

Stretching, core conditioning class offered at Fitness Center An excellent introduction to exercise

A stretching and core conditioning class is offered Wednesdays from noon to 1 p.m. in the Shasta Room at the Del Valle Clubhouse.

The instructor, personal trainer Robert Hancock, said his class is a good match for those getting re-introduced to exercise. The class consists of basic stretching, breathing and core conditioning. Improve flexibility and balance at a comfortable pace. This is an excellent class for active seniors. Props (such as floor mats and elastic resistance bands) are used at every class.

To register, fill out the program forms available at the Fitness Center front desk. The telephone number is 988-7850.

The ongoing course is \$10 per class or \$60 for six weeks. Fees are paid directly to Hancock.

For information, call him at 510-375-9248.

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Eldercare Services offers seminar on family caregiver issues

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson
Executive director,
Eldercare Services

It is a challenge to find a class that covers caregiver issues, but Eldercare Services and Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church (LOPC) are co-sponsoring a day-long seminar for family caregivers titled "The Family Circus: Walking the Tightrope of Elder Care and Aging" on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at LOPC, 49 Knox Drive, Lafayette.

There is no charge and the speakers are experts who will offer the guidance needed when embarking on the caregiver or receiver journey. Lunch will be provided and many informative service providers will be there to share their offerings. There is limited seating, so register today. To register or for information, go to <http://tinyurl.com/lpk4tlg> or call 937-2018.

Family members need care

According to research by the Family Caregiver Alliance, almost 30 percent of households in the United States are caring for an aging family member. As baby

boomers grow older, the number needing some kind of care or support will rise.

Most people will be unprepared for the role of caregiver because of a sudden new medical diagnosis, an accident or age-related changes in sensory or mobility functions. Most people try to do their best because they truly love and care for the elders in their life or they might be the only person available to care for a family member.

What tools are needed to assist the family caregiver? Here are five things to think about:

1. What is normal: Take a class to learn about some of the normal issues in aging such as changes in taste and touch. When the caregivers become sensitive to these changes, they become much more patient with those for whom they are caring.

2. Benefits: Know what benefits you are entitled to both nationally and locally.

Check out the government website www.benefitscheck-up.org for all the resources that can help with care or finances. Consult with a professional care manager to see if

there are specific programs in your local area.

3. Memory loss: About 50 percent of people who reach the age of 85 will experience some type of memory loss that can affect processing information and the ability to be safe living alone. Learn about illnesses that affect memory that can be reversed, the many different kinds of dementia, and how to interact and preserve the dignity of those with those illnesses. Eldercare Services offers a monthly class and the Alzheimer's Association has classes as well. It is critical that family caregivers be part of a support group or find a counselor to reduce guilt, stress or burnout.

4. Options for living choices: All kinds of living situations, from staying in your own home and being connected to a "village" to living in a "life-care community" are available now. Attend the "Family Circus" on Saturday, Oct. 26, and go to one of the breakout sessions about all of these options. Those who have a plan to stay in their own home may want to educate themselves for the possible "what ifs" of a longer life:

5. Legal tools: Be sure to check in with an estate planning attorney about changes in trust language. Check legal documents once a year. Be sure to obtain a durable power of attorney for health care. For people who have strong feelings about end-of-life issues, complete a POLST (Physicians Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) form. Most importantly, people who need caregivers should be sure that those chosen to be their advocates know their values, wishes and want so they can have the life they choose.

Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC, is the founder and executive director of Eldercare Services and a fellow and past president of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers.

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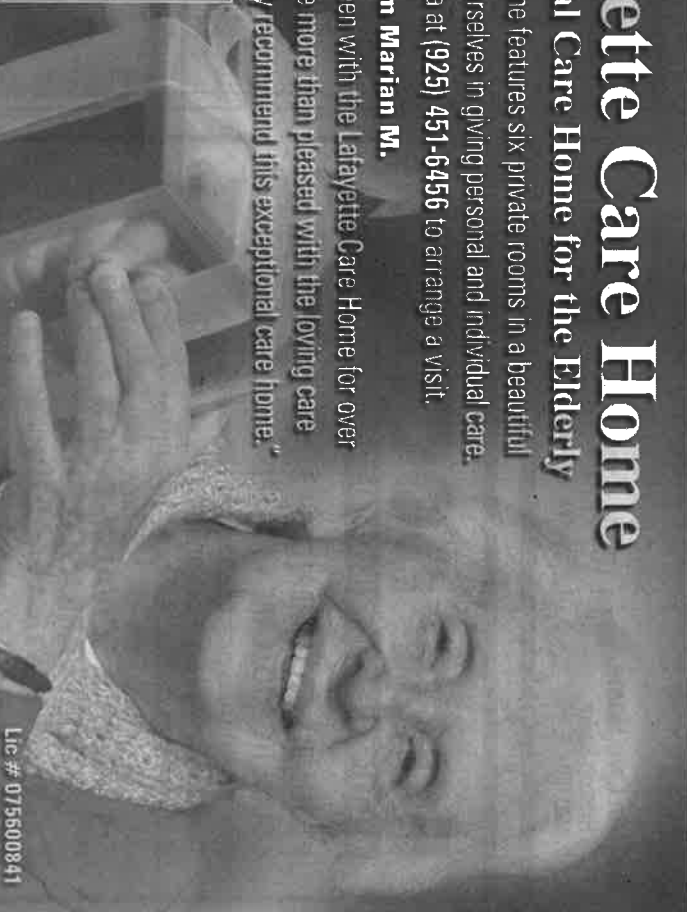
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