

Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

JOURNAL

published since 1989 by the *non-profit*

***Partnership to Preserve Independent Living
for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities***

On the Internet @ www.LivingPartnership.org

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24 hours a day—EVERYDAY

WINTER 2004
Volume 12 Number 3

A **READER SPONSORED** publication of positive and informative articles to educate, empower, and inspire.....

IS YOUR MEDICATION MAKING YOU SICK?

by Roberta Wertenberg, Coordinator Fifth District C.A.R.E. Program

An important part of any treatment plan is the medication we are prescribed. How can we get the most benefit from each of our medications?

First, it is necessary to understand why a particular medication has been prescribed. But, according to Pharmacist Raylene Mote of the Campus Pharmacy in Loma Linda, it is equally important to understand the consequences of not taking the medication. Ms. Mote suggests writing down all your questions regarding medications and treatment prior to each doctor's office visit. Because the doctor's time with each patient is often limited, it is not unusual for the physician to terminate a visit by sending a nurse to deliver the prescription the doctor has written. A patient is then left without the opportunity to discuss the prescribed medication with their physician.

It is possible to discuss many con-

cerns regarding your medications with your pharmacist. However, the pharmacist is often faced with the same difficulties in contacting the physician as the patient, those being unanswered telephone calls and faxed messages to the prescribing doctor. It is always best to refill a prescription before you run out. That way, you are not left without medication while the pharmacist and physician play telephone tag.

More than one-third of all medications prescribed are for patients over the age of 62, with each patient taking an average of five or more different medications daily. To reduce the chance of drug interaction, consider using the same pharmacy to fill all your prescriptions. Many pharmacies have computer programs that help to screen for undesirable side effects. Side effects do increase with age;

(Continued on page 2)

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: ..Personality Traits that Keep Us Well —Page 3 ..What to Do When Doctor Tells Me I Am Legally Blind—Page 4 ..Agreement to Raise IHSS Caregiver Wages—Page 5 ..Living with Bipolar Disorder—Page 8 ..New Vet Transport—Page 9 ..Solicitation Contract Law—Page 10 ..Truth Behind Prescription Drug Prices—Page 12 ..Some Tips for Buying a Used Car—Page 13 ..Cómo Manejar la Pérdida—Page 14

(Continued from page 1)

a dosage appropriate for a person of 25 may be entirely too strong for someone over the age of 65.

Ms. Mote suggests that anyone taking multiple medications consider purchasing an inexpensive medication tray, which is available at most pharmacies or over the Internet. The medication tray allows the patient or caregiver to prepare their weekly medication in advance and eliminate questions of if they have already taken a particular pill. In a pinch, an empty egg carton



Inexpensive Medication Organizers are available at any pharmacy and over the Internet. They come in many sizes, up to a full month and some of the more elaborate organizers and dispensers even “talk”. The one-week organizer above retails for about \$3.

may also be used, however many medications lose their potency when exposed to the air.

It is possible to request an easy open top from the pharmacy for most medication. Grandparents raising grandchildren who opt for easy open bottles must remember that all medication should be kept out of the reach of children.

A trick learned from an experienced nurse long ago is to read the imprinted direction on each medication bottle three times before dosing to prevent errors. If you have trouble reading those small print directions on the label, consider asking the pharmacist to enlarge the print at the time of filling. If you are an internet user and order medications from different coun-

tries, your medication may look different from the same medication purchased in the U.S.

Some medications may be crushed or added to juice in order to aid swallowing. Your pharmacist has a list of medications that can be administered in this manner.

To make sure your medications are working properly and not hurting you:

- develop an understanding of each medication that you take and why you are taking it
- keep a list of medications and their assigned dosage in your purse or wallet for easy reference
- when you receive a prescription, make a point of checking each label for accuracy
- know the special instructions that accompany each prescription, such as possible food or herbal supplement interaction
- know the time of day that a particular medication should be administered for maximum effectiveness, and take your medications on a regular schedule.

When it comes to medication, what you don't know can hurt you!

Meeting the Challenges

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 3, January 2004

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Meeting the Challenges is published quarterly (four times a year) by the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, 6296 Rivercrest Drive, Suite K, Riverside, CA. 92507. Non-profit organization postage paid at Riverside, CA. The Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation organized for the purpose of improving or preserving the independence and dignity of the elderly and persons with disabilities and their families. **The educational and transportation programs of the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities are supported by the charitable contributions of individuals and organizations**, with additional funding provided by the Riverside County Office On Aging, the Riverside County Transportation Commission, Community Access Center, the City of Blythe and . Visit us on the Internet at www.LivingPartnership.org or through *Vital Connections* at www.vitalco.net
 POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Partnership to Preserve Independent Living for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, 6296 Rivercrest Drive, Suite K, Riverside, CA 92507.

