



*Preserving health and financial dignity through education and advocacy since 1973.*

SUMMER 2006

# THE ADVOCATE



by Pamala McGovern  
*Executive Director*

## *Executive Director's Message*

If you have been at the Council on Aging offices recently, you've probably noticed the *Just Imagine Tour* posters along the hallways. This is just one of many changes taking place at the Council as we gear up for the doubling of the aging population in Orange County. It's the individuals, those we serve and the volunteers and staff here at the Council who are dedicated to providing services, that motivate me to get up and go to work every morning. We would love to share their stories with you. If you haven't attended one of our *Just Imagine Tours*, please see Page 2 for more information on the Tour and how to make a reservation. The *Tours* are helping us spread the word about who we are, what we do, and the positive outcomes when people who care lend a hand to people in need.

Stories from our clients, volunteers and staff actually inspire some of our attendees to become volunteers. This is extremely important because another change at the Council is our new goal of doubling our volunteer corps of nearly 250 to 500 to better meet the demands of our aging population. On Page 6 there is more information about our diverse volunteer opportunities.

The *Just Imagine Tours* are not fundraisers and I can give you my personal assurance that we don't ask for donations at these monthly meetings. However, since the inception of these

*Tours* in January 2006, a new energy and awareness has emerged. Together we're going to create a society where being old is as valued as living a long life. This aging process beats the alternative and we're all in it together. That energy and awareness was translated into the most successful fundraiser in the history of the Council on Aging. I'm thrilled to report that our fundraising luncheon in May raised almost \$200,000 in donations and pledges! My sincere thanks to everyone who attended and participated in our Imagination Generation luncheon in May. There is more information about this on Pages 3 and 4.

Throughout this and future issues of *The Advocate* we are taking a new approach to communicating to our readers. When you read our feature article, "The Gifts I Remember Most" on Page 3, by Ms. Jerry Beck who spoke at our Imagination Generation Luncheon, perhaps you will better understand what motivates so many of us to do what we do. We are passionate about our work and our mission of preserving the financial dignity, health, safety and independence of Orange County's disabled and older adults at-risk. We invite you to join us and help us fulfill a mission that is critical to anyone whose personal goals include a long life of dignity and independence.

# Join Us for a *Just Imagine Tour*



## **What?**

One-hour orientations describing our programs and services and presented through actual stories and testimonials

## **Where?**

Council on Aging—Orange County  
1971 E. 4th Street, Suite 200  
Santa Ana, CA 92705

## **How Can You Attend?**

Please call Sandy Moody at (714) 479-0107 ext. 277 to make a reservation as seating is limited.

## **When?**

The third Wednesday of every month

## **Why?**

To get the word out to the community about the free services and programs we offer at-risk adults

The 2006 schedule for our **Just Imagine Tours** is:

September 20th at 7:30 am  
October 18th at 10:30 am  
November 15th at 7:30 am

**For More Information about our Tours, go to [www.coaoc.org](http://www.coaoc.org)**

# The Gifts I Remember Most

By Jerry Beck

**I**n September of 1999 my mother was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer and by November she passed away. In July of 2000, my younger brother was in a freak auto accident and killed instantly. In October of 2000, my youngest brother succumbed to a stroke after years of drug abuse and after wiping out my parents savings and life insurance.

Suddenly, I was the only one to see to my father's care. He had suffered a severe stroke in 1992 and was incapable of caring for himself. And even though he was an alcoholic and an abuser when I was growing up and I was filled with anger, I assumed the responsibility for my father's care.

I was extremely unhappy with an assisted care facility that my father had been living in for almost four years and, in fact, had stopped paying them because we had a major disagreement about the services they were providing.

Apparently the facility had contacted the Council on Aging Ombudsman Service because of non-payment on my part. Sara, the Ombudsman for that facility, was familiar with my father and his surroundings as she had visited with him many times over the years.



Sara, a true advocate for the resident was immediately sympathetic to my plight, and spoke to what she felt (and I agreed) were issues with the current facility that were actually putting my father at risk. The global stroke my father had left him with little feeling on his right side and impaired ability to speak. He also had dementia that left him with little or no short-term memory and he was legally blind.

