

Visiting Angels serving Whatcom, Skagit, Island, San Juan and Snohomish Counties

**Special Interest
Articles:**

- Compassionate Communication
- Letter from Fred and Debbie

Highlights on Page 2:

Ideas for Quick

Activities

Communication

(continued)

Memory Walk

Compassionate Communication

We all want to make communication with care recipients, their families, other care givers and case managers satisfying and effective. The *1997 Adventures in Caring Foundation* identifies Four Elements for successful communication: attention, acknowledgment, affection, and

acceptance.

Aspects of Attention:

- Listening, seeing, feeling
- Asking permission for such things as entering, and helping
- Giving choices and giving control
 - Accepting answers if yes or no
 - Observing and respecting a person's body language, tone of voice and facial

expressions

- Going with what the person wants to talk about or discuss
- Focusing on what is right for the person rather than what's wrong.

**Aspects of
Acknowledgment**

- Appreciation, respect.
 - Taking a genuine interest in the person.
- (continued on page 2)*

A Letter from Fred and Debbie Bengen

Dear Angels,

In our effort to improve your experience as a caregiver, we had our first "Caregiver Coffee" on July 22. Four of the Whatcom County Caregivers, Dedee Larson, Darlene Clute, Cheryl Lager-Levi, and Irene Hammond met with Fred and our Bellingham Office Manager, Mary Nichols.

We asked: What would help you feel recognized and rewarded in your work as a caregiver? How can we address our need for back-ups?

The discussion was thoughtful, lively and far reaching. We were inspired by the obvious deep commitment each of these caregivers have made to their clients. The shared stories and memories reflected the values of Visiting Angels of *Integrity, Teamwork* and *Service*. We'll be sorting through the wonderful ideas and **getting back with you about what we will implement.**

We've moved into our new Burlington office! Our new address is:

325 E. George Hopper Rd #107
Burlington, WA 98233

Our new phone number is
360 707 2074.

Thank you for all you do for our care recipients!

Sincerely,

Fred and Debbie

Please let us know what topics you'd like addressed in future issues!
Call your case manager.

Compassionate Communication (continued)

- Communicating on how she/he has made a difference
 - Talking about what's special, important or interesting to him/her.
 - Helping people feel needed, wanted and valued.
 - Validation, affirmation.
- Aspects of Affection**
- Finding common ground
 - Sharing
 - Being together
 - Warmth, comfort, kindness
 - Appropriate use of touch
 - Heart, joy, good humor.
 - Smiles
- Aspects of Acceptance**
- Help people feel safe and comfortable
- with you
- Non-judgmental
 - No pretenses.
 - Open to change.
 - Letting to wanting it to be a certain way.
- Please share your ideas on compassionate communication and we'll feature them in the future!

Please join Visiting Angels' Team as we take steps to end Alzheimer's.

**Memory Walk
 September 10**

Hillcrest Park
 Mt. Vernon
 3 miles

Call your local office to sign up!

Visiting Angels is proud to be one of the official sponsors.

Ideas for Quick Activities

- Ideas for quick and fun activities:
- Whistle
 - Give a comforting hug
 - Hum a tune
 - Feel a flower petal
 - Blow a kiss
 - Smell a fragrance together
 - Look at clouds in the sky
 - Make up a funny rhyme
 - Give a complement about someone's dress or appearance
 - Show a funny drawing or cartoon
 - Ask for an opinion
 - Recite a poem
 - Show pictures
 - Taste a piece of fruit or candy
 - Sing favorite songs together
 - Take a walk
 - String Cheerios to hang outside for the birds
 - Write a letter to a family member
 - Finish famous sayings
 - Arrange fresh flowers

From The Best Friends Staff – by Bell and Troxel

Safety Committee Elections

It was a unanimous, non-mud-slinging, voter-friendly, everyone's-a-winner, election. "This is a first," says Chad Bengen (tongue in cheek), the Director and organizer of the Safety Committee Election Campaign (SCEC). "It is extremely refreshing that all of the candidates stayed on track and focused on the issues

rather than any possible character flaws in their opponents."

Of the six candidates, all were unanimously elected to serve on the committee. "It was an easy decision," said one voter, since candidates would be a winner.. According to Chad, the Safety Committee will be responsible

for reviewing incident reports and making suggestions about how to improve safety conditions for all employees of Visiting Angels.

"The next step will be to contact each committee member and establish a date and time for their first meeting," said Chad. Contacts will probably be made next week for a September meeting.