Helpful Internet Resources

- Vital Connections www.vitalco.net , in the *Health and Medical* section, has many references to credible sources of information on medications, their side effects, interactions with other medications and over the counter supplements.
- The National Library of Medicine, accessible through the *Health and Medical* section of Vital Connections, or directly at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html>, provides extensive drug information.
- The Food and Drug Administration, also in the *Health and Medical* section of Vital Connections, has up-to-date information on product approvals, recalls, and safety alerts.

Personality Traits that Keep Us Well

Several studies, conducted during the last 40 years, are said to show “beyond a doubt” that certain personality traits keep us well, boost our immunity, and improve our immune systems:

- HOPE—a transcendent conviction that, no matter what the circumstances, things will get better
- PERSEVERANCE—the eager acceptance of challenge and a stubborn persistence in the chosen course of action
- COMMITMENT—an attitude of curiosity and involvement with self, work, and family that results in a deep sense of meaning in life
- SENSE OF CONTROL—a deep conviction that what we do can and will make a difference
- POSITIVE VIEW OF CHALLENGE—the ability to see change as an opportunity for growth and excitement
- SOCIALABILITY—the ability to relate well to others and to continue to interact in a strong social network
- HEALTHY LIVING HABITS— people with a disease resistant personality tend to exercise more, take time to relax 15 minutes a day, and restrict the intake of sugar, nicotine and caffeine.

[SOURCE: *Mind/Body Health: The Effects of Attitudes, Emotions, and Relationships*, by Karren, Hafen, Smith and Frandsen]

INLAND AREA TRIVIA QUIZ.....

IN 1859, Benjamin **Barton** purchased 2000 acres of land of what had been the Asistencia property of Mission San Gabriel. (The current-day chapel on Barton Road was redesigned and rebuilt in 1937.) Barton was a pioneering farmer and was instrumental in the development of the town of Redlands. His San Bernardino farm stretched all of the way south to San Timoteo Canyon. **What did he grow?**

[THE ANSWER WILL BE FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE OF CHALLENGES.]

STUDY LINKS LOW VITAMIN D TO FALLS

Australian researchers have found that *being severely deficient in Vitamin D increases the risk of falls*. Almost half of elderly women in high-level residential care, though not bedridden, were found to be severely deficient. Another 20%, who were healthy enough to live in low-level residential care, were also severely deficient. Both groups of women had an average age of 84 years. Researchers said that the same low levels in a growing child would cause bone abnormalities such as rickets. *Administering Vitamin D supplements was found to decrease the risk of falls in the elderly.*

WHAT TO DO WHEN DOCTOR TELLS ME I AM LEGALLY BLIND?

by Sarah Feinbaum, Orientation and Mobility Specialist

When told that you are now legally blind, there are several things that you must do for your safety and to maintain your independence:

1. Contact the Department of Rehabilitation and ask for an application. Complete the application and return it to the case worker immediately.

When they receive your application, they may send you to a low vision specialist to assess you for many types of low vision aids such as magnifiers, or CCTV (closed circuit television). This machine enlarges the written word so you can read your mail, view photos, and read magazines, etc.

The low vision specialist will make their recommendations to your case-worker, who will then send a rehabilitation counselor to evaluate your needs for maintaining your independence and safety in your home. For example, the counselor may recommend several kitchen items and equipment to assist you. The counselor may suggest a residential program where you would live during the week and come home on the

weekends. There is no charge for this service and all aids and equipment are at no cost.

2. Contact Braille Institute or Lighthouse for the Blind.

These are non-government, non-profit agencies, whose missions are to reach out with support and offer classes to teach the legally blind person to maintain their independence.

Braille meets weekly and the Braille bus has designated pick-up points for students to take them to the school in Rancho Mirage. Lighthouse will pick you up at your home, take you to their school, and then drive you back to your home. Lighthouse offers classes from 1-3 days a week. There is no charge to the student at either program. The phone numbers are: Braille Institute (760)321-1111; Lighthouse for the Blind (909)884-3121.

3. After you have registered at either program, ask the counselor or coordinator to refer an orientation and mobility specialist for an assessment.

The orientation specialist teaches specific skills, which include those necessary to enable them to travel safely, confidently and efficiently. The assessment and instruc-

tion should include: sighted guide skills, long cane skills, street crossings, light and metropolitan travel, route planning and use of public transportation.

The orientation and mobility specialist is responsible for providing appropriate assessments, individualized instruction, family support, professional consultation, collaboration, and community education.

The specialist also recommends other helpful services and agencies, such as the Veterans Administration, getting a California Identification Card, California Access Telephone, ADA Certification, Dial-A-Ride or TRIP services. The specialist will assist with the paper work and contacts.

