

# Carewwrite

— Carewest's Newsletter for Staff, Residents, Volunteers and Friends —

*January 22, 2004*



## Above and Beyond

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*Unit Clerk Jo-Ann Greenlee with resident Cory Meyer*

Every Christmas for almost a decade, **Donna Bomford** has added another person to her already bustling family – a resident of Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre. The addition holds special meaning not only for 86-year-old resident **Marjorie Ketcheson**, but also for Bomford and her family, who have come to appreciate Ketcheson's rich memories and lively stories.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**BRENDA**  
H U B A N D



## **FunDFest Supports Carewest Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Service**

Happy New Year and welcome back after what I hope was an enjoyable holiday season shared with family and friends. As is true every year, the start of the year was kicked off with Carewest's major fundraising event, FunDFest, held at the Palliser Hotel January 15<sup>th</sup>.

This was the fourth year in which money raised goes towards our Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Service, with a goal of \$2 million for a special endowment fund.

Carewest is the first long-term organization in Calgary to have a dedicated pain and palliative care team. We should all be proud of this fact. We help those in our care approach the end of their lives in a dignified, meaningful and peaceful manner – as free from pain and worry as possible. It is an honour to be part of such a process.

Our specialized team, which includes three pain and palliative care nurse consultants and a palliative care volunteer coordinator, provides ongoing consultation, education, and support for all

Carewest frontline staff, who in turn take those learnings to the bedside.

The Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Services staff help not only when a person is approaching death, but also at earlier stages of an illness with ongoing support and pain management. Through it all, our Palliative Care team helps ease the pain. If we can manage the physical pain – which robs a person of much, including their energy – we free them up to live.

In addition to our work throughout Carewest, 39 palliative care volunteers dedicate their time to comfort or sit with a dying resident, talk about their life, their experiences and memories.

What sets Carewest apart from other Palliative Care providers is the relationship we're able to build with residents and their families in a long-term care setting. The longevity of those relationships – sometimes years in duration – is honoured when it comes time to offer palliative care. We know our residents' personalities, their likes and dislikes, their pasts and the dreams that make them unique.

As we enter into this new year, let's be proud of the amazing work we perform each day. And let's look forward to another successful year at Carewest.

*Brenda Huband  
Executive Director*

# Above and Beyond *Continued from front page*



Every Christmas for almost a decade, Donna Bomford has added another person to her already bustling family – a resident of Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning Centre.

The addition holds special meaning not only for 86-year-old resident Marjorie Ketcheson, but also for Bomford and her family, who have come to appreciate Ketcheson's rich memories and lively stories.

A special bond developed between Bomford, a Licensed Practical Nurse, and Ketcheson more than 10 years ago.

“One year I had Christmas off and when I came back to work, Marjorie's roommate said that she had spent Christmas day crying. She's an only child and has always felt alone at Christmas,” Bomford said. “When I came home I told my family and they said that would be the last time she'd spend Christmas by herself.”

Every year since, Bomford has brought Marjorie into her home to help bake cookies, have Christmas dinner and decorate the tree.

“I got really attached to Marjorie. She's just a special lady and she never asked for anything or any attention,” Bomford said.

“My family loves her. She came to my daughter's wedding and my son's wedding. My son will sit and play the guitar for Marjorie and he'll sing to her.

It's really a neat relationship. She has nobody, so we sort of adopted her.”

Bomford's story is one of many woven into the fabric of Carewest, as staff routinely go above and beyond on their own time to bring joy to residents' lives.

Unlike the fast pace of acute care, there is little glamour or glory in long-term care, just the day to day work of making residents' lives as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. The residents become well known to the staff who care for them, often for years. Around Christmas, that special care takes on a festive feel.

Whether it's wrapping gifts for them, doing their mending or taking them to see the Christmas lights, caregivers help residents find joy in the holiday season.

The deeds are done by staff without a second thought but with enormous appreciation from those often too frail to go outside, let alone visit the mall.

