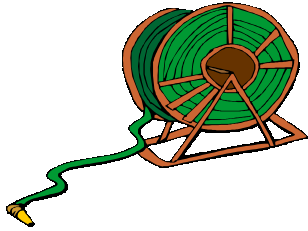




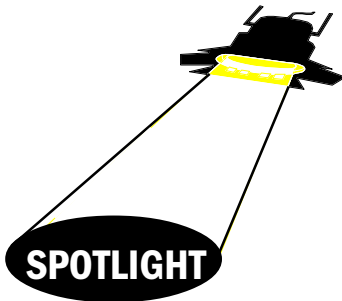
The Caring Neighbor

A Newsletter from the Caring Neighborhoods Program
City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation

May/June 2003



SUPER VOLUNTEER



SPOTLIGHT

Caring Neighbors of Arden Park (CNAP) is a sensational Caring Neighborhood in East Sacramento. Always willing to offer a helping hand, CNAP are doing their part to help elderly neighbors live happily, safely, and independently at home.

CNAP was created when **Kurt Kunert**, a recent retiree, wished to help seniors in the community. Kurt and **Mrs. Kunert** regularly visit frail seniors, but wanted to do more in their neighborhood. Kurt organized a meeting, and neighbors immediately started a Caring Neighborhood. **Kim and Kelly Jones** have been instrumental in getting the word out, and to date, over 30 neighbors have volunteered to make a difference in the lives of Arden Park seniors.

CNAP team up to help elders with grocery shopping and rides to the church, visit lonely or ill seniors, and share information about programs such as exercise classes and in-home care. No job is too big, as neighbors go the extra mile to help seniors live happily throughout their later years. CNAP acts of kindness include: mopping up after a washing machine overflowed, helping remove wallpaper, facilitating procedures for obtaining a reverse mortgage before losing a home to foreclosure, taking a lawn mower to the repair shop, and much more!

GREAT JOB, CNAP, and a special thank you to Kurt Kunert, Kim and Kelly Jones for your hard work and dedication to the elderly in your community!

Do you know of a SUPER VOLUNTEER who deserves to be recognized? We would love to hear about your efforts! Please contact Tracey Gray at (916) 277-6009 or tgray@cityofsacramento.org and let us know how you are making a difference in your neighborhood!

ADOPT-A-SENIOR

This spring, a special group of youth volunteers and a dynamite general contractor teamed up to help a local senior. The **Adopt-A-Senior project**, between the **City of Sacramento's Caring Neighborhoods** and **W.I.A. Youth Programs**, provides outdoor repairs and yard work to older adults who are unable to complete the work and do not have family members living nearby able to help.

We adopted **Mr. F.**, a local senior who has made a lifetime of contributions to the community. He suffers from Parkinson's disease, a crippling illness causing muscle spasms and difficulty in walking, writing, or even talking. Mr. F. lives alone with his dog Missy, who loves to play outdoors, but he can enter the backyard only by crossing a wooden deck. The deck was in serious disrepair, placing Mr. F. in danger each time he went to the backyard.

Under the direction of contractor, Chuck Jordan, volunteers rebuilt the deck and completed yard work. We removed old boards, raked pine needles and leaves, removed several bags of debris, trimmed hedges, washed windows, mowed the lawn, and planted flowers. This hard working group took pride in their work, as several neighbors thanked us for our service to their neighborhood. Now, Mr. F. can safely enjoy his backyard with Missy.

The Adopt-A-Senior project could not have been a success without our volunteers and local businesses. A special thank you to **Simmen Lumber Company**, **Papa Murphy's Pizza** (North Highlands), **Coca-Cola Bottling Company**, and **Bel-Air** (West El Camino Ave.) for your donations to this project. THANK YOU Mr. Jordan and W.I.A. volunteers for making a difference for this special senior!

If you would like to nominate a senior for upcoming Adopt-A-Senior projects, please contact (916) 277-6009 or tgray@cityofsacramento.org.

BENEFITS-CHECK-UP

Do you know hundreds of programs are available to help seniors? From prescription drug discounts and property tax relief to volunteer opportunities and veterans assistance, finding information about over 250 programs is simple, fast, and free!



The National Council on Aging has created www.BenefitsCheckUp.org, an online resource to help your senior neighbors. Anyone can use it, and it is completely anonymous. Personal information such as name, address, and social security number are not required. However, to determine which programs your senior qualifies for, information such as age, zip code, and income are needed. In 15 minutes, complete a questionnaire and receive a personal report.

Be sure to tell your senior neighbors about Benefits Check Up! Recent inquiries provided information on health care, financial assistance, employment, nutrition and meal programs, housing assistance, veterans services, educational programs, and much more! For more information, or if you do not have access to a computer, contact Maria Lueras at (916) 264-7324.

PAINT THE TOWN AND PAINT PROGRAM

Do you know an older neighbor whose home could use a new coat of paint? Don't miss out on **Sacramento Neighborhood Housing Services (SNHS) 15th annual Paint the Town day.**



Volunteers from local businesses will paint and improve homes for elderly neighbors in South Sacramento neighborhoods. Services are FREE to the homeowner, including: painting, minor landscaping and exterior repairs. Enthusiastic volunteer teams have even replaced windows, installed wheel chair ramps, repaired porches, and planted flowers. The application deadline is July 21st! If you know of a senior neighbor who could benefit from this program, contact 452-5356 x10.

In addition, the SNHS Paint Program provides free exterior paint for homes in South Sacramento, Florin South, Avondale/Glen Elder, Meadowview, Oak Park, and Gardenland. The homeowner provides the labor, however special arrangements may be made for elderly residents. Renters may be eligible. For more information, contact 452-5356 x19.

REMEMBER ME DAY is a special time just for seniors at the Firehouse Community Center. Every month, older adults gather to have lunch, meet new friends, and win prizes from the ever so popular Bingo game. Most importantly, Remember Me Day is for seniors to share their fondest memories.

Upon my visit, I asked a few seniors what they liked best about Remember Me Day. **Mrs. B.** enjoys the great homemade lunches, including chicken, meatballs, ice cream punch, salads, desserts, and more. **Mrs. S.** loves to play Bingo in hopes of winning special prizes. **Mr. B.** especially wanted to learn about transportation options from the monthly speaker.

Remember Me Day is the third Wednesday of each month at the Firehouse Community Center, 810 Grand Avenue, from 1 to 4 p.m., and ALL seniors are invited. For more information, contact Thema Bennett at (916) 283-3000.

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR ELDERLY NEIGHBORS THIS SUMMER?



- ✓ Visit www.benefitscheckup.org with a senior neighbor to find information about local senior services. (see article)
- ✓ Organize a group of neighbors to paint an elder's home by participating in the Paint Program through Sacramento Neighborhood Housing Services. Contact (916) 277-6009 for info.
- ✓ Take an exercise class with a senior neighbor. Contact (916) 277-6009 for more information.
- ✓ Remind senior neighbors about taking precautions against heat stroke and heat-related illness. Contact (916) 277-6009 for more information.
- ✓ Conserve energy on a hot afternoon or evening, by inviting an older neighbor to your home to decrease use of air conditioners.

Caring Neighborhoods Program

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"Make **your** neighborhood a **better** place to live!"