman who doesn't know any one's name anymore besides her own, throws her fists in the air in celebration and says, "This is for Laura!" There were tears in my eyes as I thought about how blessed I was to be the recipient of that. Many times, a dear elderly lady who thinks her voice is too old to sing, will sing with us because she loves to sing and she knows we love to sing with her. Though it may be cracked and give out soon, hers is the most beautiful voice I have ever heard. It is made beautiful by her willingness to serve God and do what she can.

CONTINUED...

## The Touch of the Master's Hand

'Twas battered and scarred, and the  
auctioneer

Thought it scarcely worth his while  
To waste much time on the old violin,  
But held it up with a smile.

"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,  
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"  
"A dollar, a dollar. Then two! Only two?"  
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;  
Going for three..." But no,  
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man  
Came forward and picked up the bow;  
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,  
And tightening the loosened strings,  
He played a melody pure and sweet,  
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,  
With a voice that was quiet and low,  
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"  
And he held it up with the bow.  
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?"  
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?  
Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,  
And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,  
"We do not quite understand.  
What changed its worth?" Swift came the  
reply:  
"The touch of the Master's hand."  
And many a man with life out of tune,  
And battered and scarred with sin,  
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd  
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,  
A game — and he travels on.  
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,  
He's "going" and almost "gone."  
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd  
Never can quite understand  
The worth of a soul and the change that is  
wrought  
By the touch of the Master's hand.

Myra Welch would say that she heard a speaker address a group of students on the power of God to bring out the best in people. She said she herself became filled with light and that "Touch of the Master's Hand" was written in 30 minutes!. The finished poem was sent anonymously to the editor of her local church news bulletin. She felt it was a gift from God and didn't need her name on it.

## WHY HOSPICE?

Death is inevitable – we are all heading that way. When an elder at Grace Home appears to be nearing the end of life, we offer hospice services to them and their family. Most families choose hospice care – after many questions have been answered. There are a lot of myths regarding hospice care, so I thought I would address them in this newsletter.

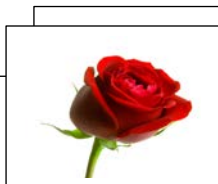
One of the first myths is that hospice care is about death. It's not – it's about life. This may seem like a paradox, so let me explain. The criteria for admission to hospice care is a life expectancy of six months or less. However, we have had elders who have been on hospice much longer than that, as well as some who are discharged from hospice. Several years ago we had an elder here who was admitted to hospice three times before going "home". Hospice is about recognizing that a disease process is no longer curable and that comfort is the new goal. It treats the person, not the disease. Comfort not cure, pain and disease symptom control, physical, emotional and spiritual care are all components of hospice that allow elders to live what life they have left to the fullest, with dignity.

Another myth is that admission to hospice is "giving up on them and just letting them die". Nothing could be further from the truth! Hospice care is an acceptance of the inevitable and a shift from frequent unpleasant visits to the hospital to remaining in familiar surroundings, being cared for by people they know and love: caregivers who are using a wide array of treatments and medications to keep them comfortable and pain free. Many previously used medications and treatments may be stopped, but only ones that no longer provide any benefit to the elder.

Speaking of medications raises the specter of another myth, probably the one I'm asked about the most: "Will my loved one be drugged into unresponsiveness and given medications that will hasten their death?" The drug everyone seems to be most concerned about and scared of is morphine. Morphine is one of the chief "go-to" drugs in hospice care, but is only given when needed and in doses that provide pain relief and comfort. The dying process is often accompanied by rapid breathing, which increases discomfort and anxiety. Morphine relaxes the body, slowing the breathing. The elder may sleep more, which is fine, as comfort and decrease in anxiety is being achieved. Many studies have been done over the last several years that have shown that using morphine near the end of life actually prolongs life by several days. The body is relaxed and not fighting the dying process. Sometimes the morphine is given as often as every two hours and an elder passes a few minutes after a dose has been given. This may be why some think the morphine caused the elder's death, but the reality is it had nothing to do with it. The morphine doses given in hospice care are small and do not cause a person to die.