**Cory Meyer**, a resident at Carewest George Boyack, is among those unable to do her own Christmas

shopping. But that doesn't mean it doesn't get done. Unit Clerk **Jo-Ann Greenlee**, who has worked on and off for Carewest since 1982, has made a habit of going that extra mile for Meyer and other residents.

*Continued on page 4*



*Therapy Aide Kathryn Ramdharry  
with resident Helen Jankey*

## **Above and Beyond** *Continued from page 3*

Come Christmas, that effort means perusing the Sears catalogue with residents, taking down their gift orders and picking up the items. Those who don't find what they like within the pages of the catalogue can count on Greenlee to hit the mall with their lists in hand. Last Christmas, Greenlee spent an extra six hours of her own time gift shopping for residents.

"To a lot of these residents who don't have families, we're their family, so if they can't rely on us to do those little things, they have no one," she said. "I like to help when I can. It's nothing. I just go out and do this and I don't think anything of it, but all the residents who I shop for are all really appreciative."

For Carewest Colonel Belcher Therapy Aide **Kathryn Ramdharry**, lending a hand over the holidays means coming in on her own time to prepare and cook a Christmas meal for 69-year-old resident **Helen Jankey** and her Ontario-based family.

With care, Ramdharry laid out the linen table cloth, decorated the family dining room, brought in a small Christmas tree and special music and strung up lights – before she even got to cooking.

"They deserve the best treatment," said Ramdharry. "If we can help them out, then why not? Why else are we here except to make their life a little bit better?"

"Helen wanted a really nice Christmas and for me, it was just kind of like having my own family. I gave a lot, but I got a lot back too. It made her family happy to know she's well taken care of," said Ramdharry.

For Jankey, the day held a significance that went beyond a nice meal.

"It really went splendidly, nothing was forgotten, the food was done perfectly and the room looked lovely," Jankey said. "Since I've been here, Kathryn has always been my guiding light. She helped me feel like I was doing something nice for my family. To me, that was special."

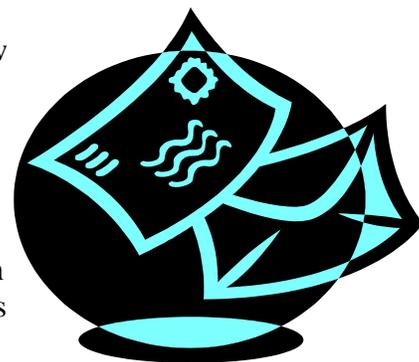
*Lynne Koziey  
Communications Coordinator*

## **Look for Staff Survey In Your Paycheck**

If you've been waiting for the perfect time to share some of your ideas of how Carewest can improve its services and procedures for staff, now is the time. The annual staff survey – now in a shorter, more convenient form – will go out with all pay cheques on January 21<sup>st</sup>.

The survey is an important tool for Carewest management to hear from those who know firsthand what changes and improvements need to be made at each site. Staff are encouraged to identify concrete ways Carewest can make staff's working life easier and more efficient.

The deadline for survey submission is February 13<sup>th</sup>. Surveys can be submitted anonymously at each site. Your opinion does count. Take the time to let it be heard!



*Lynne Koziey  
Communications Coordinator*

# New Awards Recognize Good Attendance

Over the past few months, the Employee Recognition Committee has been reviewing its policies to better reflect appropriate recognition for Carewest employees and its values.

Originally created to reward employees with exceptional attendance records, the Attendance Recognition Awards were put into place. However, there have been problems defining and understanding the Exemplary Attendance part of the program. (E.g., Is it based on hours or missed shifts? What about if we are asked to take time off and have used up our vacation? What if there is an outbreak and I cannot come into work for more than two days?)

The Committee wants to continue to recognize employees who have outstanding attendance and maintain the current financial level of recognition to Carewest employees. In fact, we want to motivate employees to strive toward a perfect attendance record periodically throughout the year instead of only having one opportunity. Our solution for April 2004 is to do create the following awards:

**Perfect Attendance Recognition Annually** All employees who have maintained a perfect attendance record over the sick year (beginning of April to end of March) will be awarded a \$50 gift certificate.