An orientation and mobility specialist will also evaluate any aides that have been prescribed for their effectiveness in meeting your individual needs. For example, the specialist might assess the effectiveness of different colored sunglasses. Depending on the eye disease, different colors of sunglasses may help a person see an image with a higher contrast and definition. These sunglasses also help by minimizing glare and maximizing

AGREEMENT REACHED TO RAISE WAGES FOR IHSS CAREGIVERS

The Riverside County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority and the United Domestic Workers (UDW) have entered into a tentative agreement, pending member ratification, that provides for wage increases and health benefits for over 9,000 independent care providers.

Wages were raised to \$8.00 per hour (up from \$7.11), a 12.5% increase, with an additional increase to \$8.50 in six months. Health benefit eligibility is based on care providers working 80 hours/month for

(Continued from page 4)

comfort when traveling outside.

Get the support you need.

After you have contacted these agencies and received training in the areas identified by the appropriate professional, you will be on your way to continuing to have an independent and fulfilling life.

Sarah Feinbaum is an Orientation and Mobility Specialist with San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, and a private contractor with other local and state agencies. For more information, you may write to her at: P.O. Box 1746, Idyllwild, CA 92549-1746

three consecutive months.

UDW and the IHSS Public Authority have negotiated since February to reach this historic agreement aiming to stabilize the care providing workforce. The result is improved services for elderly and disabled consumers of the County IHSS program.

Approximately 67% of care providers are family members and friends who provide domestic services and personal care to their loved ones. The remaining 33% of care providers have been located through newspaper ads and other sources. These services allow IHSS consumers to remain safely in their own homes. Without this care, many would be in convalescent hospitals at substantial cost to taxpayers.

The Riverside County Board of Supervisors estab-

lished the IHSS Public Authority in June 2002 to act as the employer-of-record allowing the 9000 providers to enter into collective bargaining for wages and benefits.

As a further enhancement to the IHSS Program, the IHSS Public Authority is establishing a registry of care providers who want to be referred for work. Registry staff will match consumers needing care with available providers. The registry providers will be subject to background checks and both providers and consumers will be offered training. The Public Authority is currently recruiting care providers who wish to be on the Registry and should be ready to take requests for help from consumers in March. For more information, call 888-470-4477.



**JOIN THE IHSS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**
Current and former IHSS clients and care providers are eligible for membership. Monthly meetings. Transportation is provided for those who need it, including those using wheelchairs.

**Call for more information or an application:
In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
PUBLIC AUTHORITY
Riverside County
(909) 358-5708**

Senior Ombudsman Services.....Riverside (909) 686-4402....Coachella Valley (760) 770-9999

HOW TO REPORT "DO NOT CALL" REGISTRY VIOLATIONS.....

If you have registered your telephone number with the National Do Not Call Registry, and you receive unsolicited telemarketing calls from businesses with which you do not have a business relationship, you have the right to file a complaint. Complaints may be filed in three ways: Mail, Telephone, E-mail.

Your complaint should include: "your name, address, and the telephone number where you can be reached during the business day; the telephone number involved with the complaint; and as much specific information as possible, including the identity of the telemarketer or company contacting you, the date on which you put your number on the national Do-Not-Call registry or made a company-specific do-not-call request, and the date(s) of any subsequent telemarketing call(s) from that telemarketer or company."

You can mail a complaint to: Federal Communications Commission, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554. Call in your complaint to: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY. Or you can E-mail to: <donotcall@fcc.gov>.

If you haven't registered your residential or wireless numbers yet, and would like to do so **at no cost**, you can call 1-888-382-1222: for TTY call 1-866-290-4236. You must call from the phone number you wish to register.

FREE Hearing Loss Discussion Group

Everyone is invited to attend monthly hearing loss group meetings, from 2-4 p.m., at the Mizell Senior Center. On Tuesday, February 10, the main topic will be "Healing Relationships Hurt by Hearing Loss", and the March 9th meeting will feature a demonstration of the California Telephone Assistance Program.

The meetings are led by Laine Waggoner, MA, MS and Director of "HEAR" (Hearing-loss Education And Resources). Waggoner has lived creatively with a profound hearing loss for 45 years and specializes in hearing loss adjustment and rehabilitation. No products are sold, but information is available about many products on the market from various assistive listening device distributors. Many devices help us to understand speech better, either with or without hearing aids. Information is also available about various signaling and alerting devices.

No reservation is needed. Call the Mizell Senior Center for directions at 323-5689 or Waggoner at 324-4150 with your questions.

Current Internet Scam To Steal Your Identity.....

