



Thank YOU
for recognizing our efforts
by sending your friends & family!

Atty. Steve Pizzuti	Rev. Michael Robinson
Hathaway Manor	New Center Legal Advocacy
Sue Lent	Jan Landers
St. Luke's Hospital	Mattapoisett COA
Dartmouth COA	Tetreault Insurance Agency
Joanne Veeder	Chris & Ann Albernaz
Barbara Laverdiere	Steven Souza

We invest 100% of our time & energy to delivering first-class service to our clients. As a result, our valued clients, partners, & friends refer their family, clients, friends & associates to us. We build strong, lifelong relationships, one person at a time!

*In observance of the
Christmas Holiday,
our offices will be closed
December 24th at 12 Noon and
closed December 25th.
We will also be closed
December 31st at 12 Noon and
closed January 1st.
From all of us at
Surprenant & Beneski, P.C
we wish you and your family
every Joy of this
Holiday Season!*

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December, 2009

Home for the Holidays

'Tis the season for stress, special challenges

Once again the holiday season is upon us. 'Tis the season for mixed blessings. Along with the joys of the season come stressors. Many families get together after a long period of time without physically seeing each other. Because of the time and distance, changes in older loved ones become more noticeable. The Holidays also may be a time when families face and discuss the difficult decisions about finding care for their older relative. Here are some of the changes that may indicate your loved one needs some extra help:

Weight loss

- Bad personal hygiene or significant negative changes in personal hygiene
- Unusually cluttered, dirty or messy home
- Unusually loud or quiet, paranoid, agitated behavior
- Local friends and relatives are expressing concerns about changed behavior
- Self-imposed isolation, stops attending activities
- Signs of forgetfulness such as unopened mail, piling newspapers, not filling their prescriptions, or missed appointments
- Signs of poorly managed finances, such as not paying bills, losing money, paying bills twice or more, or hiding money
- Unusual purchases

If you notice changes that are of concern, a physical and neurological exam should identify any medical issues that your loved one is facing. After the medical issues are in hand, a good Geriatric Care Manager can help your family assess what types of options are available to assist your loved one live a full, fruitful and safe life. A GCM is a professional who specializes in assisting seniors and their families with the issues surrounding aging. Suggestions may include a home health aide, adult day care, and a bill paying service or many other things.

If your loved one can no longer live on his or her own, then the issue of where the person will live has to be decided. A family member's home, assisted living, senior housing, or nursing home are all possible choices. These choices have many consequences. This is where having a good elder law attorney can provide much needed assistance.

If nursing home care is needed, Medicaid planning should be done to assist the loved one in qualifying for Medicaid as soon as practicable and thereby preserving as much of the loved one's assets as possible. Many families incorrectly believe that all savings will be lost to pay for a nursing home stay. This is simply not true; a good elder law attorney should be able to protect all the assets of a married couple and a good portion of a single person's savings.

Last, but certainly not least your loved one should consult an elder law attorney to ensure that all alternative decision making documents such as a Health Care Proxy, Durable Power of Attorney and HIPAA release are in place and valid. A Health Care

(continues on page 2)



Mark Your Calendars For These Upcoming Events in
December! Call 1-800-929-0491
To Reserve Your Seat!



Living Trust Seminar

All programs are from 6:30pm-8:00pm

Wednesday, December 9th (code: NBCC)

The New Bedford Country Club, 585 Slocum Road, North Dartmouth.

Long Term Care Presentations, including Veteran Benefits

Thursday, December 3rd (code: Wamsutta) 1:30pm-3:00 and 6:30pm-8:00pm

The Wamsutta Club, 427 County Street, New Bedford

Long Term Care Presentations on the Cape

All Programs are from 1:30pm-3:00pm

Tuesday, December 8th (code: Cape)

Cape Cod Island Association of Realtors Conference Center
22 Mid Tech Drive, West Yarmouth

If you prefer, you can also register for our seminars on-line by going to: <http://www.the-sb-lawfirm.com/upcoming-events/long-term-care-planning-workshop> for long term care seminars <http://www.the-sb-lawfirm.com/upcoming-events/revocable-living-trust-planning> for trust seminars.

(continued from page 1)

Proxy allows another person to make medical decisions for you if you become incompetent. A Durable Power of Attorney allows another person to handle legal or financial issues for another person. A HIPAA release allows others access to your medical records. All of these documents will allow family members to assist an older person who is facing physical or mental challenges. Actually, we all should have these documents in place in case we become incapacitated unexpectedly, whatever our age. If we have not chosen alternative decisions makers the court will choose one for us through the guardianship process if needed. This process is complicated; time consuming, emotionally draining and expensive.

The holidays are a time of joy and stress. If you come home to find your loved ones need some help, don't worry; there is a lot of support out there for caregivers. Contact an elder law attorney right away to start the process. Most likely the attorney will have good referrals to the other services you may need. If you need help establishing your estate plan call our office for a consultation.

To set an appointment for a consultation, call our office at **508-994-5200**. We generally charge \$500 for a consultation but this fee will be waived if you mention this article. This information is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For specific questions you should consult a qualified attorney.

COASTLINE ELDERLY NUTRITION NEWS

This time of year you will find plenty of articles telling how *not* to eat during the holiday season and giving tips of foods *not* to choose at a holiday party, but during these times of celebration who wants to hear what *not* to do?! Be good to yourself this year and eat the good stuff! Below is a list of top picks this holiday season:

Eat, Drink & Be Merry!

Oatmeal:

Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes people make is skipping breakfast the morning of a big holiday meal. This will leave you starving and cause you to overeat & fill up on high calorie, high fat holiday treats! Start your day off right with eating breakfast. With snow falling outside, oatmeal if a great way to warm you up! It provides a nice source of dietary fiber, which is good for the heart and digestive system.

Walnuts:

Holiday parties provide plenty of appetizers and munchies laying around - from crackers and cheese, to chips and dip but the fat and calories in these starters can add up quickly. Spend time socializing with your friends & family at the holiday party and have a small handful of walnuts for some protein and healthy Omega-3 fats. Remember, more is not always better - just keep it to one handful.

Sweet Potatoes:

Searching for a healthy side dish to go with your main meal? A baked sweet potato is a nutritional powerhouse. In place of some of the other high fat side dishes, the sweet potato is low in calories with no fat or cholesterol. It is a great source of dietary fiber and plenty of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Cranberry Sauce:

The canned cranberry sauce may be high in sugar but make your own and similar to the sweet potato, you will get some more vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber and antioxidants!

Dark Chocolate:

Choose a small piece of dark chocolate to satisfy your sweet tooth after the meal. Pies & cakes won't provide you with the flavinoids found in dark chocolate - good for your heart.

From the desk of Kim Ferreira, MS, RD, LDN
Coastline Elderly Services, Inc.