**Perfect Attendance Recognition Quarterly** All employees who have had perfect attendance over the quarter (January to March, April to June, July to September, and October to December) will be placed in a draw for a day off with pay by site groupings (Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning and Carewest Nickle House; Carewest Sarcee; Carewest Royal Park and Carewest Signal Pointe; Carewest Cross Bow and Cross Bow Administrative Centre; Carewest George Boyack; Carewest Glenmore Park; and Carewest Colonel Belcher – a total of seven monthly draws). This allows employees who have missed one day in one quarter to still be eligible for three other draws throughout the year.

As this change is in the middle of a sick year, we will follow through with the old policy for attendance recognition (Perfect and Exemplary awards) at the end of March. The new policy will be in place starting April 2004. Therefore, the first site draws will take place in July for the time period of April to the end of June.



Thank you to all those who strive for perfect attendance on a regular basis and good luck in the upcoming draws!

*Roma Zotzman  
Human Resources  
Carewest*

## Important Eligibility Information

- Employees must be regular full time, regular part time or temporary full time or temporary part time who have worked throughout the time period and have had access to sick leave credits for the entire time period.
- Sick time, any unpaid leave of absences, and any time off for disability reasons will count against your perfect attendance record.

# Big Money Rumble Winners



The Big Money Rumble continues to make winners out of Carewest and Calgary Health Region staff. Recently, three more people won cold hard cash in the Rumble, which raises funds in support of health promotion initiatives in the region. The Rumble ends July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004 with the grand prize of \$15,000.

- (\$1,250) **Lori Rideout**, Support Services, 8th & 8th.
- (\$2,004) **Marilyn Dotta**, Food Services, Carewest George Boyack.
- (\$750) **Brigid O'Shea**, Transition Services, Foothills Medical Centre.

## Getting Back on Track After the Holiday Season...



After the hustle and bustle of the holiday season do you find yourself in a funk? Taking care of yourself includes both physical and mental health. Healthy choices and actions that you make daily help to keep you both physically and mentally fit.

Keep healthy and safe in the workplace by making sure you warm up your muscles when you come in from the cold can prevent injuries when lifting. Choosing healthy snacks at the cafeteria and at home help maintain a feeling of well-being.

Rejuvenate by doing things that make YOU feel good. Here are some ideas for you to try:

- Bundle up and take a walk; appreciate the season
- Go to your favorite spot and take a five minute break from everything
- Shut off the phone – take a break from the outside world for awhile
- Listen to a piece of your favorite music without distractions
- Light a candle
- Take a long bath
- Choose healthy snacks at home and work
- Read a book
- Journal
- Work on a hobby or craft project



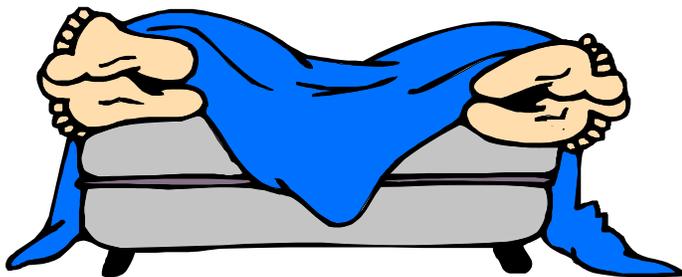
Find your personal comfort level. Start by making changes that are small enough that you can manage them and large enough you can feel and see the results. Make your goals realistic to avoid getting discouraged. Making small changes and healthy choices will help you develop healthy new habits. It's up to you!

*Shari Moynihan, Employee Wellness  
Carewest Administrative Centre*

# SLEEP MATTERS.....

Insights about sleep from **Dr. Charles Samuels** from the Centre for Sleep and Human Performance, who delivered a 'Sleep Matters' workshop on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003 at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning...

- Sleep is an active biological process and is regulated by the biological clock.
- The brain needs daily light exposure to regulate the circadian rhythm.
- The brain needs to be sleep deprived to sleep.
- The brain is susceptible to awakening during the night every 60-90 minutes.
- Sleep lightens with age.
- Total sleep need does not decline as we age, but distribution of sleep changes and naps become more important.
- Snoring and sleep disordered breathing increase with age.



