

# PRIME TIMES

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AboutElderCare.org | (918) 336-8500  
1223 Swan Drive, Bartlesville, OK 74006



*Thrive at home! Services that enhance your quality of life!*

# Advantages of Companion Care

Companion care has many advantages. An essential benefit is that it allows older adults to live independently in their homes. Aging isn't all that hard. Losing your independence is! Loss of independence is difficult to accept, but moving from the home you love and have resided in for decades can be devastating! Your home is where you shared your life with your spouse, raised your children, developed landscaping, and enjoyed many life experiences with your family.

One of our Brighter Living caregivers remembered her experience as a companion for a silver-haired gentleman in his home. "I was his caregiving companion," she said. "He developed short-term memory loss and struggled to manage his daily routines. His wife had passed away, and even though his children wanted to care for him, they had their own families to care for and could not meet their dad's needs. It was a challenging time for this family." Like many older adults in this same situation, he did not want to be a burden on his children, and his children were experiencing feelings of guilt because they could not meet their dad's daily needs. "The family had discussed his moving into an assisted living facility, but he was not ready to leave the home he loved."

## *What are the advantages of companion care?*

Companion care provides the assistance needed to continue a daily routine while maintaining safety and well-being. Adult children have peace of

mind knowing their loved one is happy and receiving the care they need. When the family visits, they enjoy the time they spend together

and reminisce about their lives and memories, rather than cleaning the house, doing laundry, fixing the refrigerator, shopping, preparing advanced meals, or taking trips to the doctor. It is a joyful time and something to remember.

Brighter Living recognizes and values the importance of living independently at home and aims to provide trustworthy, dependable, and kind caregivers. We want to assist clients in being safe in their homes while meeting their daily needs.

Families tell us our service offers them peace of mind knowing dad or mom is okay and happy being able to live in the home that is so dear to them. Our Brighter Living team is available to discuss all the options that help your family meet your goals. We are here to help make life brighter for our aging population.



# Alex and Merrill's story - Brighter Living at home

By Dee Evans, guest contributor

*Alex in North Carolina*

In Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, Alex hesitated before lighting the candle. Today would have been his mother's 78th birthday.

Alex cherished the time they had together, especially during his mother's last months. He was grateful she went out on her own terms and at the place where her soul was most at peace: the beach.

As a young woman, Alex's mother traveled from her home in Bartlesville to the Outer Banks, fell in love, and never looked back. It wasn't a man - Alex's dad came later - it was the sand, salt air, and the ocean's powerful lull. Alex didn't know which his mother loved more, his father or the beach.

When Alex's mom said farewell to Oklahoma, she left behind her parents and her sister. Of the four, Alex's Aunt Merrill was now the last one standing. It was incredulous. The octogenarian lived independently and carried on like a 30-year-old most of her life. And now she was Alex's responsibility. At least that was the promise his mother asked him to keep right before she died. "Take care of your Aunt Merrill," his mother whispered.

And how was he supposed to do that? Aunt Merrill was 1300 miles and a time zone away, and she was a handful. No children, no spouse and adamant about staying in Bartlesville, in her own house, around her own things. Alex was conflicted. He loved his

Aunt Merrill, but he loved his family and the Outer Banks more.

"Gotta get the hip replaced," Aunt Merrill said when she called at Christmas.

"Wait, what? Do they do that--?" Alex uttered.

"For someone my age? Yes, Alex. Eighty's the new fifty, in case you hadn't heard," Aunt Merrill responded.

First, Alex panicked, then he rearranged his life; Aunt Merrill could not be alone for this. Though his aunt assured him that she had everything under control, Alex flew to be by her side. The surgery went well, and Alex took Aunt Merrill home within a couple of days.

To Alex's great surprise, they were met by a delightful woman from Elder Care's Brighter Living. Apparently, Aunt Merrill did have everything under control. Alex was amazed. Brighter Living managed everything his aunt threw at them. Pick up a prescription? Of course. Stay for another hand of gin? Happy to. Help an old gal out in that pesky bathroom? That's what we're here for.

Alex was relieved. Elder Care's Brighter Living was available for as much or as little as Aunt Merrill required, for as long as she wanted or needed. His mother would be pleased.

Alex lit the candle and closed his eyes.

"Mom, Aunt Merrill's just fine."

# The what and why of long-term care insurance

By Lori Roll, guest contributor



Lori Roll and “Bella”

**L**ong term care insurance (LTCI) is a topic that becomes important to families who seek to age in place. What are the costs, needs, and benefits? How does LTCI affect Medicare and Medicaid?