A third myth involves eating and drinking. Elders on hospice are offered food and liquids on a regular basis until it is obvious their body no longer needs or wants it. Feeding an elder whose body no longer wants food causes intense discomfort. The elder is not being "starved" to death, their physical body just no longer needs or wants food or liquids. Sometimes an order is given by the doctor to hold food and liquids at this point as it is no longer needed.

While we as humans tend to dread and fear the dying process, it is as much a part of life as birth. At Grace Home we strive to provide our elders with "a good death" when they reach that time of life. This is not an oxymoron. It is a death where they are comfortable and relaxed and can cross over in peace and quietness. We support the use of hospice for those who desire it as they provide us with many of the protocols and tools to make this happen.



IN REMEMBRANCE...

Dolly Linan



## New Dining Experience

Starting Monday, May 7, each table in the dining room received a number. Each day a different table gets served first. An assistant brings a cart of drink around at lunch and supper, and each elder gets their choice of drink instead of getting the same thing every meal. Next, instead of one person at a time getting a meal, all elders at one table get their meals put on a cart and just the plates are all brought out at once. No more trays and everyone can eat together. Elders also have access to a fridge just for them as of May 22.

### HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW OUR ELDERS?



Some of our elders most loved songs:

La Cucaracha  
The Old Rugged Cross  
Sing a Song of Sixpence  
Rock- a- bye Baby  
When I've Gone the Last Mile  
In the Garden  
Just as I Am  
My Jesus Has Broad Shoulders  
My Jesus, I Love Thee  
You Are My Sunshine  
Diddle, Diddle Dumpling  
I'll Fly Away  
I Believe in a God  
Nearer My God to Thee  
The Love of God  
God on the Mountain  
How Great Thou Art

If you come at the right time, you will see a puppy curled up on an elder's lap or on the leash with an elder holding on to it. Maybe she will be playing with another elder on her bed or sleeping with someone else. Her name is Dixie and she is very much still in the training stage so she doesn't spend much time at Grace Home yet. Most of the elders are very happy to see her as she is happy to see them.



Elders are enjoying fresh lettuce on the salad bar and their sandwiches. This is the same lettuce they planted as seed. They are watching with enthusiasm as zucchini, cucumber and tomatoes blossom and start to show proof of vegetables to come. Radishes and green onions have already been enjoyed, leaving an empty spot in the garden.



### Mother's Day Party

Each of our ladies were invited along with their children to attend a party on the Saturday before Mother's Day. We served hot ham, cheese, and poppy seed sliders with strawberry shortcake and punch. One of the daughters sang "Medals for Mothers".



### Father's Day BBQ

Still in the plans... So far the plans consist of inviting at least one son/son-in-law... per man to join their father/brother for a lunch of grilled hamburgers and potato salad outdoors.



**Outings:** April- Grace Home Gift Evening

May- Walmart

June- Esau's Park for Fried Chicken Picnic

## Butterflies and Death

What does a butterfly have to do with death? Butterflies are beautiful, elegant creatures and death is a dark, foreboding end to life. Or is it? We recently had an in-service on death and dying in which we were to write what we would want if we had a terminal illness. From the murmurs that I overheard, I am guessing most of us wrote about the same thing. Keep us comfortable, but do not prolong life. Is it actually death we fear or is it the fear of pain and uncertainty of how death will come?

A couple days later, while searching and praying for an answer to a dilemma in my own life. I ran across a devotional on the caterpillar and the butterfly. The devotional likened a caterpillar to working for Satan, being a hindrance to God's work. As we give our hearts to God, we are spinning a cocoon and we emerge into a beautiful creature, a butterfly. Some butterflies can put off a sour odor when attacked to ward off the enemy.

