

Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be.

- Robert Browning

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Journey's Way

Resources and Programs for People 55+

by Cynthia Wishkovsky

Sophie was beaming, “I joined this group that helps me better manage my chronic conditions (arthritis, high blood pressure) and there I met friends and a special buddy. My buddy and I made an agreement to walk and eat less junk food and check in on each other. She really needs me –and I need her-- We’re a good team and most important, it’s working! I feel less tired and I’m even trying out new recipes.”

Journey’s Way, the aging services of Intercommunity Action, offers a wide array of innovative resources and programs for people 55+ to enrich their lives in their communities and support them through life’s challenges. Journey’s Way provides a set of inter-related resources and programs to meet the needs of older adults throughout their journey of aging. Programs include a senior community center, The Center at Journey’s Way, which provides a wealth of information, resources and programming for both independent and vulnerable older adults. Housing counseling and social services are available along with a rich program of the arts, education and social activities. Information and referral, transportation, lunches and nutrition education offered in partnership with more than 25 community programs assures access to services, up-to-date education and community resources. Neighbor to Neighbor outreach program links volunteers to older adults in our community so they can stay independent. Through help with reassuring calls, rides and chores, vulnerable older people can continue to live more securely in their homes in their communities. The past year has been very exciting for Journey's Way. We realized our dream of creating much needed affordable housing, a new modern center to meet

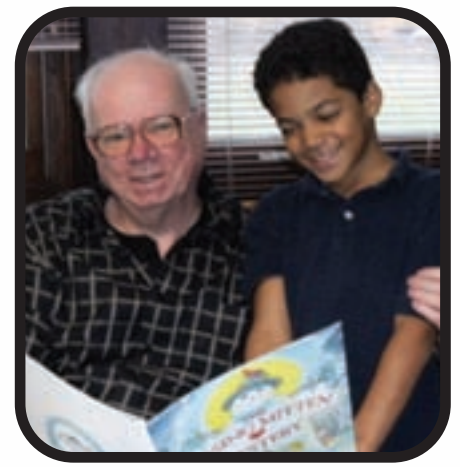
growing needs, and a new state-of-the-art adult day center to serve more people. These new program facilities, all on the same square block, create a campus of community services in the heart of Roxborough. The new center, renovated from a local church and school, almost quadruples the amount of space available for programs and services. It includes a fitness center, a computer lab, an art studio, a full service kitchen and large and small meeting and program rooms.

Journey’s Way’s small staff is augmented by over 400 volunteers, who help with the essential aspects of running the program as well as providing critical services in the community for the elders we serve or helping children in the schools or assisting with civic endeavors.

In the new campus environment, Journey’s Way’s programs create a network of opportunities for older adults. Our center participants involve themselves in classes that promote good health and fitness; they educate themselves in evidence based workshops where they learn best practices that help them prevent falls, manage chronic health issues, and get the most out of life. They learn how to get good nutrition on a budget through available breakfasts, daily luncheons, consultations with a nutrition educator, food resource programs for those in need, and shopping trips. They enjoy opportunities for lifelong learning, civic engagement, and being part of a community.

As people age in place, Journey’s Way has a commitment to help them stay in their homes and in their communities for as long as possible. Neighbor to Neighbor connects volunteers to area residents who need assistance.

It feels so good to give back to the community and encourage others to



Yearly we recruit volunteers who help with weatherization, cleaning gardens and walks, conducting safety checks, and making small repairs for people stuck in their homes.

Our housing counselor helps those who have financial or legal difficulties related to issues of home ownership, tenant landlord issues, financial issues related to safe lending, mortgage mitigation and accessing resources for home repairs. Because a range of services is offered within our one agency, coordinating services among different departments is a regular occurrence.

Mary, age 73, was recovering from surgery and could not do her regular gardening. The housing counselor was helping her make financial arrangements to keep her house and noticed her beautiful art work. The counselor learned she was an artist but had stopped painting due to illness. She was feeling isolated, bored and looking for things to do. The housing counselor completed the financial arrangements and then connected her to Journey's Way Neighbor to Neighbor program for the yard work. The Journey's Way center counselor then helped her with transportation to the Center, and soon enough she was volunteering to instruct painting and drawing classes. "It feels so good to give back to the community and encourage others to find their creativity. As a volunteer I don't have the pressure I experienced working but I feel just as useful and excited." In addition, Mary attends

the Journey's Way monthly Adult Caregivers Support Group as she is the caregiver for her mother.

