

Dancing with Our Elders Newsletter

Vol. 4, No.16

Quarterly

January- March 2009

Become an Optimist---Live Longer

By Eva Madigan



Ms. Willie & Mr. Ryan Share
a laugh at Trinity Institution

While reading about senior's health I happened to come across this interesting article on aging. The medical content was reviewed by the Harvard Medical School. I would like to share it with you.

"Genes and health behaviors contribute to the length and quantity of your life, but so does your attitude and beliefs about aging."

Americans are living longer than ever. Over the past century, the average American lifespan has increased a whopping 27 years. What's the secret to a long and healthy life?

Good genes help. You can get them from your parent. And since you can't pick your parents, this avenue to a longer life is out of your control. Besides, the value of good genes is in question. New research from Yale University found that genes contribute only 25% to the length of your life. This seems to mean that other factors, such as health, behaviors and mental health, play a role in longevity too.

The Yale study claims that a good attitude helps keep your heart pumping and your feet tapping an additional 7.6 years on average. An optimistic outlook adds more years to your life than low blood pressure (4 years or less), low cholesterol (4 years or less), a healthy weight (1 to 3 years) and regular exercise (1 to 3 years).

"These are the Good Old Days"

The Yale study suggests that people who believe negative stereotypes about growing old may face a reduced life expectancy. If you think old people are frail and sickly, you probably see yourself as frail and sickly when you get old.

Frank Landry, a 79-year old retired dentist from New England, didn't grow up with these negative stereotypes. He watched his elders remain active and involved as they aged. And he followed their example. His long list of activities includes working as a hospice volunteer and fundraiser and helping the Rotary Club support widows and widowers." Some people sit down and won't do nothing." He says, "I think you have to accept what you have and work with it." *(Continued on page 4)*

In this issue read about one of our eldest members Mrs. Goldie Crenshaw, a regular from Troy since 2007. And see our section "Elders in the News", our recipe and birthdays.

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Mrs. Goldie Crenshaw

Our Elder of the Month by Carlos Osorio



Mrs. Annie Downs & Mrs. Goldie

Mrs. Goldie Crenshaw, one of the eldest ladies who joined our Wednesday 2 pm group, began traveling from Troy, NY to Albany's Trinity Institution for Dancing With Our Elders program. Health permitting and with the kindness of Janice Woodard, Goldie takes a ride with Annie Downs (Janice's mom), Goldie's friend. Mrs. Crenshaw really enjoys attending the Wednesday class whenever she gets a ride, now from Livingston Hills, NY. Goldie can still shake up a storm with her dancing at the Latin beat; she stays at

Livingston, NY where she recently welcomed our group, Dancing With Our Elders, along with staff and residents

during Nursing Home Week.

About Goldie's life (*Excerpt from a biography by J. Lee Wilson, a community outreach worker for Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center*). In April 10, 1915 "Goldie," as every one calls her, was born in the farm country near Columbia, South Carolina. When she was five years old, Goldie and her parents and four brothers and five sisters moved to Salisbury, North Carolina. Her family was self-sufficient, growing their own vegetables, hogs, chickens, a cow and mules. Keeping up with feeding the animals, working in the garden, hauling water and helping with the washing didn't leave much time for play, but *Hide and Seek* and *Hop Scotch* were two of her favorite games she enjoyed playing with her brothers and sisters. Goldie was the youngest of ten children and is the only one still living. Her mother and father worked very hard and with careful planning were able to provide for this large family.

Karen Jocelyn, Goldie's mother, separated from Woodard Gibson, Goldie's father, of whom she remembers very little. Karen, was a wonderful cook and passed on to Goldie her recipes for collard greens and corn bread. Her mother also was an excellent seamstress and made quilts that she sold to make extra money to meet the family's needs. She was such an accomplished seamstress that she even made Goldie's basketball uniform without a pattern.

As the youngest daughter, Goldie rarely had new clothes as a child. Her clothes were handed down from her sisters, dyed and cut down to fit her. As Goldie got older, she learned to sew and became an accomplished seamstress herself. She still makes most of her own clothes.



Mrs. Goldie with Ms. Willie

Goldie's mother, Karen Jocelyn, died when she was 13. Her aunts, Nell & Estelle, brought Goldie to live in Albany at the age of 15, and she loves Albany since then. Goldie misses her aunts, who were also seamstresses. They made ties and slacks for people. Goldie lost touch with them. Mrs. Goldie expresses the love of hats and dressing up.