Now, what does this have to do with death? As a human, we blunder our way through life, not seeing far enough ahead to always make wise choices. We become sick, blinded, crippled, an emotional wreck, just flat out pitiful creatures much like a caterpillar. Those things that make us human spin us into a cocoon. When the time is right, God prompts us to break out of our cocoon (our body) and if we have given our hearts to Him, we emerge a beautiful butterfly. Most have the sour odor that accompanies some butterflies, only it is often felt, not smelled in the ones left behind. As the butterfly stretches its wings, it is free to float on gentle breezes, perch on beautiful flowers and spend eternity in peace and love.

That is why, when one of our dear elders at Grace Home nears the point of breaking free of their cocoon, we place a butterfly beside their name outside their door as well as what we call the butterfly cart which goes into the room to remind us of what awaits on the other side of the cocoon. The butterfly cart is for us caterpillars left behind to help us prepare for the debilitating odor of their absence. It is filled with chap stick to keep the elder's lips moist, lotion for massaging their hands and feet (feeling is one of the last things to go and massaging lightly gives us a feeling of doing something to ease them out of their pain wracked cocoon), gospel music, a Bible, drinks and snacks for family members, a butterfly book which is placed there for anyone to share memories of the one leaving us, books on dying for children to help them understand what is going on, and tucked in the bottom drawer is a butterfly quilt to place over the empty cocoon as it leaves the building. Staff line the hall to pay their last respects as this cocoon trundles through the Home for the last time, and if you look closely, you will see glistening eyes and most likely a few tears. We might not be blood family, but we make a point of loving each elder that comes into our care as if they were our own grandparents.

This butterfly program is for the families of the elder but also for the staff to help us deal with the grief of losing one we have taken into our family. This grief is magnified as we sit with elders that have no one but us to care about them as they take their last breaths as they slip out of this world.

Thank God He gave us the chance to become butterflies!

-Laura Koehn



**HEY LITTLE WORM, DON'T YOU SEE? ONLY BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE! COME OUT OF YOU SHELL AND FLY WITH ME. ONLY BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE!**

## Self-worth in Elders (continued)

Another elder recently told me that she feels that when she gives a reproof to a younger girl, it is dismissed or made fun of. Are we as the younger ones failing our elders and letting that wisdom that is ours for the asking just go to waste? Are our days too busy to take the time to listen to a grieving heart or sit with an elder to listen to them talk about the things that matter most to them? We all like to feel appreciated but do we take the time for those who have nobody to make them feel appreciated? We all have a part to play and if we don't give to our elders, we cannot expect the younger to visit us when we become the elders.

-Laura Koehn



WELCOME TO GRACE HOME  
Nikki Spence- Activity Assistant  
Charity Peters- Activity Assistant  
Lovejit Kaur- CNA  
Sylvia Mendoza- CNA  
Shally Basuta- CNA  
Alyssa Lincaire- CNA  
Tiffany Koehn- Housekeeping/Laundry  
Daljit Johal- CNA  
Yahminia Martinez- CNA



## ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS: April through June

### April

- Kite flying which didn't turn out well. Need to try with different kites
  - Made strawberry jam
  - Blowing bubbles
- Kindergarten parade. Children were adorable on their bikes, scooters, wagons going up and down the halls. Then they gave a little program for the elders.
  - Menu Committee Meeting
- Coffee Bar. The elders got to pick between an iced coffee and a latte. They informed me that we needed to do that way more often.
  - Baking for Grace Home Bake Sale
  - Grace Home Gift Evening

