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Special Interest:

- "We're living longer – but are we able to enjoy it?" – Pg. 2
- "Now you can stay at home longer with better home care!" – Pg. 4
- "Family caregiving is stressful. Can you avoid burnout?" – Pg. 5



Get the help you need for yourself or a senior family member – and get the latest information on aging – by calling the Schmieding Center. We'll provide the answers you're looking for, send you helpful information, and connect you with hard-to-find resources. Call us at 479-751-3043 or Toll Free at 1-888-866-8991.

Launching the Newsletter!

New Source for Senior News!

By Beth Vaughan-Wrobel, EdD, RN, FAAN

Exciting News & Views On Aging Well

You're reading the newest source for senior news and views in Arkansas! We think it's an important step in achieving our mission, which is "to improve the quality of life of older adults and their families in Northwest Arkansas through education and patient care." We aim to do so by being a national leader in healthcare, home care, and education for seniors.



Senior Healthcare & Education



Dr. Beth Vaughan-Wrobel,
Associate Director, SCSHE

We provide comprehensive patient care and coordination of services by an interdisciplinary team of professionals who specialize in the care of older adults. And because we want older people in NW Arkansas to age successfully, we are dedicated to leading a national movement to change and improve the way older adults age and receive care. We are committed to providing innovative education programs and consultation services related to home care and home caregiving, addressing the issues of older adults in the community, and improving the geriatric expertise of health care professionals and students.

Aging Successfully

This newsletter, published quarterly, will provide you with the latest information about aging with success and grace. The columns "Aging & Memory," "Healthy Aging," and "Caregiver Update" will appear in every issue, along with an insert called "ElderEvents," a calendar of programs to be offered by the Schmieding Center during the next quarter. It's easy to pull out and save for future reference. Also, you'll find information in each issue on the latest materi-

(cont. on pg. 7)

10 Ways It's Up To You!

Healthy Aging

By **Randy Shinn, MD**
*Geriatrician,
Northwest Senior Health –
Schmieding Center*

America is getting older! One in five Americans will be over 65 by 2030—increasing from 35 million in 2000 to 70 million! *And not only are more of us over 65, we're living longer than ever before!* Unfortunately, it doesn't appear we're getting any healthier. The

most recent data and research shows that Americans are not necessarily living in better health during their senior years.

You can be healthy longer! Can we do anything about it? Actually, it's primarily up to us! A major challenge for each of us is to narrow the gap between chronological life span and healthy life span. Seventy percent of the physical decline that occurs with



aging is related to modifiable risk factors, which include smoking, nutrition, obesity, physical inactivity, injuries from falls, and prevention/screening tests. In other words, to live healthier we must all start exercising, quit smoking, improve our diets, have regular screening exams or tests, and maintain our mental health.

Preventable health risks

Almost 20 percent of older Americans experience mental disorders. Depression is common among senior adults and often goes

untreated. Because many people believe that memory loss and dementia are a part of “normal” aging, diagnosis and treatment are often delayed. But many mental health problems are preventable or treatable, so screening for depression and memory loss is highly recommended.

We want to encourage you to reduce your risks of preventable health problems, thereby increasing the number of additional healthy years you can expect to live. The Gerontological Society of America has identified 10 modifiable factors that have the greatest potential to promote healthy aging.

1. Exercise

Physical activity is the key to healthy aging. Regular physical

activity can prevent the development of many problems which can increase as we age – obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, stroke, depression and premature death. Nothing gives the human body more benefit than regular, daily exercise.

2. Lose Weight

Being overweight or obese is associated with greater risk of diabetes, heart disease, and can worsen arthritis and other ailments that include stroke and pulmonary disease.



3. Improve your diet

Start eating 5 or more fruits and vegetables daily! Poor nutrition increases your risk for many conditions, including high blood pressure, osteoporosis, arthritis, and diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. As a nation we consume too much saturated fat.

4. Stop Smoking

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of death and disease in the U.S. Quit Smoking!

5. Flu vaccine

Get yearly flu vaccine after the age of 65.

6. Pneumonia vaccine

Get pneumonia vaccine every 6 years after the age of 65.

7. Mammogram

Get yearly mammograms after the age of 65.

(cont. on pg. 7)



Aging & Memory

By Stephen Gemmell, PhD
*Neuropsychologist,
 Northwest Senior Health –
 Schmieding Center*

Do you sometimes have trouble finding the right word? That's one of the most common complaints of people over age sixty. Other complaints include increased forgetfulness and decreased mental processing speed. And I often hear from my patients that they were concerned because they went into the kitchen and couldn't remember why. If that has happened to you occasionally, there is probably nothing to be alarmed about.

