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# Senior Care News

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## Taking Care of You

In the normal world, things like going to your own doctor's appointments, having lunch with friends, or reading a book are just part of daily life. But in the world of caregiving, these things get transformed into monumental tasks in an already overwhelming list of things to be done.

Problem number one when we are in caregiver mode are the million and one good reasons why we have to put the needs of our loved one first. The second, and by far the biggest problem, is time. We know we can't do anything about the 24 hours we are allotted each day. The challenge then becomes to find equally compelling good reasons to take care of our own needs, too. Following are some statistics on caregivers that help bring the point home.

According to the National Family Caregivers Association:

"Elderly spousal caregivers with a history of chronic illness themselves who are experiencing caregiving related stress have a **63% higher mortality** rate than their non-caregiving peers."



"A wife's hospitalization **increased her husband's chances of dying within a month by 35%**. A husband's hospitalization boosted his wife's **mortality risk by 44%**."

"Family caregivers experiencing extreme stress have been shown to age prematurely. This level of stress **can take as much as 10 years off a family caregiver's life.**"

"Stress of family caregiving for persons with dementia has been shown to impact a person's immune system for **up to three years** after their caregiving ends thus increasing their chances of developing a chronic illness themselves. "

I know what you're thinking, "but.....". And you know what? You're right. Whatever you fill the blank in with, you are right. You're not imagining the lack of time, or the lack of energy, or how overwhelming it can be just to get 10 minutes for yourself. But, as you can see from the statistics above, it's necessary. You, getting the time you need, is every bit as important as your loved one getting their meds or getting to a medical appointment.

So go ahead, pamper yourself, incorporate the things you enjoy into the schedule, keep a journal, keep in contact with family and friends, go out on the town, read a book, take a nap, and don't forget to laugh. You have good reasons to.



## Stroke Awareness

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and the number one cause of disability in the United States. It's estimated there will be 795,000 new or recurrent strokes this year alone, with over 144,000 of those strokes resulting in death.

The good news about strokes is that 80% of them are preventable, and, if symptoms are acted on quickly, they are highly treatable. In order to act quickly though, we need to know the signs and symptoms of a stroke.

The National Stroke Association recommends F.A.S.T. action to reduce the impact of stroke. Below is a quick resource guide for recognizing the signs of stroke.

### Stroke strikes **F.A.S.T.** You should too!

- F** Facial weakness
- A** Arm & leg weakness
- S** Speech problems
- T** Time is critical

#### Other symptoms include:

- Sudden trouble seeing out of one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking or with balance
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Call 911 immediately if you have any of these symptoms

## Upcoming Events Across Southeast

### Juneau Family Caregivers Support Group

Tuesday, June 9th, 7-8pm, The Bridge Adult Day Center, 1803 Glacier Hwy. Call Senior Information and Caregiver Resource Center, 463-6177.



### Ketchikan Family Caregiver Support Group

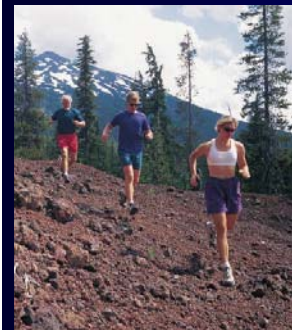
Ketchikan Senior Center. Call Nicole: 225-8080

### Sitka Family Caregivers Support Group

Pioneer Home Manager's House. Call Brave Heart Volunteers: 747-4600

### Juneau—Only Fools Run at Midnight

June 27th - Distance: 5K or 1 mi. run or walk. Starts at 11:59 pm, begins and ends



downtown at Centennial Hall. Proceeds benefit SAIL; costumes are encouraged. Contact SAIL at 907-586-4920.

## Featured Book

**Happy New Year to You!: A Read-Aloud Book for Memory-Challenged Adults** by Lydia Burdick, Illustrated by Jane Freeman.

Finding new ways to interact with your memory-challenged loved one can be difficult at times. With this, the second book in the Two-Lap Book™ series, Ms. Burdick and Health Professional Press have brought you a fun way to spark conversation, enjoy being close, and involve all the members of the family.



The author, who began writing and designing the books as a way to engage with her own mother, has included lots of ideas on how everyone, regardless of age or ability, can utilize the book. There are helpful conversation prompts and songs for each page, suggestions on how to use the book whether your loved one can read themselves or not, and there's even a game that can be played with the bright colorful illustrations! The next time you're looking for a few stress free moments to share with your loved one think about picking up Happy New Year to You!

## A New Face

We are pleased to announce that we have added a new member to the Senior Information/ Caregiver Resource Center section of the Southeast Senior Services family.

Julie Dyar has worked with seniors in a variety of venues from real estate sales and property management to providing seniors with information on long term care planning, Medicare, Medicare supplements and Part D.

In addition to her professional experience, she brings a passion and an excitement for issues concerning caregivers and their loved ones born of her own caretaking experiences.

She has lived in Juneau for over 11 years with her husband and three daughters. She likes to read, bike ride, sing along to all her favorite songs, and when the sun is out you can catch her anywhere but inside doing the laundry.

Welcome Julie!

*Happy New Year to You! can be borrowed from the Senior Information & Caregiver Resource Center. Call 463-6177 or 1-866-746-3177.*

**This newsletter is published by the Senior Information / Caregiver Resource Center, 895 W. 12th St., Juneau, AK 99801. A Program of Southeast Senior Services, Catholic Community Services, Juneau, AK.**

**To add or remove your name from our mailing list, email [seniorinfo@gci.net](mailto:seniorinfo@gci.net) or call 463-6177 or 1-866-746-6177 (toll free in Alaska).**