When Goldie went to school, she loved it. And every Friday she had a test. Goldie really enjoyed learning things. Goldie says **"I learned that you are like everybody and people are friends"**. Mrs. Crenshaw didn't go to college, her family couldn't afford it. Goldie started working when she attended high school during her spare time.

**"I learned that you
are like everybody
and people are
friends"**

- Goldie Crenshaw

Goldie married William Smith when she was 20 and had a son, William Smith, Jr. who died in the Army. Her only son was named William Smith in honor of his father; her son made the United States Army his career for 26 years. Goldie later re-married Johnny Crenshaw. She has two grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Goldie worked since she was a very young child, taking care of her cousin's babies, helping her mother do laundry for others to make extra money, and working in the garden. When she came to Albany as a teenager, Goldie did housework by the day or by the week and went to night school in the evening. As an adult, Goldie worked for 24 years at the Albany Woolen Mills, running two machines at once. After they closed the mill she went to work for William Press for three years and then worked for Tobin Packing Company for six years. At age 87, Goldie was still working; and she was an honored part-time employee, with perfect attendance and punctuality, for the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, where she opened the income tax returns. Now Goldie is temporarily staying at Livingston Hills Nursing Home, awaiting a placement in Albany where her friends and community care for this loving lady.

Goldie has belonged to the Macedonia Baptist Church since she was 15 years old. For 20 years she was president of the Ushers for her church, an honor as well as important responsibility. At the church suppers, Goldie is remembered for her collar greens. She still attends her church when members of her congregation give her a ride for Sunday's service.

In addition to the activities noted above, Goldie is a seamstress who makes beautiful clothing. She took sewing lessons and models her creations sometimes for the Annual Senior Fashion Show at Ida Yarbrough under the auspices of Senior Services of Albany. She loves to be active and is always ready to go where she's invited.

Goldie Crenshaw accepts life on life's terms and remains cheerful. When she lost everything in a fire she regrouped. When she broke her ankle she recovered. A few years ago her car caught fire and she just bought another.

When asked to describe herself, Goldie replied, **"I just try to be Goldie. I try to remember all the things I didn't have when I was young and just learn to accept things as they are."**

In Albany Goldie met Mrs. Annie Downs, they attended the same church for many years, Macedonia Baptist Church. They became close friends, going shopping together and visiting friends. Goldie went dancing after “a day’s work” (she did everything from cleaning, to sewing, to babysitting). As a little girl, Goldie loved to dance swing, jitterbug, the rock-n-roll and, of course Cha-cha. She tells me with a big friendly grin. Ms. Goldie Crenshaw is now a beloved member of the group *Dancing With Our Elders*, Albany Chapter, since 2007 and enjoys still the dancing music that makes her smile happily.

Goldie’s message to youth is to **“enjoy yourself”** and **“rest because you only live once.”** Mrs. Goldie misses her mother, who was a special person to her.
Thank you Mrs. Goldie, you are a gift and talented woman to this community.

“I try to remember all the things I didn’t have when I was young and just learn to accept things as they are.”

- Goldie Crenshaw

“We Shall Overcome” (continued from page 1)

You know what you’re supposed to do to stay healthy and live long: eat well, exercise regularly and stay away from smoking and excessive drinking. These behaviors require dedication and self-discipline.

People who are optimistic are better able to stick to good behaviors because they know that good habits are the result of smart choices they make. People who don’t have an optimistic outlook are likely to take a more passive approach to health. They may believe that they have no control over their weight or diet so they don’t make the effort to practice good health habits.

When faced with a health crises, optimists adapt and recover quickly because they actively participate in their treatment and recovery. They believe actions directly contribute to improve health.

Finally, optimists do not feel the sense of hopelessness so typical of pessimists. As a result, optimists experience less stress and less depression overall.

“Put On a Happy Face”

To stay optimistic as you age or to create an optimistic point of view, take these steps:

Realize that setbacks are a part of life

No one can escape hard times. When you find yourself in a stressful situation, tell yourself that time passes. There can’t be valleys without peaks. Look for the next peak.

Visualize a positive outcome

The movie “Field of Dreams” taught us “If you build it, they will come.” The same can apply to health. If you aim for the best outcome, your actions will likely follow.

Reject negative messages about aging

Media and advertising would have us believe the world is filled only with youth. Just because TV often depicts age as being equal to infirmity doesn’t mean you have to buy that message. Once you have spot these falsehoods, you’ll be lot less susceptible to them.”

Find examples of people who have aged gracefully

Paul Newman didn't let age slow him down. He's was still racing cars at age 80 and was running a food company. Martha Stewart, at age 64 is busier and more successful than ever, with an empire that includes magazines, TV and products. Picture them the next time you think your age is a roadblock to an accomplishment.