With help from the Ombudsman program, I selected a dementia unit that was perfect for him. It left him without access to leaving the facility and with one-on-one care and assistance. They engaged him in exercises that actually gave him more mobility with his right side and he was able to eat with silverware, which had been challenging prior to the move. He even wound up with a "girlfriend" there, where they would sit together and hold hands when they weren't engaged in other activities.

At the end, my own relationship with my father was one of enormous compassion, gratitude and forgiveness. Years before, I had thought that "making peace" with my father was enough. It wasn't. With Sara's intervention I was able to realize the amazing gifts he left with me – not the least of which was admiration, love and respect for him.

There are few words to convey how intervention from the Ombudsman service, and Sara in particular, gave my father a quality of life and dignity I hadn't been able to provide before she stepped in. My father was in the new facility for almost a year before passing away and with the help of Sara and others, was allowed to live out the remainder of his life much happier than he'd been before. Of all of the "gifts" I've received in my life – Sara Rand, California State Certified Ombudsman and the Council on Aging will be the ones I remember most.

# Imagination Generation Luncheon



*Imagination Generation Luncheon - May, 2006*

## Luncheon Stories

WOW! Through the generosity of those attending our first annual fundraising luncheon, almost \$200,000 was raised in donations and pledges to support programs for disabled and older adults at-risk. Our one-hour event at the Fairmont Hotel in Irvine was hosted by Bill Gresher, Board President, and included a vision for our future by Pam McGovern, Executive Director. Also included were several emotional stories from our clients. A huge thanks to all of our donors and attendees.



*Linkages Client*

*"Thank you for the ceiling lift, electronic door opener and new computer. I can now sit up, open the door and build a home-based business. Your support has truly had a significant impact on my life."*

*Sincerely, Robert H.*

*Sometimes I think no one cares about Elderly People, but then someone nice shows up, as you did.*

*Gail R. – Facility Resident*

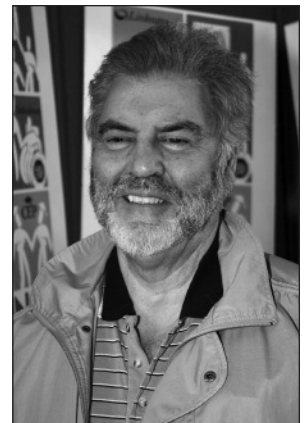


*Ombudsman, Grayne*

*My daughter was living in my home and she was spending my money without my permission.*

*It was like she had thrown me away.*

*I want to thank the Financial Abuse Specialist Team and Grayne for helping me. Mr. L.*



*Ombudsman, Dan*

**Save the Date for the Imagination Generation Luncheon - May 17, 2007.**

**Please contact Penni McRoberts, Director of Development and Communications (714) 479-0107 Ext. 223.**

## Thank you to our generous Donors in 2006

We would like to introduce the Founding Members of our Life Preservers who have not only made a donation, but also pledged their support for five years to help us achieve sustainable funding. We will honor these donors throughout the year at special events.



*We became a Life Preserver at the **Gift of Dignity** level because the Council on Aging—Orange County has such incredible services to offer our older adults at risk in Orange County. As a member of the Board of Directors, SmileMakers Guild and Friendly Visitor program, we have seen first-hand, the need for services to allow independence and dignity for those experiencing health and aging challenges.*

~ Richard & Vicki Craft

### Life Preservers

#### **Gift of Dignity - \$25,000**

Richard and Vicki Craft  
Bill and Sandy Gresher  
Mike and Pam McGovern

#### **GIFT OF HOPE - \$5,000**

Michael Bader, JD  
Mary C. Blum  
Robert R. Cardoza  
Robert and Joan Curtin  
Edna Davis  
Madelyn Dudley  
Stephanie Dufour

Rae Harper  
Hedy Kirsh  
Ann Maness  
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Jeff and Nancy Stack  
Mike and Cindy Steiger  
Elsie Studer  
John and Nancy Weiford  
Vivien Winneke  
Keith D. Wisbaum, Esq.