Subject: YOUR ONLINE BANKING ACCOUNT

Dear Online Banking Consumer,

This email was sent by your Online Banking center to verify your e-mail address. You must complete this process by entering required information. This is done for your protection --- Please, provide the following information:

Bank Routing/ABA Number (9 digits):
First 6 digits of your Banking Card:
Online Banking Login ID (CIN or CAN):

Your Online Banking Password (or PIN):

Can you believe that many people actually fall for this scam?

[SOURCE: www.scambusters.org]



Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

Dear Friend and Reader,

I think you agree with me that every issue of *Meeting the Challenges* is filled with important, interesting and useful information. Our non-profit organization publishes *Meeting the Challenges* as a labor of love, but we need you to help us to continue with a tax-deductible donation.

Your donation will keep *Meeting the Challenges* coming to your mailbox and it will help us reach others, who might not be able to even afford the smallest donation.

Meeting the Challenges sends easy to read self-help, preventative and solution oriented articles on health and independent living topics, including information on how to access services when they are needed.

Unlike most magazines, the only things we advertise are free and low cost public services! But this freedom from constant barrages of commercial ads means that your contribution to our publication is absolutely essential. Without you, *Meeting the Challenges* could not exist.

Please do your part. Please send your tax-deductible donation, today, in any amount, to: *Meeting the Challenges*, 6296 Rivercrest Drive, #K, Riverside, CA 92507, or contribute On-Line at <http://www.LivingPartnership.org>.

Thank you,

Cis LeRoy
Partnership President

P.S. - The future of our important work depends on the generosity of our readers. Please help as much as you can.

Can You Hear Your Heart Beat?

Until recently, tinnitus (ringing in the ears) was mostly seen and treated as a circulatory disorder in the inner ear. In recent years, however, researchers have found other factors influencing the treatment of tinnitus.

In a continuing German study, researchers have discovered the degree to which the patient's general well-being plays a role. While some people examined in the study hardly notice their tinnitus, others suffer a lot from the continuous ringing or buzzing in the ear. The latter often end up in a vicious circle of sleep disorders, and some even suffer from depression.

It turned out that those who found their tinnitus most distressing and threatening had a history of suffering from stress, from other physical ailments and/or were strongly performance oriented. Some of these patients believe that their tinnitus is a symptom of some terrible disease.

People of calmer disposition and a general sense of well-being suffer far fewer psychological effects from the continuous buzzing or ringing in the ears.

[SOURCE: hear-it.org]

Living with Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar describes the extreme mood swings that are characteristic of this illness.

THE “UP” - SIDE

- Restlessness—high energy and activity level
- High levels of excitement and exhilaration
- Rapid talking, racing thoughts
- Increased interest in goal-oriented activities
- Easily sidetracked
- Exaggerated optimism and self-confidence, inflated self-esteem
- Increased anxiety and nervousness
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Decreased need for sleep without experiencing fatigue
- Reckless behavior, impulsiveness, poor judgment, intense pursuit of pleasure
- In the most severe cases, delusions and hallucinations

THE “DOWN” - SIDE

- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Restlessness or irritability, anger, worry, agitation
- Loss of appetite and weight, or weight gain
- Pessimism, indifference
- Unexplained aches and pains
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to take pleasure in former interests, social withdrawal
- Insomnia or inability to stay awake
- Fatigue
- Recurring thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts

Many of us have experienced most of these symptoms at some point, but a person who is suffering from Bipolar Disorder is likely to experience a number of these symptoms together, intensely, and over a longer time. Bipolar Disorder cannot be self-diagnosed. If you, or someone you know, has these symptoms, it is very important that a psychiatrist or physician is consulted.

Often, when a person is experiencing upside symptoms, which can include increased energy, heightened mood, and increased sexual drive, they do not feel the need to seek medical attention. However, Bipolar disorder, when undiagnosed and untreated, gets worse and can lead to harmful, illegal and life-threatening results.

Bipolar Disorder often begins when a person is 15 to 25 years of age, but can also appear later when we are in our 40s or 50s. The exact causes are disputed, but researchers generally agree that susceptibility to the disorder may run in families, much like heart disease. Normally, the onset of Bipolar Disorder follows some kind of stressful life event, such as the death of a loved one, a severe automobile accident, the loss of a job, or even the birth of a child. We all have differing levels of stress tolerance.

When diagnosed, treatment can include talk therapy and medications. A person's lifestyle also will impact the successful management of the disorder. Here are some guidelines:

- Learn about yourself and your illness – read books, attend lectures, talk with your thera-

pist about how your symptoms affect you and those around you

- Constantly monitor yourself – learn to recognize mood swings and understand what they mean
- Take care of yourself physically – establish a regular sleep schedule and stick to it, exercise every day, eat a low-fat diet, do not use alcohol or illicit drugs, and TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS EVERYDAY, AS PRESCRIBED, AT THE SAME TIME (*no matter how you feel*).