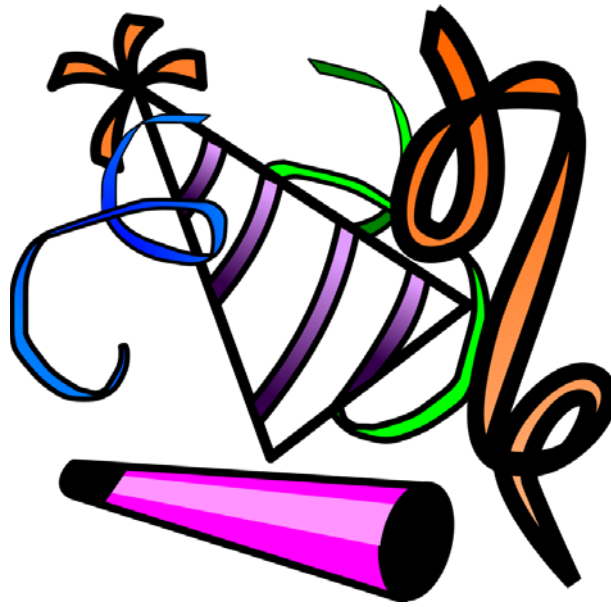
### May

- Building with craft sticks
  - Goldfish Race
- Menu Committee Meeting
- Potato Chips and Ranch dip
  - Kite Flying
  - Mother's Day Party
- Ark Encounter- Tara gave a presentation after going there.
  - Making ice cream in a bag
- Armchair travel to Yosemite- with ice cream sandwiches
  - Fire pit Social
  - Root Beer Floats

### June

- Popsicles
  - Watermelon Feast
    - Orange Julius
      - Slushies
    - Iced Coffees
  - Father's Day BBQ
  - Ice cream Social
  - Lemonade Social
- Pancake Shop- Elders get to add different things to their pancakes and help make them for supper
    - Spa- hand massage, foot spa
      - Crepes
    - Guacamole Fest
    - Soda Shop

## Things to Celebrate



Administrative Professionals Week- April 22-28

National Nurses Week- May 6-12

CNA Appreciation Week June 14- 21

Bonnie Toews received her Dietetic Service Supervisor license before she even finished the class!!! She got it 6 weeks early and is now the official Dietary Supervisor at Grace Home!!! We are so excited!

### The Little Boy and the Old Man

Said the little boy, Sometimes I drop my spoon.  
Said the little old man, I do that too.  
The little boy whispered, I wet my pants.  
I do too, laughed the old man.  
Said the little boy, I often cry.  
The old man nodded. So do I.  
But worst of all, said the boy,  
It seems grown-ups don't pay attention to me.  
And he felt the warmth of a wrinkled old hand.  
I know what you mean, said the little old man.  
-Shel Silverstein



The Volunteer program account is about empty and we need to refill it to help out with the tea parties, crafts and other activities that our volunteers enjoy doing with our elders. We also use money from this account to put on a party every year for our volunteers to show them a little of how much they are appreciated. We are asking that on June 30, anywhere from 10:00 am to 11:00 pm, that you would make your way into Atwater to Panda Express, hand them the flier at the bottom of this page and enjoy the meal that you purchase. I hope it tastes better because of your willingness to help us out. You can even go two times that day if you really love Panda Express and want to help out even more. If you know of anyone who would like an extra flier or two, you can send them to Grace Home or to our website [gracehomeinc.com](http://gracehomeinc.com)



## FUNDRAISER EVENT

Raise Money for:  
Grace Home Inc. -Junior Volunteer Program



When	Where	How
Saturday, June 30, 2018 10:00 AM - 11:00 PM	Panda Express at Hwy 99 & Applegate 1531 Bell Dr. Atwater, CA 95301	<b>In-store:</b> Show paper or digital version of this flier <b>Online:</b> Enter 250335 in the promo code box during online checkout.

20% of event sales will be donated to: Grace Home Inc. -Junior Volunteer Program

Participating fundraiser guests are required to present a valid fundraiser flier (hard copy or smart phone) with each order to receive credit for the fundraiser. Flyers may not be distributed inside or within vicinity of restaurant (including, without limitation, to the restaurant parking lot before or during your fundraiser). Panda Restaurant Group reserves the right to cancel any and all fundraiser events for any reason and/or withhold payment of associated donation funds if the Panda Restaurant Group Fundraiser Guidelines are not followed.

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