For those elders who are in need of support and care, the Adult Day Services Program offers a safe nurturing therapeutic environment. It can also be the program of choice for elders experiencing a temporary setback while recovering from serious illness.

The Adult Day Center at Journey's Way assists elders in need of support and care during the day thus making it possible for many caregivers to continue working. "I don't know what I would do without your program." is a comment we hear often. The adult day program offers each participant an individualized plan of care, meaningful activities throughout the day, social service and nursing assistance, and meals. In our beautiful new space, we have the capacity to serve more people and to expand our services and hours.

Susan, age 79, is thrilled to be in living in a new apartment at Pensdale Village II, our newest affordable apartment house, one block away from the Center. She told us she could no longer care for her house and it made her feel very upset. Her new apartment has stabilized her life and her finances. She has more energy to invest in what she enjoys – her family, her friends, and her activities and volunteer job at Journey's Way. Pensdale Village I and II have created housing

continued on next page ►



find their creativity.

Saved by Sown

by Seulky McInneshein, Ph.D.

“You saved my life!” Virginia, a 70-year-old Germantown resident confined to a wheelchair, says to her SOWN telephone group about a recent cancer scare. “I’m sure I’m here today because of all of you.” Each Monday afternoon, Virginia waits for Patty, her SOWN support group facilitator, to connect her to Elizabeth, Helen, Rose, and Betty, her group members. For over 25 years, the Supportive Older Women’s Network, SOWN, has been providing services to older women throughout Philadelphia. Recognizing the important link between emotional and physical well-being, SOWN staff support an older woman’s abilities to function independently and help keep her living in her own home by preventing isolation and depression. In Philadelphia, based on recent survey numbers from 2008, 57% of older adults are women and 71% of older adults wish to remain living independently at home for another 10 years or more.

“I feel very lucky to be in a SOWN group.”

Nina, 75-year-old Mount Airy resident

Older women coping with chronic health and life issues are more vulnerable to feeling isolated and depressed and are at greater risk for being removed from their homes. Virginia, like many older adults, suffers from disabling chronic health problems, including high blood pressure, diabetes, and arthritis, which make it difficult to leave their home. Virginia, herself, rarely receives a visitor or a phone call; often days pass without human contact. She has very few people to confide in and doesn’t want to burden anyone with her problems, even though she struggles with physical, financial, and emotional challenges. Virginia feels she is no one’s priority, rather invisible - invisible to her doctors, her social workers, and most importantly, her children.

But, there is one place where Virginia is not invisible. Through SOWN’s telephone support groups, Virginia feels connected. Only recently, Virginia was terrified that

the cancer she beat years ago had returned. She struggles to keep her fears and worries to herself; not wanting to burden anyone with her problem. Hesitantly, Virginia answers the telephone Monday afternoon and with encour-

“We need healthy relationships at our age.”

Sophie, 80-year-old West Oak Lane resident

agement from SOWN’s group facilitator, the words pour out of her, “I think I have cancer again.” “Can you tell us what is happening, Virginia?” Patty asks. Virginia explains that she has experienced the symptoms for a week. She discloses to her peers that she is truly scared of undergoing a colonoscopy. “I don’t want to go into the hospital because so many of my friends and family have gone in but never come out. I don’t want to die!” Virginia weeps.

Betty exclaims “Oh Virginia, that procedure is a little scary but it’s really nothing to worry about. I just had one done.” “Me too!” exclaims Rose. Virginia feels relief as her telephone group peers explain to her each step of the procedure; they comfort, console and encourage her. Most of this group session focuses on Virginia. You are important, you need to take care of this, and you need to take care of yourself is the message Virginia hears from Elizabeth, Helen, Rose and Betty.

With encouragement from her SOWN group, early the next day Virginia catches a cab and rides to the local hospital. She returns to the group in a month, happy to once again speak with the women who helped save her life. She thanks the facilitator along with the group and shares with them how wonderful it is to have them as her support team. Her peers continue to encourage and empower Virginia to realize that she isn’t invisible, that she matters and that she’s a very important member of their telephone family.