Often, we don’t know who to ask for help, or even what questions to ask. The cost

of care is a predominant question, as is understanding home health care benefits and all levels of nursing home care, including skilled, intermediate, and custodial care.

We asked insurance professional, Lori Roll, her thoughts on a few key areas.

**Q: How do families determine if LTCI is right for them?**

A: At some point in life, many elders may require assistance including long-term care (LTC) services such as at-home care, adult day care, assisted living or nursing home care. LTCI can be a viable financial aid, depending on what it covers and how much it costs. And while insurance can help reduce expenses, no policy pays the full cost of any LTC option.

**Q: How does Medicare & Medicaid factor into LTC?**

A: Families often mistakenly believe Medicare will pay for LTC, but Medicare only covers limited rehabilitation or home care which requires skilled nursing care. Medicare will not pay for custodial care, basic supervision or help with daily tasks of living such

as bathing and dressing. While Medicaid covers some services for those who qualify for financial assistance, private services may not accept Medicaid. Therefore, attention to options and the cost of LTC is important to consider sooner rather than later when there may be fewer choices.

**Q: What does a LTCI policy cover?**

A: A LTCI policy helps cover daily or monthly costs of care required for persons with a chronic medical condition, a physical disability, or a disorder such as dementia. Most policies will cover care provided in the home, a nursing home, an assisted living facility and/or an adult day care center.

**Q: What is the cost of LTCI?**

A: Costs have several factors that determine the cost of LTCI. For example, costs depend on your age when you buy the policy, the maximum amount that a policy will pay per day, the maximum number of days or years a policy will pay, the number of days before the payment begins and an optional inflation guard. Many LTC policies have limits on how long or how much they will pay. Many LTC policies have limits on how long or how much they will pay. Elders are wise to look ahead at the options of providing long term care required by nearly 70% of the older population in the United States.

*Long term care without other resources can be expensive. Elder Care also offers in-home care at affordable rates. Some may also qualify for program assistance, based on financial Need. Call Elder Care at 918-336-8500 to learn more about our in-home resources.*

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Lori is President of Phoenix Insurance, Inc, downtown Bartlesville (918) 336-5460. Contact Lori for assistance with your long-term care insurance questions.

# Protect your joints

By Foundation Therapy Specialists

**M**aintaining good joint health is an important aspect of healthy aging. Progressive deterioration of joints can occur as we age and from improper stress and strain. There are steps that can be taken to lessen the strain on joints, even with the most basic daily activities. Common daily activities are listed below along with tips on how to best protect your joints when performing the activity.

**Reading** - Sit in a straight back chair with your shoulders back and feet on the floor. Utilize a reading stand and place the book at eye level. Avoid excessive forward bending of your neck or holding the book up in front of you with your arms.

**Watching Television** - Avoid sitting in a recliner for prolonged periods of time. Instead, try to sit in a straight back chair which will provide better support for your spine. Try to change positions every 30 minutes, no matter what type of chair you are sitting in. The TV should be placed at eye level, so that you do not have to extend your neck to look up at the screen.

**Computer Work** - Sit in a straight back chair with proper back support. Make sure that your feet are on the ground with your knees and hips at a 90 degree angle. Place the computer screen at eye level, about 18-22 inches from your forehead. The top of your head should be parallel with the top of the screen. Your forearms should be parallel to the floor as well and they should rest on the desk or chair arms with the elbows bent at a 90 degree angle. Place

documents on a holder to the side of the monitor so that you do not have to look down often. Perform stretches such as chin tucks and shoulder blade squeezes while seated and take a break every 20-30 minutes.

**Housekeeping** - When changing sheets, try to place bed in an area where all corners can be reached without straining. Squat down, and keep back straight to tuck in the corners. If it is necessary to reach across bed, place one knee on the bed as you reach. Avoid bending forward at the hips to reach across the bed.

**Ironing** - Position ironing board at a height that allows you to keep your back straight. Avoid forward bending. Place one foot on a low stool to relieve the pressure on your back. Take frequent breaks.

**Gardening** - Utilizing a kneeling pad to absorb some of the pressure on your knees will allow you to be closer to your work and help avoid excessive bending of hips and spine. Avoid excessive or repetitive lifting of heavy objects, especially from the ground, and use a gardening cart or wheelbarrow to move tools and planting materials. Change positions frequently to avoid stiffness or cramping.

If you, or someone you know, are currently experiencing joint pain, it would be to your advantage to consult your doctor and inquire about physical therapy to help you establish an appropriate program that specifically addresses your needs. Foundation Therapy Specialists at Elder Care specializes in administering individualized care in a compassionate environment. Contact us directly at (918) 766-0391.