If you sense that an upside swing is beginning, it is suggested that you may be able to help minimize its intensity and effects by:

- Getting more sleep than usual
- Avoiding all caffeine and other stimulants, including diet pills
- Avoid decision making
- Don't go shopping and turn off the shopping channel
- Do things that have a calming effect on you.

Bipolar Disorder, not only affects those of us who have it, but also everyone around us. To help someone with the disorder, we can:

- Learn about the disease and its warning signs
- Offer emotional support – patience, understanding, and affection
- Encourage diagnosis and adherence to treatment
- Encourage avoidance of

- alcohol and drugs
- Ask the person how you should respond when you see symptoms
- Don't play therapist; just listen if concerns are expressed and gently point out realities, if appropriate, and offer hope
- Invite the depressed person on outings and to participate in activities; if refused, be "gently insistent"
- Learn the early warning signs of suicide and take any suicide threats *very* seriously
- Join a support group for families and friends of people with bipolar disorder.

SOURCES: The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA); Bipolar-Disorders.com

New VET TRANSIT TO VA from COACHELLA VALLEY

American Veterans (AMVETS) is now providing *FREE* van transportation from Palm Springs to the Loma Linda VA Medical Center. This service, for veterans with medical appointments only, will initially run 3 days each week.

The van departs from the main lobby entrance of Desert Hospital on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Because departure time will vary depending upon the vet-

eran riders with their medical appointments, 48 hour prior registration is required. Return travel will depart the VA Hospital no later than 4 P.M. and return to the Desert Hospital in Palm Springs.

For reservations, call the DAV travel office, Monday - Friday from 9 AM to 3 PM, at 1-800-741-8387 / ext. 3014. Rides are reserved on a first come first served basis. To reserve travel on the Desert Health CARE van to meet

AMVETS Express at Desert Hospital, call (760) 320-7137, or call SunDial.

If you have more questions about AMVETS Express, call Tom Swann at 324-5670. To volunteer to become a driver, contact Post 66 Adjutant Daryl James at 349-3440.

NOTICE: *FREE transportation for qualified Desert veterans is also available to the VA Hospital in Loma Linda via SunLine's SunLink Commuter Service. Call (760) 343-3451 for more information.*

Get answers to questions about raising grandchildren, call WarmLine at 1-800-303-0001

Beware of Solicitation Contracts

by George F. Dickerman, Attorney and Counselor at Law

Few things tick me off more than rip-off contractors and scam artists, particularly when their scams take place at your own home.

Here's a typical scenario: you notice a leaky pipe under your kitchen sink and decide you'd better call a plumber before you get too much water damage. A plumber comes out immediately and, after a look under your house, tells you that the problem is very severe and you need to have your entire plumbing pipes re-done-immediately! They quote you a price of \$7,000 and then have you sign an "emergency waiver" of your right to cancel the contract within three business days.

- They tell you this is necessary because the pipes are about to burst and you will suffer severe water damage to your house.
- They use scare tactics to have you sign a contract immediately, rather than wait a day or two to give you time to contact other contractors and obtain second opinions.

California Civil Code Section 1689.6 gives you the

right to cancel a contract within three business days of the date you sign the agreement. Rip-off contractors know this law, and will try to circumvent it by having you sign an "emergency waiver".

There are certainly times when a real emergency exists. It may be 105 degrees outside and your infirm spouse may die if the air conditioning is not repaired immediately. If so, then the laws allows you to waive your three-day right to cancel by personally writing an explanation that describes the emergency and that specifically acknowledges your three-day right to cancel and waiver of that right.

However, I've been involved in cases where there was no emergency at all. The elderly client was legally blind, and the contractor wrote some chicken-scratch explanation, himself, that described the alleged "emergency", and then had the client sign it.

How do you protect yourself?

1. Before you call a contractor, ask your family, friends and neighbors for referrals.
2. Before you call the con-

tractor, place a call to the Contractors State License Board at 1-800-321-2752 and ask if the contractor is licensed, bonded and in good standing. Are there any outstanding complaints against the company?

3. Get AT LEAST TWO, if not three written estimates before you agree to hire a contractor. Any honest contractor will not be offended. Even if your situation is truly an emergency, you can still schedule at least two different contractors to come out to your home (i.e., 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.) to give estimates.

Home solicitation contracts do not have to be a nightmare. Keep this article for future reference to review if you need to call a contractor to make home repairs.

George F. Dickerman devotes much time to assisting seniors in matters of elder law. For more information, call his offices at (909) 788-2156.

You can read other articles by George F. Dickerman on wills, trusts, probate, conservatorships, Medi-Cal planning and other subjects on the Internet at Vital Connections <<http://www.vitalco.net/ElderLawMag/ElderLaw.htm>>

Exercise To Increase Strength, Stamina and Energy....