SOWN’s services help older women gain greater control over their lives, solve common problems, decrease isolation and depression, provide mutual support, identify

► To learn more about SOWN visit: www.sown.org



Virginia shares a warm, welcoming handshake from her SOWN buddy.

SOWN gives me that."

resources, and increase coping skills. SOWN continues to expand programs to address the complex needs fac-

ing older women and the families in their care through its three core programs: Support Groups that reach both older women aging in place and homebound older women; the GrandFamily Resource Center, which supports grandparents raising children; and Growing Healthy Lives Together, which provides older adults with healthy living education and workshops, one-on-one coaching and healthy congregate dining events to promote healthier lifestyle so that older adults can age in place in their neighborhoods.

Currently, SOWN reaches almost 1,000 older women and nearly 50 SOWN groups are meeting regularly throughout Philadelphia. SOWN also provides individual counseling, advocacy, and leadership training. As older adults continue to face complex issues related to aging, SOWN continues to help them face these changes, even if they are unexpected like Margaret, a 75-year-old woman, who is now raising two granddaughters, ages 6 and 8, in her Germantown home after the sudden death of

"The good feeling I have during the group lasts all week."

Mary, 71-year-old Manayunk resident

her daughter: "My SOWN group is like my extended family. Support occurs each time we meet," says Margaret. ■

Journey's Way

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for over 100 older adults over the last five years. A social service coordinator on site helps each resident as needed.

Journey's Way Geriatric Counseling Program, a nationally recognized model, offers assessment and treatment for people experiencing late life depression and other behavioral health conditions. Experienced clinicians offer assistance in many community sites and in the home when necessary.

Mrs. Smith is a 75 year old widow living alone in her house. She was referred to the Geriatric Counseling Program by a concerned family member because she had stopped going to church and family get-togethers and seemed increasingly isolated. Mrs. Smith was evaluated by a Geriatric Counseling Program therapist and found to be suffering from clinical depression. She agreed to the recommended treatments of medication and therapy and over a few months began to improve. With the support of her therapist, she was referred to Touching Lives 55+ our peer counseling program, to support her recovery. This group helped her to gain confidence, strengthen her resolve to stay active, make friends, and integrate into the larger center activities. When her counseling ended, Mrs. Smith was no longer depressed and had resumed all of her former activities. She was also attending the center three days a week and enjoying art and exercise classes.

Journey's Way touches the lives of over 3100 older people and their families and the number is growing each year. Within a rich service and program environment we deal with issues of age related problems such as income, access to benefits and information, emergency help, and counseling for difficulties ranging from home preservation to behavioral health issues. Our Center supports health and wellness, offers a place of friendship, and new opportunities for creativity, learning, and personal growth. Our social workers and Adult Day Services Program help elders and their families negotiate the difficult long term care system to find the right place for care and support. Our Adult Day Service participants enjoy a wonderful day while they and their families benefit from the health and social services provided. Our Geriatric Counseling Program ameliorates suffering and restores lives. This array of services and programs enables us to respond to the concerns, worries, stories, and dreams of each individual. We strive to provide those services and programs with spirit and heart. ■

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We recently received notice from a woman and her adult son about their plans. Based on the information they have read through the Foundation's publications, each of these supporters decided to direct \$50,000 of their estates to Green Tree. As they wrote to tell the Foundation their plans, they explained that they come from generations of family with roots in this section of the city, and they want to contribute to the community's welfare long after they are gone. In this way, they will continue the

family's good work in the community for generations to come. And we say a genuine "thank you" for this kind of farsighted generosity!

A charitable gift annuity (CGA) is a way to do well financially while doing philanthropic good, and it is the second most common planned gift. In exchange for an asset like cash or stock or even real estate or a paid-up life insurance that you donate to Green Tree, the Foundation will pay you a specified income for life. The actual amount varies according to your age and the number of beneficiaries (maximum of two). There are additional benefits to the donor in the initial charitable deduction you receive, and the favorable tax treatment of the income that is tailored to your situation. You can even establish a charitable gift annuity now, and decide later when you want to begin receiving your income payments!

