



The Caring Neighbor

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

June/July 2002



SUPER VOLUNTEER

SPOTLIGHT

Michael Marsden is a very special neighbor from the **Sunrise Ranch Neighborhood Association in Area 6 of Citrus Heights**. Through small acts of kindness and organization of a neighborly project, he is making a BIG difference in the life of an elderly neighbor, as well as in his entire neighborhood.

Michael and Mrs. S. have been neighbors for 26 years. Mrs. S., an elderly lady, has always shared her friendly smile with others. After being widowed last year and experiencing poor health, she has not been able to keep up with the maintenance of her aging home, and must rely on relatives and friends, such as Michael, to assist with repairs.

The paint on Mrs. S.' home was deteriorating and in need of repair, and Michael wanted to help. He contacted the Caring Neighborhoods Program, which facilitated a donation of paint and materials from Rebuilding Together. Then, AIM Real Estate Sales and Loans in Citrus Heights sent their repair technician to paint Mrs. S.' house. Her home looks as good as new, and she was very grateful for the helping hand. **Thank you, Michael, for your hard work and in making a difference in YOUR neighborhood!**

ARE YOU assisting your elderly neighbors in your Caring Neighborhood? 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 277-6009 or via e-mail at tgray@cityofsacramento.org and let us know how you are making a difference in your neighborhood!

PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

Today, medications can improve our quality of life, from providing chronic pain relief to eliminating the need for some surgeries. However, prescription drug expense is the largest growing health care cost in the country, and skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs are taking their toll on many seniors. Because most elderly persons do not have insurance coverage for their medications, they have to pay, out of pocket for prescription drugs. This presents a hardship, forcing many into poverty.



Seniors on fixed incomes must make difficult sacrifices just to buy their prescriptions, unfortunately leaving little money for rent and other bills. Many cut their pills in half or ration daily doses to make them last longer. Last year, one in eight seniors went without groceries or skipped meals in order to afford their medications.

Fortunately, several prescription drug discount programs are available to seniors, to ease the burden of expensive medications. The California Health Care Foundation has a very comprehensive and easy to use informational chart on the various discount programs available. This chart can be found online at www.chcf.org.

For those in need of personal assistance, the **Older Adult Social Service Coordinator** for the **City of Sacramento, Maria Lueras** is available at **(916) 264-7324**. As a Caring Neighbor, you can share this information with neighborhood elderly to assist them in accessing the medications that they need, while making a big difference in their finances.

HOW YOU CAN ASSIST YOUR ELDERLY NEIGHBORS THIS SUMMER:



NEIGHBORHOOD WALK



The 50+Wellness Program, sponsored by the City of Sacramento, promotes healthy aging by encouraging positive lifestyle habits and physical activity for those 50 years and older.

A new effort of 50+ Wellness is the establishment of the Neighborhood Walk Program, encouraging regular exercise through the formation of neighborhood-based walking groups. Exercising with others is easier, safer, and a lot more fun than on your own. And, neighbors can encourage each other to stick with the routine while bringing other neighbors along to join in!

Walking is a wonderful form of aerobic exercise, strengthening the heart and lungs and increasing metabolism, while keeping your own pace. The Neighborhood Walk Program can help you and your neighbors get started on your walk to better health and making a few friends on the way.

As a Caring Neighbor, you can start a walking group in your neighborhood to help seniors to get regular exercise. You can simply include seniors in your group, or assist an elderly person, who may not keep the same pace as the younger crowd, in a short morning or evening walk. For more information on how to get started, or to receive the 50+ Wellness newsletter, please call **(916) 264-6094**.

- ✓ On a hot day, offer a ride to the grocery store for a senior who does not drive.
- ✓ Become acquainted with an older person by having a picnic at the park.
- ✓ Enjoy a glass of lemonade and a friendly game of cards with an elderly neighbor.
- ✓ Assist an older adult in making their home more safe and accessible, such as by installing non-slip strips in bathtubs and showers.
- ✓ Inform seniors about prescription drug discount programs and how to save money on medications. (See front page)
- ✓ Share information with elderly neighbors about the dangers of heat stroke during the summer months. (Call 277-6009 for more information)

REBUILDING TOGETHER

A national volunteer organization that preserves homes for low-income, elderly, and disabled persons, is providing free minor home modifications for seniors 60+ and caregivers of seniors 60+ who reside in Sacramento County.

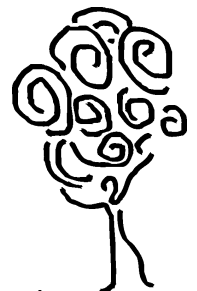


Simple home modifications, such as the installation of grab bars and smoke detectors, can make a world of difference for an older adult by allowing them to maneuver safely throughout their home. Rebuilding Together Volunteers complete improvements, including the installation of grab bars, shower assist units, raised toilet adapters, bath mats, night lights, and smoke/fire detectors. Although the program is free, donations are accepted, and qualifications are based upon income. For more information, please contact **Theresa Morales at (916) 455-1880 ext. 0**

"The Caring Neighbor" is a publication of the City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation Caring Neighborhoods Program.

Caring Neighborhoods Program

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