Is memory loss normal?

Memory loss is not a normal process of aging. So if you do experience a noticeable change in short-term or long-term memory, it

is important that you share this with your doctor or seek a memory evaluation.

Often, there is a thin line between what is and is not normal age-related cognitive decline. Now that we are able to identify and diagnose cognitive changes before they convert to dementia, it is more important than ever before to be proactive about memory loss and seek consultation if you are concerned about such changes. Excuses such as "memory loss is normal for my age" or "there is nothing doctors can do for my memory loss anyway" are no longer adequate reasons to avoid talking to your doctor about your concerns regarding your memory or that of a loved one.

Northwest Memory Disorders Center

Last April, the Schmieding Center and Northwest Health System opened the Northwest Memory Disorders Center (NMDC), a Center designed specifically for diagnosing, treating, educating, and providing caregiver assistance for people experiencing cognitive changes. At the NMDC, we believe that by identifying cognitive changes as early as possible, we are better equipped to monitor and treat such changes and help our patients to maintain their independence for as long as possible. In addition to the NMDC, we offer monthly educational meetings to the community on topics related to

healthy aging and memory. You are welcome to join us for these informative lectures held on the third Tuesday of every month at 10:30 a.m. at the Schmieding Center in Springdale.



"Aging & Memory" will be featured in every issue of ElderFocus. Written by a member of NMDC, we will address topics that are of interest to our patients. We think you'll find them interesting and helpful as well. Don't forget to join us for the seminars!

If you have suggestions on topics of interest to you, please let us know by calling us at 479-751-3043 or 1-888-866-8991. ▀

"The greater part of our happiness depends on our dispositions and not on our circumstances."

MARTHA WASHINGTON



Schmieding Center
 for Senior Health
 and Education of
 Northwest Arkansas

A Partnership of:

University of Arkansas
 for Medical Sciences
 Donald W. Reynolds Center
 on Aging

Area Health Education
 Center – Northwest

Northwest Health System

Caregiver UPDATE

Where Can I Find Better Home Care?

By Valerie Alsbrook, RN, BSN
Coordinator of
Home Caregiver Training



It usually starts with a phone call. "Hello, my name is Mary Smith. Can you recom-

mend a caregiver? I need help with my mother!" She is distraught as she gradually reveals details of the crisis. Mary, like so many who call, will feel a sense of relief and support after consulting with experts in elder care at the Schmieding Center. And Mary will also receive a copy of "The Schmieding Center Caregiver Directory," which links those needing a caregiver in the home with a listing of caregivers who have satisfactorily completed training in home caregiving at the Schmieding Center.

Professional training for home caregivers

Schmieding-trained home caregiver graduates have many reasons for enrolling in our home caregiver courses. After Fran's husband passed away and her son

died in an accident, she felt her life had no meaning. She had no idea what she wanted to do. Although she had some caregiving experience, she felt unskilled. A friend

suggested she look into the classes at the Schmieding Center. Now Fran proclaims,

"I can't believe my new found confidence. I have made many new friends and doors have been opened to me because of the training I received." Barbara, a Certified Nursing Assistant working in a hospital, wanted to try helping "one-on-one, in the home." Joan, a bank employee who was looking for a career change, always dreamed of working in healthcare.

Three levels of certified training

The Schmieding Certified Home Caregiver Training program is unique, because it is focused on the special needs of the elderly and structured to provide quality training at three different levels of care. With no previous experience, individuals can train at all three of these levels and are able to seek employment with families needing that level of care.

The foundation course is **Elder Pal™**. Upon completion of this course, a caregiver will be prepared to work with a client who requires minimal supervision or assistance, including elders with

visual or cognitive impairment. Elder Pals assist with such activities as bathing, dressing, light housekeeping, shopping, and meal preparation.

Over half of all Elder Pal graduates also take the intermediate course, **Personal Care Assistant**, which builds on the foundation of the Elder Pal course. Lisa's mother was at home recovering from a hip fracture and her father had mid-stage Alzheimer's Disease. Lisa lived in Little Rock, while her parents lived in Northwest Arkansas. A Schmieding Certified PCA, trained to care for someone requir-



ing moderate assistance, was hired to live with Lisa's parents until her mother could resume care of her husband.

