

Red Oak Residence

Independent and Assisted Living

March 2015

Only a Little While Longer!

The main office will be relocated (again) to room #120 while the contractor repairs nail pops and re-paints. I expect this relocation to last for 10 days. Room #120 has been remodeled and will remain a conference and training location for now.

The painters and carpet installers have their final punch lists. Please be sure to let someone know right away if you notice anything not quite perfect so we can have it addressed.

Theoretically unrelated to the blast, there are two renovation projects on the near horizon. I plan to remodel our three common laundry rooms and the commercial kitchen this spring. Be sure to keep an eye out for a special celebration when the Country Kitchen reopens!

Our Caregivers

Choosing a caregiver is one of our most difficult tasks. We look for someone who is a “natural nurturer”, someone with a gift and desire to work with seniors. Usually this person is referred to us by either family or friends or from one of our trusted employees. From there we have interviews followed with an initial training program, a mentor program, certified courses, continuing education and each has passed a Federal Fingerprint Check and Criminal Background Check. Within 30 days, each caregiver has received training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and infection control. By three months each caregiver must pass a Fundamentals of Caregiving course or be a certified Nurse’s Aide, and two types of specialty training.

Laure Anne coordinates a minimum of 12 annual hours of continuing education on topics as varied as individual health issues (such as high blood pressure and dehydration), lifting safety, fire prevention and food service. Additionally, there is hands on training at each of our monthly staff meetings. If you know someone who would make a good addition to our team, please encourage them to come in and talk to us. Meanwhile, smile at a caregiver - it means so much!



Spring Ahead!



Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour when you go to bed on Saturday, March 7th. Daylight Savings Time begins on March 8th.



Last Minute Tax Deductions

If you are a caregiver for a spouse or other family member, there are several tax deductions, often overlooked, that you can take in addition to direct medical care. Some examples:

- Mileage (to doctor appointments, etc.);
- Lodging for both caregiver and “patient” on an overnight trip, if needed for medical reasons
- Modifications to the house to accommodate the person being cared for;
- Medical equipment, i.e., hospital bed, bath bench
- Hearing Aid batteries
- Dentures, tooth care, glasses
- Long distant calls for medical purposes
- Hire home health care
- Prescriptions, insulin

Deductions are for out-of-pocket expenses, not those paid by insurance. Also, if you provide over half of the support for someone else (disabled offspring, or elderly parent living with you, for example), you may be able to claim that person as a dependent. Keep good records and always consult a tax preparer if you have any questions.

Warning Signs of Stroke

Every minute in the U.S., someone suffers a stroke – the nation’s leading cause of death. Yet the public remains largely ignorant of the warning signs of stroke.

Although most people know the symptoms of a heart attack, only about one in four can list stroke symptoms. A stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks a blood vessel or artery, or when a blood vessel breaks, interrupting blood flow to an area of the brain. The most common symptoms are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm, leg, especially on one side of the body.

- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

According to the National Stroke Association, the average stroke patient waits more than 12 hours before getting help. The best way to fight stroke is to prevent it in the first place. Simple things, such as exercising and not smoking, reduce the risk. Regular use of aspirin, especially in those over 50, may help, too. Aspirin thins the blood so do not use it if you're on an anticoagulant or if you use certain herbal medicines - check with your doctor first. Also, drink plenty of water. Dehydration makes the blood thicker and thus increases the risk of stroke.

If you think you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms that may be a stroke, Act! Contact your physician, the emergency medical system or caregiver. Rapid intervention is the key to surviving this attack on the brain.