## Sleep hygiene:

- relax for two hours before bedtime
- keep a regular sleep/nap schedule
- do not go to bed if you are not sleepy
- no caffeine after 2 p.m.
- no nicotine after 4 p.m.
- alcohol disrupts sleep
- sleep seven to eight hours between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.
- nap for no more than 30 minutes between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- be consistent; routine is important
- don't watch the clock; get out of bed if you cannot sleep and relax

## Consequences of poor sleep:

- poor concentration and memory
- irritability and reduced coping ability
- depression
- alcohol and sedative abuse

## Sleep in shift workers is disrupted but can be managed by:

- minimizing sleep debt
- maximizing sleep quality
- paying attention to diet, exercise and alcohol/smoking
- making time for you and your family

## Dementia and sleep:

- dementia impairs normal sleep biology – “What you see is what you should expect”
- disruption of sleep can increase agitation
- always look at medications

Make sleep a priority and quality of life will improve!

*Terri Gilson & Darlene Meagher  
Carewest Research & Development Committee*

## Workout Perk

[www.realage.com](http://www.realage.com)

If you like a cup of coffee in the morning, moving your exercise routine to the morning, too, could mean a workout boost. In a study, people who consumed about a coffee cup's worth of caffeine before their workouts experienced less exercise induced muscle pain during their fitness routine. Researchers speculate that the muscle-soothing effects could boost exercise endurance.



# Lifestyle Choices Program Truly is About "Choice"

During the months of November and December I had the opportunity to spend some time on the units with the staff and residents at all of the Lifestyle Choices sites. I was particularly impressed with the vast knowledge the Lifestyle Choices staff possess about the residents they care for. And, although the staff knew virtually everything about their residents preferences (from the way they like their pillow adjusted to their preferred evening snack) they still ensured that choices were always offered. With up to 75 residents per unit, that's a lot of detail to remember!



All of the Nursing Attendants that I 'buddied' with went out of their way to offer choices and make each and every resident feel unique, which is precisely what the Lifestyle Choices program is all about. Thank you to all of the staff at Carewest George Boyak, Carewest Royal Park, Carewest Sarcee, Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning and Carewest Colonel Belcher for taking the time to orientate me to your program!

*Terri Gilson, Program Facilitator  
Carewest Lifestyle Choices Program*

## Santa Visits Royal Park

Carewest Royal Park staff enjoyed some holiday fellowship just before Christmas. We pulled together a potluck lunch and while enjoying our buffet, a guest named Santa joined the party. Some of you may recognize this Santa from a previous life in Physical Plant Services (PPS) at Carewest. Santa helped us distribute the gifts but first we each had to visit him! We think Santa had as much fun as the staff did and we look forward to a return visit in 2004.

*Debbie Hayman, Administrative Secretary  
Carewest Royal Park*

## Sarcee Christmas Party

Carewest Sarcee Pathways Unit 2 celebrated the Christmas season with a unit resident and family Christmas party on Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. The afternoon was filled with music, food and visiting. **Diana Wiebe**, Recreation Therapist, lead sing-a-longs. Santa visited each resident and elf **Perls Ruiz** took pictures. The residents were delighted to receive their pictures with Santa later.

Special thanks to **Rebecca Grant, Lynn Ann LeClair, Perls, Jocelyn, Esper, Ada, Ann, Unit 2 staff and family** for spreading Christmas cheer for all Unit 2 residents.

*Diana Wiebe, Recreation Therapist, Carewest Sarcee*



*Rebecca Grand (Santa) and Signe Cotton (resident)*

# Depression

## Can Be Prevented in Seniors



The first study anywhere that focuses on the prevention of depression among nursing home residents has found that a little prevention can tame one of the most common and debilitating mental health problems experienced by seniors.