The final course, **Home Care Assistant**, prepares the student to care for individuals requiring maximum assistance, such as an elder recovering from a serious

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Support To Lower Caregiver Stress!

Dementia & Family Caregiver Workshops

By Sara Bartlett, MSW, LCSW
Coordinator of Community Services

It's all about the caregiver... We often talk about "**caregiver stress**" at the Schmieding Center. And these same two words are used frequently in articles about aging, dementia, and Alzheimer's Disease. While family members have always provided care for husbands, wives, parents, grandparents, and disabled adult children, the 'caregiver burden' has become even greater for today's family.

Currently, over 4 million Americans have Alzheimer's Disease, with 7 of 10 living at home, cared for by family members. The added hours of personal care, home-maker services, supervision, and other assistance are usually on top of the daily responsibilities of home, work, and family. We know that services to support family caregivers are very important, yet family caregivers are still underserved and the importance of their role is still unrecognized in our society.

The Schmieding Center for Senior Education is accelerating its efforts to support family caregivers. We have just begun a Dementia Behaviors Workshop

Series. This program helps family members who care for loved ones with memory loss by providing information and techniques that help the caregiver cope with the stress of caregiving.

Coping with repetitive behaviors

The initial "Dementia Behaviors Workshop" provided information to caregivers about 'Repetitive Behaviors' and material specifically on coping with the repetitive behaviors of individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's Disease.

Many caregivers report that the most consistently frustrating behavior they encounter is the repetitive questioning and actions of people with dementia. Detailed information was presented on the changes in the brain that cause this behavior, as well as the effects of those changes on the personality and emotions of the individual. Intervention strategies were introduced to help reduce this repetitive behavior, relieve the fears and anxiety of the individual, and reduce the stress and the burden of care experienced by caregivers for an individual who has memory loss.



Even caregivers with long caregiving experience tell us they learned new information that will be of great help to them in their caregiver role.

Future Workshops

See the ElderEvents calendar included in this newsletter for a listing of programs on Dementia to be offered in October and November. Each workshop is one and one-half or 2-hours and is presented on two dates for your convenience.

Topics scheduled for 2004 include: "The Importance of Environment," "Resistance to Care," "Incontinence or 'Where's the Bathroom?'," "Combative & Aggressive Behaviors," "Decisions About Driving & Dementia," "Hallucinations & Paranoia," "Wandering & Shadowing,"

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AGING Resource Center

By **Marjorie Hart**,
Aging Resource Center Clerk, SCSHE



The Aging Resource Center is open to all Elders, Caregivers, and anyone interested in the issues of Aging. We provide a library of resource material, the latest in printed materials and videos, and computers with internet access. Here are a few new videos on exercise and an excellent book now available:

Videos

Be Bonewise, Exercise Official workout video of the National Osteoporosis Foundation includes both muscle toning and weight-bearing aerobics. For the development of healthier bones, stronger muscles, and improved stamina while avoiding osteoporosis-sensitive movements. The cardio segment



features easy-to-follow moves. The toning routines are varied and well targeted.

In Sync with Cindy Kozacek Cindy has been teaching senior workouts for 20 years,

emphasizing aerobics, balance, toning, and stretching. Toning suggests use of 1 to 2 pound dumbbells to strengthen muscles and increase bone density.

50+ Exercise with Margaret Richard

Designed to improve strength, balance, and flexibility; easy-to-follow, careful explanations are given. These moves may be done either seated or standing.

Tai Chi for Seniors

30 minutes of careful instruction on ten gentle tai chi moves, each with a focus on healing and regeneration (not martial arts).



The Sit and Be Fit Series Six separate videos for six distinct physical conditions—stroke, C.O.P.D., multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, osteoporosis, arthritis. Each features a gentle series of stretch, flexibility, and toning programs with guidelines tailored to specific health conditions.



Pathways to Better Living: Arthritis You choose the workout length, body areas, and exercise options that fit your situation.



Caregivers Guide to Exercise Shows a variety of exercises and massages for bed-ridden or minimally ambulatory people.

