

SPRING 2018

Family Matters

A MAGAZINE FOR SENIORS, CAREGIVERS & PROVIDERS





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Spring is here and with it the opportunity to look at things in a fresh, new way. Simple changes can enhance well-being and contribute to a healthy mind and body. Adding fresh fruits and vegetables to meals, taking daily walks and learning new things like knitting or a language are all good for the mind, body and soul. Along with regular medical care and compassionate caregivers, these steps can contribute to a newly enhanced level of wellness.

Spring is a great time for renewal, especially for one's health. If our experienced caregivers can help you or a loved one to prepare healthy meals, complete daily activities or find new and interesting things to do, please call us. We wish you a warm and healthy spring, (888) 962-4836.

Sincerely,

Jacob Laffen
President, Co-Owner
Family Matters In-Home Care

The power of pets to soothe dementia patients

When puppies and cats visit with dementia patients, joy and happiness erupt. Dementia robs patients of their memory and in some cases the ability to comfort themselves. Losing the ability to remember loved ones creates isolation, depression and anxiety. However, puppies and kittens tend to supersede those emotions and bring back happy memories of days gone by. Even if a senior didn't have pets as a child, the purring of a kitten or the wagging tail of a puppy can bring calm if he or she suffers from dementia.

There are many programs that bring shelter animals to seniors with dementia for this express purpose like the North Shore Animal League of America and its Shelter Pet Outreach Program (SPOT). One recreation director says that people who are non-verbal and suffer mood swings turn into "different people" when they hold a soft furry pet. If your loved one suffers from dementia, consider giving him or her some time with a pet that will deliver joy and comfort.



What You Need to Know to Prevent a Stroke

STROKE IS A SILENT KILLER.

You need to know the signs and symptoms of stroke, and how to prevent it, to keep your loved ones safe. The statistics show the dangers of stroke:

- Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States suffers a stroke – 800,000 people
- Every four minutes someone dies of a stroke – 130,000 people

PREVENTING A STROKE

It's important to know how to prevent this silent killer and protect you and your loved ones from its devastating effects.

- **Control your blood pressure** – High blood pressure is the number one risk factor for stroke.
- **Lose weight** – A healthy weight can help to control blood pressure.
- **Stop smoking** – Smoking is a leading risk factor for stroke and also reduces brain health.
- **Be active** – The more you exercise, the more you pump healthy oxygen to your body, heart and brain, reducing the risk of stroke.

It is also important to know the signs and symptoms of stroke. The faster you recognize stroke and call for emergency medical help, the faster medication can be administered to mitigate its devastating effects. Keep the FAST acronym on the facing page and post it for family members. Even children can memorize FAST to help elderly relatives.



Use **FAST** to remember the **Warning Signs of a Stroke!**

F

FACE: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?



A

ARMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downwards?



S

SPEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?



T

TIME: If you observe any of these signs, call 911 immediately! Time is of the essence! A quick response can save lives!



Let spring's creative energy flow!

Spring is a great time for “Do It Yourself” crafts with the seniors you love. Bird feeders and tiny planters help to celebrate spring and are inexpensive to make. Here’s how to make them.



Homemade Bird Feeders

- Bird seed mix
- Knox unflavored gelatin
- Boiling water
- Mixing bowl and spoon
- Biscuit cutters
- Tray covered in foil
- Ribbon for hanging

Pour 1 cup of boiling water into a bowl. Pour 2 packets of gelatin into the boiling water, stir until dissolved. Slowly pour 1 cup of bird seed into the liquid and stir. Coat seeds completely. Place biscuits cutters on the tray and fill with the gelatin bird seed mixture. Pack tightly with back of the spoon. Push a plastic straw through the mixture to make a hole for the ribbon. Refrigerate overnight. Carefully push the bird feeders out of the cutters. Thread a ribbon through the hole and hang outdoors for the birds to enjoy.

Find more crafts at: MessyLittleMonster.com



Dollar Store Terrarium*

- Decorative glass or vase
- White gravel
- Small amount of soil
- Tiny plant from garden center – succulents are best

Match the size of the plant to the size of the glass or vase you have chosen. Put a cup of soil in the bottom. Place the plant in the soil. Tip the container from side to side and carefully pour white gravel along the sides to coat the top of the soil.

*Recipe from DIYjoy.com

JULIETA LETTERMAN

Paying Caregiving Forward

Julieta Letterman is a caregiver at heart. She is also a trained professional, but it is her deep and abiding passion for caregiving that motivates her.

Julieta learned the value of caregiving by example, as her grandmother cared for her for many years during her childhood.

“I didn’t get the chance to take care of my grandmother and return the care she gave me. I longed to help make her life easier, but I never had the opportunity to do so.” As a result, Julieta pays it forward, caring for seniors and others in need as a caregiver with Family Matters.

The challenges of caring for seniors who have various needs, moods and behaviors is a source of joy for Julieta. “I enjoy the experience every day,” she says. “Providing



Julieta with client Steve in his home.

assistance, meeting their needs, making their lives easier, cleaner and healthier and making them smile makes me happy.”

Julieta received formal training as a caregiver but got her first real experience quite by accident. She was working in a hotel in the Florida Keys when she witnessed an elderly woman struggling to carry her bag. Julieta offered to help and accompanied the woman to her room. The woman thanked Julieta and said, “I hope I can have a caregiver like you someday” she said.

“That stuck in my mind,” said Julieta, “and I left my job at the hotel to look for a caregiving job.”

We are so glad she did. Caregiving is a way of life for Julieta and she improves the lives of our clients every day.



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Upcoming Events



**San Diego Mission Federal
ArtWalk 4/28-29, 11am to 6pm
Little Italy, San Diego**

www.artwalksandiego.org/missionfederal

**Palo Alto: Spring Family Day (art making, music)
Sunday, April 15, 2018, 2-4:30pm, Palo Alto Art Center,
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto, CA**

www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/artcenter/cals.asp?ViewBy=7&CalDate=4/15/2018&EventDateID=74186



**Downtown Campbell Farmer's Market –
Sundays 9am to 1pm (year-round),
E Campbell Ave and N 1st St, Campbell, CA 95008**

www.downtowncampbell.com/event/campbell-farmers-market