If either of these possibilities interest you, and you have a desire to ensure the grant-making that benefits elders, children, uninsured and underinsured residents right here in the Northwest sector of Philadelphia, contact: **Susan Hansen** at 215-438-8102 or email us at susanhansen@greentreecommunityhealth.org.

Welcome Volunteers! Volunteers Welcome!



KRISTIN OWAD

Kristin was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She moved to Philadelphia two years ago after finishing school. Currently Kristin is a Registered Nurse at Aria Health hospital on the Medical Surgical floor. Kristin enjoys nursing and is continuing her education at Eastern University. In her free time she enjoys doing yoga and exploring Philadelphia. She is a site visit volunteer.

NANCY ALLEN

With more than two decades in academic administration and teaching in universities (most recently at Villanova) and four years working as a consultant for the Phoenixville Community Health Foundation, Nancy is looking for a new position. During this time, she is volunteering at Crisis Ministry in Trenton and for our Foundation.

Nancy has a Ph.D. in English Literature from New York University. She participates in the Greater Philadelphia Workshop Studio and is currently writing a novel.



TRACEY WHEELER

Tracey comes to Green Tree Community Health Foundation as a volunteer assisting with site visits. She is a loving sister, daughter, aunt, caregiver to her pets and is enthusiastic about making the world a better place.

Tracey has a background as a paralegal but the bulk of her experience lies in academic research. She served as a data manager/research specialist on 2 of the largest NIH funded clinical trials on bipolar disorder and depression at the University of Pittsburgh. More recently, she held the position of Associate Director of Regulations and Compliance for the University of Pennsylvania/Office of Nursing Research. Always compassionate and striving to help others, her plans are to advance her career in social services. "The best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm."

DR. KATHLEEN CHRISTOPHE

Dr. Christophe is a graduate of the Medical College of Pennsylvania. She completed her internship at MCP - Hahnemann's Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and then her residency at the University of Chicago in 2002.

In addition to being an obstetrician and gynecologist, Dr. Christophe is pursuing an interest in public health and health policy. She has been accepted as a grant reviewer for the Department of Health and Human Resources. Recently, she has offered her services to Green Tree Community Services where she can have an impact to the underserved.

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

SITE VISITS

We are interested in volunteers that would have interest, knowledge and background in health-related fields. Site Visits are done for each new grantee. Another visit is completed at the end of the one year granting period. This is the most needed position for volunteers. Site Visits are performed year round, lists are published quarterly and we have a quarterly luncheon for you to report your findings after the visit.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

We are trying to grow this volunteer group. These volunteers would help with events, outreach, networking and representation at conferences (if appropriate).

RESEARCH

We are always looking for funding in areas such as Nursing, Elderly, Children and Families, Obesity prevention, Maternal wellness, Anti-Violence, Emancipation, the Under and Un-insured, Intergenerational programs and much more. Research can be done either at the Free Library of Philadelphia on the Parkway or the Foundation's headquarters.

JOIN OUR MAIL CREW!

Green Tree sends out various mailings to friends and supporters several times a year. The mailings range in size from a couple hundred to more than 10,000 pieces for any one mailing. Volunteers are needed in preparation of these mailings. This volunteer opportunity would vary in time depending on upcoming events and solicitations.

You can fill out a volunteer form at www.greentreecommunityhealth.org under the **Get Involved** tab, you can email Amy D'Amico, amydamico@greentreecommunityhealth.org or you can call us: **215-438-8102**

CARIE offers hope to seniors and their families...

by Diane Menio

When I am asked, what does CARIE do? I have many answers but the most important is that we help seniors and families when they feel they have no where else to turn. What do we hear most from those who call us? In the words of one of our clients, “I have recently spoken with people at other agencies. NO ONE has been so prompt in returning my calls, as insightful about the issues, and as clear in making recommendations. I only wish I had known about CARIE months ago. Much time and anguish would have been prevented.”

CARIE is a full service advocacy organization—we help individuals to resolve problems, access services, hear about options, and learn about their rights. We are informed by those who call us of issues that need broader focus and accordingly we do education and training and help to inform policy makers of the needs and interests of older adults and those who care for them. We like to call this our “Circle of Advocacy.”

CARIE exists as the first and last resort for older adults who have nowhere else to turn. Many who call CARIE have lost hope in finding justice. They often feel ignored, belittled, and desperate. And sometimes they feel angry that no one will take the time to help them find answers. All of that changes when they call CARIE.