Develop a strong social network

Friends play a key role in helping you through any crises, health or otherwise. Your network can also include counselors and support groups. Even optimists need help sometimes.

If you dread the thought of growing old, work now to change your perceptions and develop a more optimistic outlook. It may lead to a healthier, longer life.

Wisdom of the Ages

A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with certain set of attitudes - *Hugh Downs, 85*

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope or confidence -

- *Helen Keller, 88*

A man is happy so long as he chooses to be happy - *Alexander Solzhenitsyn, 88*

Joy to be fruitful has to be shared - *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

We must remember that love begins at home and we must also know that the future of humanity passes through the family.

Because of the great love for the elders, dedication and handwork of Mr. Carlos Osorio, dance instructor, the program is a big success. Thank you, hermanito (young brother). My deepest appreciation and gratitude for the undying support and enthusiasm of our CEO, Harris Oberlander.

Eva Madigan, Assistant Editor

**“Optimism is the faith
that leads to
achievement”**

– Helen Keller, 88

What's Happening...

To all Seniors

- From the **Center for Excellence in Aging Services** To prevent financial abuse to the elderly or to report a case you can call your local police precinct, a social worker, or the **Center at 591-8772.**
- **The Federal Citizen Information Center** offers free information to older Americans; call toll-free **(888) 878-3256,**
- For **Medicare information** contact **(800) MEDICARE** - 24/7 English/Spanish
- **Elder Care Program.** Caregivers caring for elderly loved ones. 3rd Wednesday of the month 6-7 pm. Albany Public Library. RSVP Mary Moller 447-2001x47
- **FREE Medical Services** for Uninsured-All services are FREE.Wednesdays from 6:30 - 8:30 pm POVERELLO CENTER, 315 Sheridan Avenue, Albany, NY Tel: 426-9428
- **FREE Cancer Screenings!** 518-454-4044
- **Free Legal Help** The Legal Project at 435-1770
- \$\$\$ For Home Repairs \$\$\$ **Financial assistance for senior home owners.** Call 436-8777
- For your Real Estate needs call: Quality City Homes, **Peter Alphonso at 701-8790**
Vita Tax. Help with your 2008 taxes at Trinity on Tues. & Thurs. Contact Benna.

Our Birthday Celebration

DWOE celebrates your birthdays one a month.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

Ellen Russell	Jan. 5
Elizabeth Claudio	Jan. 7
Pat Ryan	Jan 16
Deborah Arrington	Jan. 18
Matilde Obidos	Jan. 26
Gwen Logan	Jan. 28
Bob Perry	Feb. 17
Joyce Wethers	Feb. 17
Anne Marie Clark-Small	Feb. 22
Gloria Hill	Feb. 26
Barbara Ercole	Mar. 5
Bernice Frazier	Mar. 21
Joan Gilkes	Mar. 31

Elders on the News

Alene Sherman & Shirley Bristol met with Congressman Paul Tonko (CD 21) They delivered 4700 "Divided We Fail" pledges to Washington to take care of Social Security, health care & financial issues...

Mrs. Sherman & Mrs. Bristol have become public figures for all their TV appearances in the news with issues for our seniors. Thank you for all the work you guys do.

In February West View Towers received our group for Latin dance celebration. We had a good time, they are still talking about our performance. In the mean time, DWOE group is preparing for the summer and fall performances.

From Grandma's Kitchen: Ambrosia (Heaven's Fruit Salad)

Key points

Handle the mixture of fruits and cream with gentleness so that it retains the creamy/smoothness.

Ingredients: For 25 people

- 1 big container (6 lb. 10 oz. container) of tropical mixed fruits about 8 cups
- 1 cup of condensed milk
- 1 bar Philadelphia cream cheese
- 1 small container of heavy cream
- 1 pocket of crème of coconut

Directions:

Drain tropical fruits.

Whip milk, cream cheese and heavy cream until steep

Dissolve crème of coconut in hot water, whip until creamy, yellow and cool

Then add the fruits and the mixture.

Refrigerate before serving.

Family Recipes are a Treasure Not Found in Books.

FAMILY RECIPES ONLY to: Carlos Osorio, c/o Trinity Institution- 15 Trinity Place. Albany, NY 12202

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS, YOU, THE COMMUNITY

Eva Madigan spearheaded "Dance with Our Elders" program on May 2006.

Her Vision: a golden bridge to reach out to seniors.