# Group exercise classes keep you moving

By Angie Thompson, Development Director



Dana Brock

**G**roup exercise enhances your fitness goals, provides socialization, and offers additional support from co-participants.

Do you struggle to find the motivation to exercise? Would

you benefit from a

professional fitness instructor showing you how to execute the movements safely?

With two *NEW* group exercise classes at Elder Care, the resources are ready and waiting to keep you moving and motivated.

**D**ana Brock leads Life Movements - a class that reinforces proper breathing and stretching and engages in light cardio and strength training. All exercises fortify movements we use every day.

## Class Overview

- Senior adults 60 and older
- Ten-week class costs \$100 per person
- July 5 through September 8
- Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00am-11:45am; or 1:00pm-1:45pm
- Limited to 8-10 participants, minimum of 5 to make the class

**M**obility & Flex is open to all area adults ages 18 and older. Bee Bradley, a seasoned group fitness instructor, will keep you mobile and flexible in this mind-body class. Using movements designed to strengthen your core (*muscle group that wraps around your midsection - from front to back*) and refresh your outlook, Bee draws from Tai Chi movements and reflexology, reinforcing stretching, breathing, flexibility, and core strength. It is a total body and mind workout!



Bee Bradley

## Class Overview

- Adults 18 and older
- Eight-weeks class costs \$80 per person
- July 19 through September 8
- Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:00pm-4:40 pm
- Limited to 8-10 participants, minimum of 5 to make the class

Both classes are open to the public. Call Elder Care at 918-336-8500 to sign up for either class or to learn about future classes.

*Participants should consult with their primary care provider before beginning exercise.*

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# Upcoming Events

## SENIORS CONNECT SERIES

*Estate Planning: Making Decisions for the future*

Featuring, Brandy Robles, ARVEST Wealth Management  
Trust Officer | Tuesday, August 9 | 2:00pm - 3:30pm  
Elder Care | 1223 Swan Drive | (918) 336-8500  
RSVP by August 1 to Elder Care



*Enjoy Life with an Attitude of Gratitude*

Featuring, Jerry Poppenhouse, photographer  
Friday, August 12 | 9:00am - 10:00am  
Elder Care | 1223 Swan Drive | (918) 336-8500  
RSVP by August 4 to Elder Care

*Living a Balanced Life*

Featuring, Marilou Bork, LCSW  
Wednesday, September 7 | 3:00pm - 4:00pm  
Elder Care | 1223 Swan Drive | (918) 336-8500  
RSVP by September 1 to Elder Care



*Medicare & You*

Featuring, Jerrie Lindley & Sue Lee  
Wednesday, November 9 | 3:00pm - 4:00pm  
Elder Care | 1223 Swan Drive | (918) 336-8500  
RSVP by November 1 to Elder Care

## GO TRAVEL TRIP

*The Splendor of the Season on the Talimena Scenic Byway*

Open to all seniors 65+

\$495 per person (*scholarships and discounts available*)

Thursday, November 10 - Saturday, November 12. Register by October 1

Contact Candy at (918) 633-8532, [Candy@goglobal.guru](mailto:Candy@goglobal.guru)

Trip details described on our website, [AboutElderCare.org/Go-Travel](http://AboutElderCare.org/Go-Travel)



# This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in June 2022

Bill & Sandy Bath  
Ralph & Lois Bergstad  
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We sincerely apologize for any unintended error or omission. Due to publication deadlines, acknowledgment of gifts may take up to 60 days in Prime Times Publication. If you feel there is an error, please call Angie Thompson at (918) 336-8500, ext. 129.

## Employee Highlights



Carol Davis, Billing Associate PT/ BLS, has been part of Elder Care’s team for 17 years. “In billing, I help patients understand their insurance benefits as they begin therapy, detailing any out of pocket cost they may expect. This allows them to plan for the impact on their finances. In credentialing, I make sure that our providers are in-network with as many plans as possible. Elder Care offers the opportunity to make a difference in many lives and in many ways by being a part of the mission to help ensure that mature adults live happy, healthy, independent lives.”

Sue Lee, Resource Coordinator/ Support Group Facilitator, has been part of Elder Care for 16 years. “I was looking for a job where I could work with seniors and a friend told me about Elder Care. I work around outstanding, caring, and friendly people and enjoy the teamwork. Everyone is always willing to help wherever needed.”



Christy Bashford, PTA, Physical Therapist Assistant, has worked at Elder Care for over 16 years. “I cannot imagine being anywhere else. I feel privileged that I get to spend my days helping patients achieve their goals. Elder Care is a unique place because patients receive one on one care and can participate in physical, occupational, and speech therapy all under the same roof.