### Annual Donors

#### **PARTNER \$10,000 - \$19,000**

WKK Fund

#### **ASSOCIATE \$1,000 - \$9,999**

API Financial Services, Inc.  
Mary Ann Austin  
Margaret E. Blount  
Linda Dean  
Ethel J. Dudzik  
First Regional Bank  
Fremont Investment & Loan/Brea  
Fremont Investment & Loan/Laguna Hills  
Fremont Investment & Loan/Tustin  
Fullerton Rotary Foundation - c/o  
Joyce Capelle  
Richard and Jewel May Fund  
Ellen & Clarence Peterson Foundation  
San Clemente Villas by the Sea  
Ken and Gail Smith

#### **ADVOCATE \$500 - \$999**

David J. Brodeur  
Brent and Terry Caldwell  
Paul and Peggy Dorris  
Jacquelynn Ellis  
George and Louise Giacoppe  
Robert Haddock  
David and Myrna Hill  
Ed and Eleanor Klein  
Janine Padia  
Marion Shurtleff  
Laural Traylor

#### **FRIEND - \$499**

Pauline S. Abbott, PhD  
Carlos and Maryann Alcantara  
Sally Alexander  
Derrick and Harriet Anderson  
Mildred Anderson  
Jill Archer  
Joelynn Arends  
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Mary Wertz  
Diane Wetherbee  
Marjorie Young

#### 1918 – 2006



Donald K. Acker

It's difficult to believe that in our last edition of the Advocate, we announced Don Acker's retirement as Accountant-Emeritus from the Council on Aging. And then in the summer issue we must let you know that since then, this special man peacefully passed away. On one of his last post-retirement visits he mentioned that he never thought he would live this long!

Don was part of the Council "family" we feel so fortunate that he spent the last eighteen years of his long life with us.

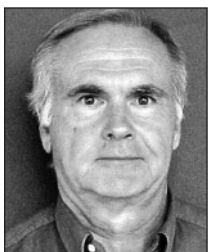
Volunteers make it possible for us to serve more than 60,000 disabled and older adults at-risk. But another 60,000 could use our help. The Council On Aging offers five different volunteer programs.

### Messages from our Volunteers



*The book of knitting patterns I made for 86 year-old Virginia for Christmas brought tears of joy. It is so gratifying to see that one's creative efforts and the little things in life are still deeply appreciated. Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Clause.*

Nan Crofford  
Smilemaker Guild Member



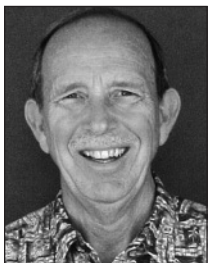
*Imagine the surprise of the family of one of my residents who was hospitalized for a serious illness and was found to have scabies. They were stunned and thanked me for looking after their Mom because of neglect at her board and care facility.*

Larry Lovett  
Ombudsman



*My friend is blind and somehow I am her eyes and ears to the outside. It's such a wonderful feeling knowing that our visits seem to make all the difference in the world to her.*