Tai Chi, the slow and graceful ancient exercise from China, is well-known for helping to increase strength, stamina and energy. Many ongoing studies are confirming the positive benefits of the exercise.

Tai Chi improves balance and reduces the risk of falls. It can help reduce stress, provide greater relaxation, lower blood pressure, and improve a person's sense of well-being, which may improve health.. One

study, presented at the American College of Rheumatology meeting in November 2001, showed that older people with arthritis can have less pain and less trouble with daily activities if they practice Tai Chi.

The Tai Chi Education and Research Institute of Palm Springs, a non-profit program of the Partnership to Preserve Independent Living, is dedicated to increasing public knowledge of the benefits of Tai Chi and encouraging everyone, especially older adults, to include Tai Chi in their healthy living regimen.

Following is a list of classes currently available to Desert residents:

Tuesdays at 3pm at LaQuinta Senior Center: classes for arthritis

Thursdays at 3pm at LaQuinta Senior Center: all levels

Fridays at 3:30pm at the Knotts Fitness Center in Palm Springs: advanced level

Fridays at 4:30pm at the Knotts Fitness Center in Palm Springs: novice level

Saturdays at 9am at the Gourmet Gardens in Desert Hot Springs: classes for arthritis and all levels

Saturdays at 11am at Palapas of Araby Cove: all levels

Sundays at 11am at Knotts Fitness Center: novice level

Sundays at 12noon at Knotts Fitness Center: advanced level

Noel Pittman is the Head Instructor and fees are very reasonable.

SunLine Offers Discounted Pass for Small Business Employees

The “Employer Pass” allows all workers to buy a \$24 monthly pass for unlimited rides on the Coachella Valley’s SunBus system, according to SunLine’s Sharon O’Donnell.

All the employer has to do is write a letter of request on company letterhead for the employee. Upon receipt of the letter and payment, SunLine will issue the pass. Passes may be obtained through the mail or in person at the public agency’s Thousand Palms headquarters Monday through Friday. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted.

The Employer Pass program allows larger employers to automatically participate each month by mail with a minimum purchase of five passes.

The general public SunBus cash fare is \$1.00 for regular riders and 50 cents for seniors and people with disabilities. Bus transfers are an additional 25 cents. Discounted unlimited-rides passes are available by the day, week or month.

For more information, call SunBus customer service, 343-3451.

**“Do what you can
...with what you have
.....where you are.”**

-- Theodore Roosevelt,
26th U.S. President

The Shocking Truth Behind Prescription Drug Prices

This article first appeared in Oct. 2002 issue of Life Extension magazine, 1100 West Commercial Blvd., Fort Lauderdale FL, tel. 1.800.544.4440, www.lef.org Reprinted with permission.

Do you ever wonder how much it costs a drug company to obtain the active ingredient in a prescription medication? Life Extension did a search of offshore chemical synthesizers that supply the active ingredients found in drugs approved by the FDA.

A significant percentage of drugs sold in the United States contain active ingredients that are actually synthesized in other countries. Drug companies import these active ingredients into the United States where they wind up in the expensive drugs you buy at the local pharmacy. While the FDA says you cannot trust drugs from other countries, the facts are that most of the drugs sold in the United States contain active ingredients synthesized in the very countries the FDA says you cannot trust.

In our independent investigation of how much profit drug companies really make, we obtained the actual price of active ingredients used in some of the most popular drugs sold in America. The chart to the right

WHAT DRUGS REALLY COST

BRAND NAME	CONSUMER PRICE (For 100 tabs/caps)	COST OF GENERIC ACTIVE INGREDIENT (For 100 tabs/caps)	PERCENT MARKUP
Celebrex 100 mg	\$130.27	\$0.60	21,712%
Claritin 10 mg	\$215.17	\$0.71	30,306%
Keflex 250 mg	\$157.39	\$1.88	8,372%
Lipitor 20 mg	\$272.37	\$5.80	4,696%
Norvasc 10 mg	\$188.29	\$0.14	134,493%
Paxil 20 mg	\$220.27	\$7.60	2,898%
Prevacid 30 mg	\$344.77	\$1.01	34,136%
Prilosec 20 mg	\$360.97	\$0.52	69,417%
Prozac 20 mg	\$247.47	\$0.11	224,973%
Tenormin 50 mg	\$104.47	\$0.13	80,362%
Vasotec 10 mg	\$102.37	\$0.20	51,185%
Xanax 1 mg	\$136.79	\$0.024	569,958%
Zestril 20 mg	\$89.89	\$3.20	2,809%
Zithromax 600 mg	\$1,482.19	\$18.78	7,892%
Zocor 40 mg	\$350.27	\$8.63	4,059%
Zolof 50 mg	\$206.87	\$1.75	11,821%

speaks for itself.