In the University of Calgary study, seniors were encouraged to speak about the stresses they were experiencing and given strategies for dealing with their own negative thoughts. They also kept a ‘mood diary’ and learned to participate in activities they enjoyed before their moods began slipping. Some of the things they liked to do included visiting with friends, reading, going on an outing, meeting someone new, taking a nap, writing a letter, playing games, doing handiwork, exercising or having a snack.

The study was led by University of Calgary clinical psychology professors **Candace Konnert** and **Keith Dobson**, and **Denise Pacentrilli** (Site Leader, Glenmore Park). Residents and staff from Carewest and the Bethany Care participated in the three-year research project, which involved 42 seniors with an average age of 80 who were exhibiting early signs of depression. Half took part in a simple group-based therapy program and half served as a control group.

Prevention of depression is important because if the early symptoms are ignored, they can grow into a full-blown clinical disorder in which people feel extremely sad and may withdraw from interaction with others. Much of the research to date on depression in seniors has focused on those individuals living in the community.

“At the end of the program and at six-month follow-up, those in the therapy group were significantly less depressed than their counterparts in the control group,” Dr. Konnert says.” It indicates to us that psychosocial interventions have great value in terms of preventing and treating symptoms of depression.”

“People of advanced age who reside in nursing homes are a very vulnerable group and their mental health needs are important to address,” Dr. Konnert says.

**Liza Stelmach**, a doctoral student in clinical psychology, also took part in the project, which was supported by the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research.

Although it is well established that people with depression respond favourably to psychosocial interventions like cognitive-behavioural therapy, until now those interventions have never been evaluated in nursing home residents, in spite of the fact that as many as 50 per cent of residents exhibit symptoms of depression. These symptoms include sadness, loss of pleasure in activities, lack of appetite, loss of sleep, withdrawal and feelings of fatigue. Many of those symptoms also accompany physical illnesses, making depression difficult for care providers to diagnose.

The researchers presented their findings at the annual conferences of the Gerontological Society of America and the American Association of Behavioural Therapy in November of 2003 and are currently preparing their findings for publication.

*Authored by Dr. Candace Konnert  
The University of Calgary  
Submitted by Carewest Research  
& Development Committee*

# Learning Guide Training

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, **Sam Adu-Darko**, **Shelly Achtemichuk** and **Corina Grover** presented a new Learning Guide Training session to a group of 25.

Our guest speaker, **Mark Ewan**, Site Leader at Carewest Dr. Vernon Fanning, spoke at the start of the session which set the tone for a very successful afternoon. Mark's five key words of wisdom when bringing new staff into the Carewest fold were:

Have a positive attitude  
Be friendly  
Be welcoming  
Be supportive  
Be encouraging

Mark impressed upon our Learning Guides that these five key points should be used not only with new staff, but with all staff, residents, families and visitors. If we all use these five words in our daily living, it can only spread through the organization.

There will be more Learning Guide Sessions to come and we will be using these words often. This is one outbreak we welcome!

Thank you to all the staff who attended this session with such enthusiasm and interest.

## Carewest Signal Pointe

Cathy Reesor  
Kim Luker  
Bettu Thinda  
Virginia Rowland

## Carewest Glenmore Park

Joyce Blayney  
Carol Soroka  
Petra Longshaw

## Carewest Cross Bow Fanning

Janet Wilkins  
Marylou Gaqui  
Don Oakes  
Val Broad  
Dilys Adu-Darko  
Patrick McKinley  
Gloria Reniva  
Qing Luo  
Emily Tipple  
Nilda Hablado

## Carewest Dr. Vernon

Margot Sondermann  
Ana Gabot  
Christina Sato

## Carewest George Boyack

Margaret Gallie

## Carewest Royal Park

Lila Lukowski  
Nina Gagnon  
Anna Siwek

*Corina Grover  
Education Associate, NE Sites*

# Mark's Words of Wisdom

- Have a **positive** attitude
- Be **friendly**
- Be **welcoming**
- Be **supportive**
- Be **encouraging**



## Handi-Bus

Striking down the road in a Handi-Bus  
Anchor chains a rattling, a clacking of the straps.  
This is how it feels  
Rounding corners on two wheels.  
Clunk, clunk, creak, creak,  
Thump, thump, squeak, squeak.  
How did that curb get there?  
Out the back goes one wheelchair.  
Why should people make such a fuss?  
It's a privilege to ride in a Handi-Bus.