Bonnie Jones  
Friendly Visitor



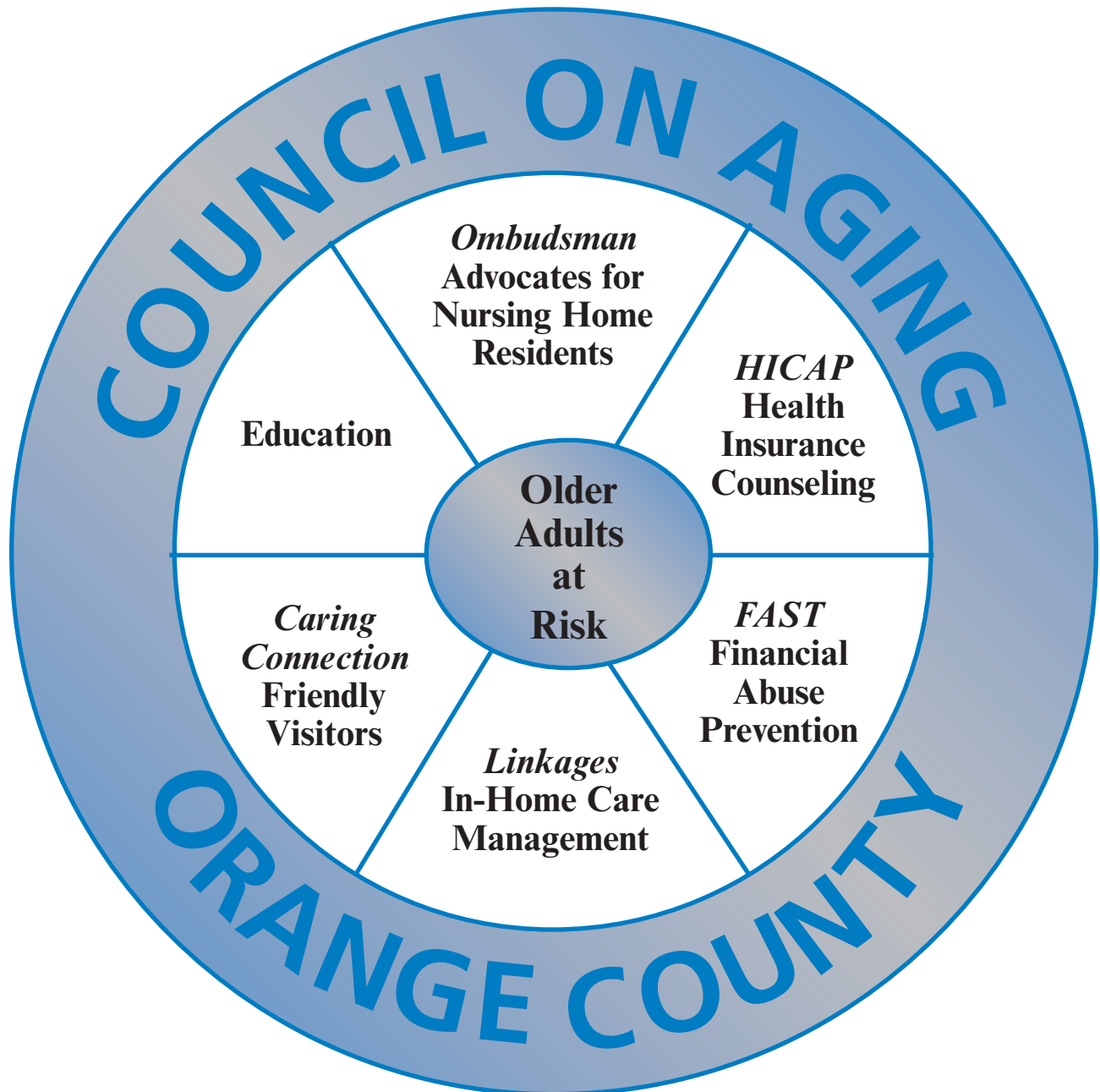
*When I am able to get medical insurance reinstated for a lapsed policy, I know we have solved a serious problem for one of our callers and it makes me feel good to be able to help a senior who has been confused by all the Medicare changes.*

Allen Lindeman  
HICAP Counselor

### Volunteer Directory

Caring Connections Friendly Visitor Program	(714) 479-0107, ext. 273
Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program	(714) 560-0424, ext. 225
Ombudsman Long-Term Care	(714) 479-0107, ext. 226
SmileMakers Guild	(714) 479-0107, ext. 227
SAIF (Seniors Against Investment Fraud)	(714) 479-0107, ext. 231

*The Council preserves the financial dignity, independence, health and safety of disabled and older adults at risk*



*Never doubt that a small group  
of thoughtful committed citizens  
can change the world;  
indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.  
~ Margaret Mead*

*Let us know what you think about our new Advocate. Email: [smoody@coaoc.org](mailto:smoody@coaoc.org)*



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*For more information visit our website [www.coaoc.org](http://www.coaoc.org)*

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*Wish List — Just Imagine how much more could be accomplished if Council on Aging had the following items:*

- Volunteers: Friendly Visitors, Health Insurance Counselors, Nursing Home Resident Advocates, SmileMakers Guild
- Bi-lingual Volunteers: Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese
- Data Entry and Grant Writer volunteers
- Volunteer appreciation gifts and activity tickets
- Tickets for events and activities for caregivers to enable them to have a time-out from Caregiving
- New, soft, warm washable, cotton clothing/lap robes/socks and slippers for older adults as gifts throughout the year and for our Holiday Project
- Stationery – Cards: Birthday, Thank You, Get Well, Sympathy for isolated and homebound
- Computers: Pentium 4 Processor or better
- 17” or 19” VGA monitors
- Office furniture: 2-Drawer file cabinets
- Use of large meeting room – 150 to 300 people

**If you can fulfill any of these wishes, please contact Penni McRoberts, Director of Development and Communications (714) 479-0107 Ext. 223.**