Book

Aging Well by George E. Vaillant, M.D. The author uses individual life histories to show that social and emotional development is a process that continues throughout life. His work, based on a Harvard University study that tracked 824 people from their teens to old age, analyzes the health and happiness of hundreds of individuals from a wide variety of back-



grounds. He uses the results of the study to reveal why some people turn out to be more resilient than others. His surprising conclusion is that individual lifestyle choices play a greater role than genetics, wealth, race, or other factors in determining how happy people are in later life. With its step-by-step advice and its revelation of scientific secrets, this informative book can help to ensure that your golden years are truly golden. "Adding life to years, not just more years to life." Motto: American Gerontological Society, 1955. ▣

New Source

(cont. from page 1)

als available from our “Aging Resource Center.”

How did it all start?

The Schmieding Center celebrates its fifth anniversary in 2004. It was created through a generous gift from Lawrence H. Schmieding, who identified the need for competent, compassionate caregivers, and specialized geriatric services

that would allow older adults to remain at home. The Center is a partnership of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Donald W. Reynolds Center on Aging, Area Health Education Center – Northwest, and Northwest Health System. You’re invited to come by the Schmieding Center in Springdale or to visit us in one of our three new locations in Bella Vista, Harrison, and Mountain Home. Call or come by today! ▀



for osteoporosis, and a good healthy lifestyle should help reduce the incidence of hip fractures. However, as we grow older there are many factors which contribute to falls. Exercise, vision screening, medication review (some medications are associated with falls), and home modifications (grab bars, handrails and improved lighting) can

Healthy Aging

(cont. from page 2)

8. Colorectal screening

Screening should start at age 50, but Medicare now pays for yearly hemocult tests and one colonoscopy every 5 -10 years.

9. Preventable Hip fractures, and

10. Preventable fall-related deaths in people 85 years and older

Treatments are readily available

all be used as strategies to prevent falls.

You can age healthy and live longer!

If you are maintaining an active and social lifestyle, it can truly benefit you as you age. All the suggestions above will improve our cognition and mental alertness as we age. Whatever your age, I hope you are inspired to make a few changes in your lifestyle today. It’s never too late to start! ▀

Caregiver Update

(cont. from page 4)

accident or coping with a chronic or terminal illness. In addition to the skills learned in the Elder Pal and Personal Care Assistant courses, the HCA learns how to transfer someone using a mechanical lift and to care for someone incapable of bathing, feeding, or dressing himself.

Caregivers and care receivers have a common goal—to improve the quality of life of seniors by helping them stay at home and remain as independent as possible. After all, there’s no place like home.

For more information about training as a professional home caregiver, call 479-751-3043 or 1-888-866-8991. ▀

Dementia & Family

(cont. from page 5)

“Activities to Provide Meaning & Purpose,” and “Sexual Behaviors.” Each participant receives a workbook containing in-depth information on the topic and related subjects and resources.

Also, we offer Family Caregiver Workshops this fall that will help you lower your stress by learning more about how to provide safe and competent physical care for an elder in the home. Topics range from “Bathing and Dressing” to “Body Mechanics and Transferring.” See the ElderEvents calendar for dates and times.

For more information or to register for a workshop, call 479-751-3043 or 1-888-866-8991. ▀



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We are on the Web!

www.schmiedingcenter.com



By Larry D. Wright, MD, FACP

Welcome to “ElderFocus!” And welcome to the Schmieding Center for Senior Health and Education (SCSHE). With this inaugural issue of the Center’s newsletter, we paused a moment to see how far we have come and to realize our fifth anniversary will be in January, 2004.

It’s difficult to believe it has been five years. On the other hand, it is sometimes mind-boggling to consider how much has been achieved in such a short period of time. “ElderFocus” is one way we will communicate to the Northwest Arkansas community the many



Dr. Larry D. Wright
Director, SCSHE

outstanding services/activities offered through the Schmieding Center. I am so proud of all the staff and faculty for the extraordinary expertise and dedication they bring to the Center. The result of their labors has allowed us to serve so many with excellent direct patient care and with educational programs for older adults and their families, as well as the health professionals and caregivers who work with them.

For me the goal is to become the most outstanding community center on aging in the country. There are few places in the world that can

offer the potential for success we have here in Northwest Arkansas—the special people with the critical expertise/passion for their chosen work, world class facilities at the Schmieding Center, a population of deserving and supportive older adults, and an extremely generous benefactor, Lawrence H. Schmieding. These components have brought us a long way and also guarantee a bright future for the important work at this Center—your Center.

So for the next five years, and for generations to come, my forecast is that the SCSHE will be recognized nationally and beyond for excellence and innovation in healthcare and education for older adults. Getting there should be exciting and fun. I hope you’ll join us for the ride.

Here’s to your healthy aging!