*By Alice Gaskell  
Resident, Unit 1  
Carewest Sarcee*



# RN Receives Award

Alberta Registered Nurses  
Educational Trust

**Sandra Stone**, Comprehensive Community Care (C3) Home Support Coordinator, recently received a financial award from the Alberta Registered Nurses Educational Trust (ARNET). This money will go towards covering expenses from the Toronto Nursing Conference she attended in October of 2003.

Between October, 2002 and September, 2003 ARNET will be distributing approximately \$600,000 to Alberta registered nurses.

According to the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses' website, "this growth marks the third consecutive year of educational funding increases provided by the Educational Trust as a result of increased donor support, investment growth and the development of funding partnerships".

For more information regarding educational and event funding through the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses, go to [www.nurses.ab.ca](http://www.nurses.ab.ca) <<http://www.nurses.ab.ca>>.

*Sandra Stone  
Home Support Coordinator  
Comprehensive Community Care*



## Alzheimer Society

### "Caring With Confidence" Series

The "Caring With Confidence" series is a new program which explores the nature of dementia, communication strategies, support services, etc. Safety in the home and avoiding caregiver burnout through good self-care practices are covered in the second workshop of the series. Call 290-0110 for the 2004 schedule.

### Social Worker Available to Help

The Society has a registered Social Worker on staff to assist families and individuals with concerns around Alzheimer Disease and other dementias. Call Raynell at 290-0110 if you need help.

### We've moved!

The offices of the Alzheimer Society of Calgary have moved to #201-222 58th Avenue SW, T2H 2S3.

### January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

What's the latest in Alzheimer Research? Find out by joining us for our 2nd Annual Forget-Me-Not Luncheon at the Westin on January 29, 2004. Call 290-0110 for information and tickets.

## Congrats Graduate!

Congratulations to **Jennifer Cummings**, Carewest Pain and Palliative Care Nurse Consultant. Jennifer has completed the Palliative Care Certificate Program through Grant MacEwan Community College. Not only has she completed the nine courses, but has come through with consistently high marks!

*Ruth Longhurst, Coordinator  
Carewest Pain and Palliative Care Consulting Service*



# Employee Recognition Program

By Roma Zotzman, Employee Recognition Committee

Congratulations to the Carewest employees and teams nominated through the Employee Recognition Program. The winners in the November and December monthly draws are:

## November

**Shelley Martin** - Administration  
**Alan Wong** - Cross Bow  
**Rose Watkins** - Sarcee  
**Margaret Bates** - Glenmore  
**Laurie McKeown** - Boyack  
**Fausat Adeoshun** - Fanning  
**Cindy McPhee** - Colonel Belcher  
**Helen Dragoescu** - Signal Point  
**Kathrin Schmidt** - Nickle House

## December

**Christine Clements** - Administration  
**Kathleen Howes** - Cross Bow  
**Diana Wiebe** - Sarcee  
**Moana Rasmussen** - Glenmore  
**Jason Kosolofski** - Boyack  
**Judy Dravucz** - Colonel Belcher  
**Christie Gregorio** - Signal Point  
**Charles Haughton** - Nickle House

## Carewrite Schedule

### February

Submission deadline: February 10  
Publishing date: February 19

### March

Submission deadline: March 9  
Publishing date: March 18

## Find a Reminder Buddy

[www.realage.com](http://www.realage.com)

Make your New Year's resolution to exercise successful by finding a friend with whom you can set up a reminder system.



In a study of older women, the participants who received prompts each week reminding them to exercise had significant increases in their physical activity levels as a result. Choose a friend who also wants to get active, and e-mail encouraging exercise reminders to each other every week.

## Update

Please send photos to Jean Stern at Carewest Administration through interoffice mail.