- **Ms. Eva Madigan for arduous support and Fundraising Efforts.**
- **Charity Cea & Family:** Sol Cea-Perez, Ly Cea. Sister Rita Angela, Francis, Lawrence & Sam
- **Dr. Sol Cea-Perez & Dr. Christy Estrada** for AMAZING NEW COSTUMES.
- **St. Louis University, MI** for DWOE II at Arbor Hill Community Center Bi-weekly class.
- **Estella's Deli**, great Italian American food. * **Trinity Institution CEO and staff.**
- **Benita Zahn**, Your Health Beat Channel 13 News. * **Rentokil Pest Control Services**
- **Well Care Health Plans of New York, Inc.** * **Meadow Brook Dairy Farms.** Clarksville, NY
- **HANNAFORD SUPERMARKETS.** Amy White & Tara Morgan, Community Relations Specialist.
- **"Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables" Nutrition program** funded by NYS DOH and USDA.

**Dancing With Our Elders program is supported in part by
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TRINITY – JUNE 2009 - CALENDAR

ALL EVENTS FREE OF CHARGE AT 15 TRINITY PLACE, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12202
REGISTER BY CALLING 449-5155, ASK FOR **BENNA AT EXT. 127**

MONDAYS

FITNESS WALK	8-9AM	GYM
LIVING HEALTHY WORKSHOPS	9:30AM-NOON	FNRC
READY, SET, WORK	10 AM-NOON	CONF. RM.
TARGET ANGER MANAGEMENT (KIDS 10-18 YRS.)	3:30-5PM	CONF. RM.
ANGER MANAGEMENT	6-7:30PM	CONF. RM.
OPEN HOUSE FOR TEENS	6-9PM	GYM

TUESDAYS

FITNESS WALK	8-9AM	GYM
THINKING FOR CHANGE	9-11AM	CONF.RM.
FINANCIAL LITERACY RM.	12-2 PM	CONF.
BIKE REPAIR	6-8 PM	BSMT
OPEN HOUSE FOR TEENS	6-9PM	GYM

WEDNESDAYS

FITNESS WALK	8-9AM	GYM
THINKING FOR CHANGE	9-11 AM	CONF. RM.
PARENTING CLASS (LEAP PROGRAM)	12:15-1:30 PM	CONF. RM.
DANCING WITH OUR ELDERS	2 PM	LOUNGE/2 fl
GED	4 -6 PM	CONF. RM.
COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD (CAB)	5:30-7:30PM	CONF. RM.
BIKE REPAIR	6-8PM	BASEMENT
OPEN HOUSE FOR TEENS	6-9PM	GYM

THURSDAYS

FITNESS WALK	8-9AM	GYM
READY, SET, WORK	10 AM-NOON	CONF. RM.
DANCING WITH OUR ELDERS at AHCC (6/11, 6/25, 7/9, 7/23)	1 – 2 PM	1ST FL.
TARGET YOUTH PEER GROUP	3:30-5PM	CONF. RM.
GED	6-8 PM	CONF. RM.
ROOTS – REENTRY OPPORTUNITIES & ORIENTATION		
TOWARDS SUCCESS (6/25)	6-8PM	LOUNGE
RETENTION COUNTS (6/4)	6-8 PM	LOUNGE
OPEN HOUSE FOR TEENS	6-9PM	GYM

FRIDAYS

FITNESS WALK	8-9AM	GYM
MASS FOOD DISTRIBUTION (6/5)	10 AM	OUTSIDE
KNITTERS & CROCHETERS POETRY CLUB	9:30-11AM	FNRC
FREE BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENING	10-12 PM	FNRC
FREE BLOOD SCREENING (6/5)	9AM-NOON	FNRC
FABULOUS FRIDAY (6/5)	10:30-12NOON	FNRC
OPEN HOUSE FOR TEENS	6-9PM	GYM

SATURDAYS

GOLF FOR KIDS	3:30-5:30 PM	GYM
CSI	1-5 PM	RM OFF GYM
FREE CAPOEIRA CLASSES	1:30-5 PM	LOUNGE

*“enjoy
yourself... you
only live once”
- Goldie
Crenshaw*

Dancing With Our Elders DWOE
c/o Trinity Institution-Homer Perkins Center
15 Trinity Place
Albany, NY 12202

AFFIX
US Postage here.



DWOE program is FREE for seniors
Sponsored by Albany County Dept. For
Aging
Weekly WEDNESDAYS at 2 pm.
Bi-weekly THURSDAYS at 1 pm.
Thanks to your generous donations.

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Your donations are tax deductible.
Send your donations, recipes, and comments to
the above address

Editor
Carlos Osorio (845) 679-270
Assistant Editor Eva Madigan
(518) 449-5155 ext. 110