

CAREConnections

Information and Inspiration for Caregivers

A Publication of Boulder County Area Agency on Aging

Jan/Feb 2018

INSIDE

1

Dealing with a Loved One's
Things After Their Death

4

How a Senior Move
Manager Can Help

5

The Treasures We Kept

7

Visit with a Caregiver

8

Should My Parent Move In?

10

Mom's Room

11

Community Resources

13

Making It Home

Creating Natural Balance

Dear Caregiver,

Each of our lives is filled with “stuff.” We work hard to earn the money to buy stuff, we spend lots of time taking care of our stuff, we get tired of our old stuff and long for new stuff, and, eventually, we or our loved ones have to figure out what to do with our stuff. This issue is all about dealing with a loved one's things, whether our loved one needs to reduce the clutter in their present home, must downsize for a move to another home, or has passed away and left their stuff behind—as we all must, eventually.

The articles inside look at the things of our lives from many different perspectives: getting rid of it, finding a new home for it, choosing what to treasure of it, creating a healing environment with it, and more. We hope you'll find something that's helpful to you.

The Editors

Dealing with a Loved One's Things After Their Death

by Barbra Cohn

I confess. I am attached to my material possessions. It's very important to me that I live in a beautiful environment and that means being surrounded by beautiful things. I have had the good fortune to inherit lovely things from my deceased in-laws. Their various art collections grace my walls, and I enjoy them. But, actually, at this stage in my life I would prefer to live more simply in a small, uncluttered home where I don't need an alarm system to provide peace of mind that my beautiful things will be forever guarded and safe.

Now that my mother has passed away I have more beautiful things. But this time around, as I weathered the storms of her many health crises I was able to think about the things I would like to keep and visualize what it would actually be like to clear out her apartment. I contemplated the reality of having to face the thankless task of going through her drawers and disposing of her most intimate things: eyeglasses, hearing aids, medications, bras, and underwear. I think this exercise helped me to get through the actual tasks required after a loved one dies.





CAREConnections

is published six times a year by Boulder County Area Agency on Aging (BCAAA). To subscribe or respond to articles, contact:

Care Connections

Boulder County Area Agency
on Aging

P. O. Box 471

Boulder, CO 80306

303-678-6116 (ph)

303-678-6285 (fax)

InfoCaregiver@bouldercounty.org

Care Connections is offered free to residents of Boulder County, though donations are gratefully accepted. Agencies, businesses, and professionals are encouraged to donate to *Care Connections* in an effort to keep it available at no cost to caregivers. Subscriptions to addresses outside of Boulder County may be obtained by a one-time donation of \$10.00.

Care Connections is supported in large part by the ads of local agencies and businesses. For information on advertising, call 303-678-6116. Ads, while appreciated, do not constitute specific endorsement by Boulder County Area Agency on Aging.

Editorial Advisory Committee

Barbra Cohn

Susan Damon

Juliette Jonjak Kershner

Lynn Malkinson

Kari Middleton

Jessica O'Leary

Kelli Squire

Sara Thompson

Gemma Wilson

Newsletter Design

Carol Banks Design, LLC

Louisville, Colorado

Reproduction of *Care Connections* articles is permitted with credit to Boulder County Area Agency on Aging.

Creating a safe space for family

I invited my adult children, my brother's wife and their daughters, my mother's sister and husband, and a few cousins to my mother's apartment the day after she was buried. Since everyone lived at least a thousand miles away, the "farewell party" had to be expedient. Most people were flying home that afternoon.

I asked everyone to browse through the things I had laid out on the couch and the many items, including a collection of paperweights and Lladro figurines, that were displayed in two large glass showcases. Next, we took turns choosing what we would like to take home as a remembrance of our mother, sister, grandmother, and cousin. It worked beautifully because my mother's family happens to be one of the most "normal" families I know. No one fights, everyone gets along—usually. And that's how it went without petty arguing or bickering.

But my mother had a will in which she specifically indicated that I, the only daughter, was to inherit her jewelry. A couple years before she passed, we went through her jewelry together and picked out pieces for her granddaughters and daughter-in-law. And then I found four small pinky-size rings with various precious stones that were perfect for her four little great granddaughters. The will made this task easy.

Many years ago, when my mother-in-law died, it wasn't as easy. One family member got greedy, which led to some bitter feelings. The key is to make a plan ahead of time. Encourage your loved ones to designate in a will who they want to inherit valuable and sentimental items.

Here are 10 tips for making a difficult, emotional process a little easier:

- Consider how much time you have. Do you need to vacate the apartment or house in one week or one year? Personally, I am glad that I had a time limit of one week. Even though the job was exhausting, I'm glad to have it behind me. Dragging it out month after month would seem to me to be even more exhausting, both physically and emotionally.
- Get help! My aunt, her daughter, and my partner, who stayed with me for the entire week, helped tremendously. I could not have done it without them. After everyone pulled out the items they wanted, it was easy for my helpers to go through things and deter-

mine if they could be sold or if they should be donated.

- Find a non-profit agency such as Goodwill to pick up a truckload of furniture. I was shocked when several very nice pieces of furniture were rejected because of a stain or slight crack. These non-profit groups have become very picky, so be sure to ask on the phone if they will accept imperfect furniture pieces. Set a time for pick-up and ask if the items need to be disassembled first.
- Bring miscellaneous items such as pots and pans, dishes, and books directly to a non-profit organization in order to clear the space for when the bigger items are picked up, if you have the time and energy.
- Nursing homes and continuum care facilities sometimes have a “store” on the premises that accepts used items. They often are eager to accept artwork and medical supplies such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, etc. If not, give these to someone in need. You might even find a neighbor on the same floor as where your loved one lived.
- Take photos of photos to save money and space. My parents kept dozens of photo albums from their many trips. I shipped home some albums that included family life cycle events and gatherings. My brother, however, wanted all the travel albums. Instead of spending a fortune on shipping heavy albums, I removed the photos and put them in shoe boxes. My daughter took photos of the special family photos to archive.
- Keep important papers: insurance policies, birth certificates, car titles, etc.
- Don't stop and read every letter or card that you ever sent your loved one. Box them up and bring them home to read when you aren't as emotional.