The astounding profit margin enjoyed by drug companies exposes several facts. First, it shows why the pharmaceutical industry is the most profitable of all businesses. But since large drug companies only make around 15% net profit margins, it

also exposes the incredible cost drug companies bear to comply with today's burdensome drug approval system.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

This is the first part of the article, originally forwarded to us from a reader who had received it from a retired physician friend. We make no independent claims for its accuracy or validity, but have no reason

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to suspect that it is not true. You can read the complete article at: http://www.lef.org/magazine/mag2002/oct2002_awsj_01.html.

With respect to the author's comments at a "15% net profit", we have found the following:

1. "Net Profit" is the amount remaining after all expenses are subtracted from total revenues and before taxes. Clearly, every for profit company would want this "Net Profit" amount to be as small as possible to minimize tax payments.
2. To better understand what "Net Profit" could mean, as reported in the Life Extension Magazine article, we examined the most recent Financial Statements of Pfizer, the largest pharmaceutical company, and found the following:
3. Many times we have heard that the

Revenues	\$32.4 Billion
- Cost of Goods Sold	<\$4.0 Billion>
- Investor Dividends	<\$3.2 Billion>
- Research&Development	<\$5.2 Billion>
- Selling, Informational & Administration Expenses	<\$10.9 Billion>
- Other Costs	<\$3.9 Billion>

cost of developing new drugs is so terribly expensive! Pfizer spent 16% of its revenues on this activity in 2002.

4. At the same time, Pfizer paid dividends to investors of \$3.2 Billion, or 10% of the year's revenues.
5. Cost of goods sold reflects the *actual expense of manufacturing and distributing products*—for Pfizer in 2002, that expense was only 12% of the com-

SOME TIPS FOR BUYING A USED CAR

A real thrill in life is buying a car! Some may not have enjoyed this experience in earlier times, but find that it has become a necessity all of a sudden and on a very limited budget.

So here are a few tips to help with making a better choice:

- Check the tires. The lines and patterns of tire treads should be even and uniformly worn to the same depth. Uneven wear means the vehicle could have been in an accident

pany's revenues.

6. The largest expense reported was Selling, Informational and Administration Expense.
 - Advertising expense was only \$2.3 Billion for the year.
 - Administrative expense includes such things as accounting, but also includes the Chief Executive Officer's compensation, which according to AFL-CIO's "Executive Pay-watch" was \$32 Million in 2002 (1% of Revenues and enough to buy 2.1 Million tablets of Zithromax).
 - An unreported amount of selling expenses paid for the activities of Washington lobbyists.

or is out of alignment, suggesting possible damage or poor maintenance.

- Look under the hood. You don't have to be a mechanic to see danger signs to suggest you shouldn't buy this car! Is the engine clean—no oil leaks? Test drive it and look again. Is there paint on any of the rubber molding or paint that doesn't match? This could mean the vehicle was in a serious accident.
- Pull the dip stick. If you don't know what it is, or where it is, ask the salesperson to do it for you! Examine the oil on the dip stick—do you see any drops of water? Touch it and rub oil between your fingers— if you feel grit it could be little bits of the inside of the engine.
- Test drive at differing speeds. Does it pull right or left? Does it shift smoothly or jerk and whine? Are brakes firm or "spongy" or do they squeak? Is the engine quiet, or does it clatter or smell?

If you can, ask your own mechanic to check out the vehicle before you buy.

[SOURCE: www.cars.com]

ANSWER TO QUIZ:

The answer is NOT ORANGES. In fact, Benjamin Barton grew grapes and established the Brookside Winery in 1862.

*Superando Nuestros Retos.....***CÓMO MANEJAR LA PÉRDIDA**

Por Marc Sanders, el Ph. D

Los desafíos más dolorosos en la vida implican la pérdida. En lo que envejecemos, experimentamos muchas pérdidas a lo largo del camino: posesiones, empleos, mascotas, salud, relaciones, mudanzas y muerte. Cada vez que experimentamos una pérdida, la experiencia de las anteriores puede regresar, haciendo frecuentemente la presente más penosa. Por lo tanto, debemos manejar cada pérdida con cuidado y atención.

La pena (el luto) es la manera natural en que manejamos pérdidas y es única para todos. Aunque las personas expresen su luto de formas distintas, seguido experimentan sentimientos y reacciones similares. Cuando la persona que sufre una pena o como persona que cuida a alguien que haya sufrido pérdida, debe estar enterada de estas reacciones, que pueden ser muy útiles en la comprensión de los que sucede después de que ha ocurrido una pérdida.

Por ejemplo, las personas que perdieron algo o alguien, frecuentemente experimentan una serie de cambios mentales, emocionales, físicos y sociales. En seguida están algunas de las reacciones comunes, de las cuales todas son respuestas naturales y normales del luto.