Let me tell you about Ms. C. When she called, she told us that she was at the end of her rope. Her mother had been told she had a brain tumor and wasn't expected to live another six months. Her mother's HMO had denied coverage for simple rehabilitation after surgery that would improve her comfort and quality of life during her last days. Ms. C wanted the best for her mother and didn't know what to do. Fortunately she reached Deborah, one of CARIE LINE's counselors. Deborah helped Ms. C to know more about her mother's rights and all of her options. She explained the steps involved in appealing the decision and directed her to other resources that could help her to appeal the HMO's decision. Whenever Ms. C had a question, she called Deborah.

The appeal was successful. The HMO agreed to the rehabilitation and Ms. C's mother even regained her ability

to walk. After the rehabilitation, she was able to return home with family for the remainder of her life.

Ms. C credits CARIE with ensuring that her mother's wishes were granted, praising Deborah by saying, “She gave me great courage and relief that someone actually had the right answers and cared enough to share that information each time I called...I hope CARIE will always be available to help others.”

Ms. C and her family represent only one of over 3,000 families helped by the CARIE LINE each year. The CARIE LINE has no eligibility requirements — and no one is turned away empty-handed when they call CARIE.

It is for these reasons, for these people that we advocate—to help create a system that will be sensitive to the preferences, the choices, and desires of those who need long-term care and their families. And as we advocate for a system that more adequately addresses the needs of consumers, we stress the following:

- Individuals prefer to stay independent and live at home as long as possible;
- to be treated with respect and dignity; and
- to be able to choose among a variety of options for long-term care and services.

To learn more visit: www.myeldercareadvocate.org



Two nurses from Chestnut Hill Hospital receive scholarships from the **Elissa Messori Jacobsen Fund**



Kim Greenwalt

Coming from several generations of accomplished nurses, Kim was aware of her powerful role models but used her own talent and intelligence to carve her own impressive career path. She began with an Associate Degree in Nursing in 1988 from Scottsdale (AZ) Community College followed by a Bachelor of Science in Nursing—graduating Magna cum laude from Immaculata University in 2009. She has acquired many plaudits along the way:

- Nomination for:
 - National Collegiate Nursing Award for Nursing Excellence at Scottsdale Community College, 1988
 - Nurse Excellence Award in Leadership, Pottstown Hospital, 2005
 - Wagoner Nursing Medal, Immaculata, 2009
- Published author
- CPR and ACLS instructor
- Developer and teacher of the cardiac dysrhythmia course at Chestnut Hill Hospital
- Certified critical care nurse (CCRN) for 20 years

By pursuing her Master's degree in nursing, Kim is acting on her belief that "nursing requires us to give our best and anything less is not good enough." Her ability to bring skill, compassion and commitment to patients is very important to her as well as her strong desire to "help advance the nursing profession by helping other nurses be the best they can be at their chosen profession."



Donna Hammond

Any patient, who might enter Chestnut Hill Hospital's ER, would be quite fortunate if Donna Hammond happened to be his or her nurse. Donna began as a nursing assistant in a nursing home in Wichita Falls, Texas in 1995. She earned her LVN/LPN diploma in 1997 from Vernon Regional Junior College before moving back to Philadelphia in 1998 after her husband retired from the military. She pursued further education while working as an LPN and received her Associates in Nursing from Excelsior University in 2003. Her most recent academic reference for a summer statistics course was terrific. Before becoming part of the Chestnut Hill Hospital ER team, she worked as an ER nurse at Albert Einstein Medical Center and Mercy Hospital. Her broad experience includes working in group homes for adults and children, in a prison and in home health care. All this—while raising a family and volunteering in her children's sports activities.

She relaxes by hitting balls at the driving range and walking her dogs.

Donna would ultimately like to earn her MSN and says, "I would like to work as a Nurse Practitioner. My grand vision is to be part of a mobile clinic to provide services to the many people who are under served. I believe I can make a difference."

To learn more about the Elissa Messori Jacobsen Nursing Scholarship Fund, please contact:

Susan Hansen at: **215-438-8102** or email:

susanhansen@greentreecommunityhealth.org



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www.greentreecommunityhealth.org
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