

Bears for Elder Welfare

November 2015

Issue III, Volume III

CLUB MISSION: BEARS FOR ELDER WELFARE STRIVES TO PROMOTE CAMPUS AWARENESS OF ISSUES IN AGING, TO CULTIVATE APPRECIATION IN ELDERS, AND TO ENCOURAGE STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN ACTIVITIES PROMOTING ELDER WELFARE.

BRIGHT CHILLY NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

November was an amazing month. Although many of us have been quite busy with midterms, papers, and what not, we still maintained events at Amistad House doing arts and crafts with the elders.

Towards the end of the month, we hosted a potluck social in spirit of Thanksgiving. For those who missed it, we had plenty of delicious food ranging from curry and rice to scalloped potatoes to a nice roasted chicken, courtesy of Costco. While eating, we enjoyed comedy movies such as Hitch.

Since December will be filled with the stress of finals and papers, we have decided to put a halt to all volunteer events and only have an end-of-the-semester banquet.



DECEMBER 2015

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HOLIDAY TIPS

With the holidays coming up, we have compiled some tips for you to enjoy the holidays with elders:

1. KEEP FRIENDS AND FAMILY AROUND

Although holidays are meant to be fun and happy, sometimes the holidays also come with sadness for elders because of the loved ones they've lost, so help make new happy memories with them!

2. PLAN APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES

Consider your elder's state of health before planning a six-hour shopping trip or a day hiking. If the activities cannot be avoided, consider having a walker or wheelchair at hand.

3. MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES

The holidays are a time for many to indulge in decadent food, but also be sure to plan meals catered to your elder's diet.

4. STAY INVOLVED

Don't be a victim of ageism and recognize that seniors also want to feel included in holiday festivities.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

BANQUET:

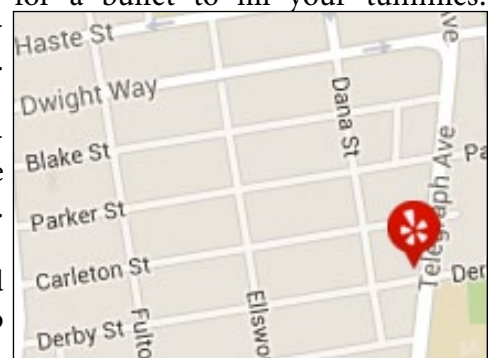
Dec. 6, 1PM - End-of-the-Semester Banquet at Bacheeso's



BANQUET



Per our semesterly tradition, we will be having a banquet to wrap up the semester. This semester, the banquet will be held at Bacheeso's on Sunday, December 6th, 1PM. Dress code will be festive formal. We hope to see everyone there for a buffet to fill your tummies!



Elder Care During the Holidays



Photo Credits: AgingCare.com

By **Lorena Ferguson**

Education Officer

Cooking elaborate meals, coordinating with family, and shopping for gifts means that the holidays can be very stressful times for us all, but for elders, the holidays can often bring on an extra dimension of stress. For those suffering from dementia or another type of mental decline, the increase in activity and people can be extremely confusing. However, there are several things that can be done to help reduce the anxiety levels of seniors.

One of the simplest, and perhaps most meaningful, ways is to remind your loved one how much they mean to you and what an integral part of the family they are. As people get older, they begin to feel that they are burdens on their family and no longer have anything

to offer. A simple “I love you” is a good way of reminding them that they are indeed needed.

Listen. Many elders have serious health problems or are mourning the loss of friends, and often all they need is a shoulder to cry on and someone to listen to them. Even if the problems are relatively minor, we all need someone to listen to us and validate us.

Focus on family. Don't attempt to change longstanding traditions. Change is stressful, especially for seniors. In many memory disorders, memory of childhood experiences is often one of the last to deteriorate. Sticking to old family traditions provides an anchor for those suffering from memory loss, and can help make them feel more at ease.

If a loved one is in a nursing home, a great way of brightening

the whole facility is to invite a group of local elementary school students to come and visit. The influx of energy and youth will often reenergize the elders and brighten the atmosphere. Another benefit is that it exposes young children to elders, therefore helping reduce the prevalence of ageism. By having contact with senior citizens, the children will come to understand that the elderly are not a homogenous group of grumpy or memory-impaired adults, but people as well.

There are also multiple organizations that are involved in elder care. Meals on Wheels, a nationwide charity devoted to feeding low-income seniors, delivers hand-made holiday cards in addition to meals. In far too many cases, these cards are the only ones that the elders will receive during the holiday season. Extending that small sign of compassion goes a long way in providing a sense of friendship that can sustain the seniors for many months. Another fantastic group is Be a Santa to a Senior. This program operates by matching volunteers to seniors in need. They request a small gift, and the volunteers buy and wrap it for them, then deliver it to their homes. These gifts are often accompanied by cards. Once again, these small steps go a long way in providing elders with the love and compassion we all need.

There are many small steps we can take this holiday season to ensure that the elders in our lives are as comfortable as possible. In many cases, it's as easy as just letting them know that they are loved unconditionally. That is a service we are all capable of providing.