CAMBIOS MENTALES/EMOCIONALES**Temor**

- De estar solo
- De volverse loco

Tristeza**Culpabilidad**

- Por cosas que no hizo ni dijo
- Por no haber prevenido la pérdida

Cólera

- A quienquiera que haya causado o permitido

que sucediera la pérdida

- Con personas que no entienden

Memorias Obsesivas

- De lo que se ha perdido

Cuestionamiento

- De las creencias espirituales y/o religiosas
- El significado de la vida

CAMBIOS FÍSICOS

- Perturbaciones del sueño
- Irritabilidad
- Dificultad en concentrarse
- Cambios en el apetito
- Dolores y aflicciones del cuerpo

CAMBIOS SOCIALES

- Tensión con colegas, socios y amigos
- Dificultad para sentirse comprendido por otros
- Preocupación de cargarse con otros
- Sentir que otros parezcan molestos e impacientes

El apoyo social es un factor importante en cómo se recuperan las personas de la pérdida. Para muchos, el apoyo de amigos, familia y/o cuidadores puede ser suficiente para ayudar en el proceso de luto. Sin embargo, para otros, la falta de apoyo o la intensidad de las reacciones físicas y emocionales pueden indicar la necesidad de ayuda profesional. Algunas alternativas profesionales incluyen psicoterapia individual o de grupo (muchos grupos tienen temas específicos al tipo de pérdida), y evaluación psiquiátrica. Finalmente, en el manejo de la pérdida se trata de entender el proceso de luto y crear el tiempo para que suceda el proceso de luto.

.....*Superando Nuestros Retos*

Para los que han sufrido una pérdida

- Recuerde que no hay manera “correcta” para pasar el luto ni hay tiempo límite.
- Esté abierto permitiendo que los otros ayuden hablando sobre lo que usted experimenta.
- Esperar altibajos en el proceso de luto.
- Evitar el uso de alcohol o drogas para sentirse mejor.
- No espere que las memorias y sentimientos desaparezcan demasiado rápido.
- No haga cambios ni tome decisiones grandes de su vida.
- Busque ayuda profesional cuando la pena parezca insoportable (por ejemplo: grupos de apoyo y/o terapia individual).

Ayudando a alguien que sufrió una pérdida

- Anímelos a platicar de sus pensamientos, sentimientos y memorias.
- Propicie comportamientos saludables, tales como comer y hacer ejercicios regularmente.
- Evitar comentarios de aliento, como “Mira por el lado bueno”. Las personas con luto simplemente quieren ser escuchadas y entendidas.
- Proporcione apoyo práctico, tal como planear comidas, contacto con parientes y amigos, manejar, pagar cuentas, etc.
- Permítalos vivir sus sentimientos sin importar lo doloroso que parezcan. El luto es un proceso doloroso.
- Aliente la ayuda profesional cuando hay dolor excesivo y se necesite más apoyo.

Marc Sanders, Ph.D., es psicólogo clínico en práctica privada y supervisor clínico para el programa de terapias en grupo de The Maple Counseling Center en Beverly Hills, CA.

Translation provided by Leopoldo Treviño

Este artículo fue publicado en El Informador del Valle, su periódico local en español. Recoja uno gratis en tiendas del Valle de Coachella, Imperial y San Jacinto.

Más.....

Seguido, la gente que tiene luto piensa si va a volver a sentirse bien otra vez. Estamos seguros que, en lo que pasa el tiempo, sentiremos menos intenso el dolor, pero, claro, nunca olvidaremos.

Porque la experiencia ha sido un cambio mayor en la vida, seremos distintos para siempre también y necesitamos llegar a un entendimiento de que estamos "bien" en esta nueva situación.

Algunas acciones positivas pueden ayudarnos a ajustarnos a nuestra pérdida y vivir con ella más fácilmente:

- Podemos empezar a ver hacia el futuro.
- Podemos hacer cosas para nosotros mismos que sean positivas y nos den placer.
- Podemos buscar cosas nuevas que nos interesen.
- Podemos tomar clases o empezar un programa de ejercicios, o hacer otras cosas que resulten en crecimiento personal.

AARP tiene variedad de materiales gratis en su Programa Luto y Pérdida. Teléfono: 1-800-424-3410.



President Theodore Roosevelt attending the replanting of two original navel orange trees in the courtyard of the Mission Inn on May 7, 1903. In 1873, just these two trees grew near Riverside, but by the end of the 1880s more than a million were producing citrus throughout southern California. The city of Riverside alone shipped thousands of railcar loads of citrus to eastern markets, and by 1900 became one of the wealthiest towns in California. [SOURCE: www.californiahistoricalsociety.org]

WINTER 2004



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Meeting the Challenges

Quarterly

JOURNAL

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