- Do not flush medications down the toilet! They get into the water supply. Boulder County's website says: Pour liquid medications over cat litter or other absorbent material, and seal it in a plastic bag before placing it in the trash. Fill pill containers with household glue, remove all personal information from the container, and place it in the trash after the glue has dried. Cut trans-dermal patches into small strips, place them in a container, and add glue or mix them with coffee grounds or used cat litter. Or, better yet, discard unneeded medications at an official take-back site.
- Don't feel guilty about getting rid of stuff. The objects meant a lot to your loved one. But your memories are not contained in the favorite necklace your dad gave to your mom. Your dad's favorite golf clubs that he won several trophies with don't hold the same meaning for you. Your spouse's slippers are old and ratty, and it's time to get rid of them. As we reminisce and go through our loved one's material possessions, it is a good time to start downsizing our household and to think about our own mortality and how we want to live the rest of our life. The memories of celebrating your loved one's life will always be held close to your heart. As you go through their items, remember the saying “You can't take it with you.” It might just help, at least a little.

Barbra Cohn is a former caregiver, a professional writer, author of Calmer Waters: The Caregiver's Journey through Alzheimer's & Dementia, and a member of the Care Connections Editorial Advisory Committee.



How a Senior Move Manager Can Help

by Kelli Squire

Whether your loved one wants to age in place but needs help with decluttering and organizing, is ready to move to a new home, or has passed away, the situation can present tasks that feel intimidating and draining. In any of these situations, there's a house full of "stuff" to deal with. What do you do? Where do you start? Do you have the time to take this on yourself—or does someone else in your family? And are you prepared to take on a monumental job that can be emotionally overwhelming?

A few years ago, my sister, my daughter, and I had to face these same daunting questions. My mother had lived in Arizona for a number of years and in the process had collected more than her share of "stuff." After she lost her long battle with an illness, we decided to take on the task of moving and cleaning out her belongings from her home. Moving my mother's things was difficult beyond words. The painstaking process of going through her belongings and figuring out what to keep, what not to keep, what was junk, and what should be donated was tedious and heartbreaking. It took us days to work through the things she had collected. I can honestly say that trying to manage the grief of her loss while sorting through her belongings made it difficult to make the right decisions. We ended up shipping to Colorado some of her "stuff" that wasn't of sentimental value just because we couldn't bear to part with it at the time. It was an expensive choice, to say the least.

Fast forward several years and we were met with the same questions once again. My mother-in-law had lived in Georgia for a good portion of her life, but after being diagnosed with dementia it was time for her to move to Colorado to be closer to her family. Moving her here was hard enough,

but then we had to move her again when the first assisted living community wasn't the best fit for her. So there we were, facing another difficult move with little time to make it happen. My husband and I needed help! Instead of taking on the challenge ourselves (we were practically experts by then), we hired a Senior Move Manager, and it was the best thing we could have done.

Initially, the Senior Move Manager sat down with us and listened to our needs in order to develop a personalized plan for us. They coordinated everything. On the day of the move, the senior movers arrived to pack all of my mother-in-law's belongings after first taking detailed pictures of everything. The pictures allowed them to see how things were placed and organized in her current apartment so they could duplicate that placement in her new apartment. This helped ease some of my mother-in-law's anxiety and made the whole process smoother. When we arrived at her new apartment, everything was already done. In a matter of several hours the movers had professionally packed, unpacked, organized, put together furnishings, hung pictures, and connected electronics. My husband and I were able to completely focus our attention on helping my mother-in-law acclimate and adjust to her new surroundings. Working with the Senior Move Manager saved us time, gave us peace of mind, and allowed us to focus on what was most important.

Relocating a loved one is an emotional process that can be overwhelming for everyone involved. Logistically, it can be a nightmare if you don't give yourself the help you need. Seniors face two hurdles during the moving process: fear of the unknown and loss of control. Relocating is a major life transition for them. If there are the financial resources for hiring someone to help, it can give families more time to focus on helping

their loved ones through the process of relocating or downsizing their lives. A Senior Move Manager can help families work through the entire process and will handle all the details with planning and implementation. They specialize in organizing, downsizing and packing up belongings, whether it's the setup of a new home, "right-sizing" and decluttering of an existing home, or coordinating services such as cleaning, waste removal, and preparation for the sale of a home.

Senior Move Managers act as a third party to help ease the emotional decisions that need to be made. Of course, seniors are attached to their belongings, and it can be hard to let go of objects associated with memories. Having a third party who understands the emotions involved in these situations can provide objective guidance that helps simplify decisions and offers relief to family members as well. A Senior Move Manager can help determine a plan of attack for moving forward in the process.

A Senior Move Manager can help with these services:

- Organizing, sorting, and downsizing
- Creating customized floor plans for the new home
- Arranging auctions, estate sales, donations, and disposal of items
- Scheduling and overseeing of movers
- Shipping or storage of property
- Professional packing
- Unpacking and new home setup
- Cleaning and waste removal
- Hiring of realtor and preparation for home to be sold

The cost of working with a Senior Move Manager varies depending on the services provided. Most offer a free consultation so you can determine the needed services and cost. You can find

a reputable Senior Move Manager in your area by visiting The National Association of Senior Move Managers (NASMM) website: <https://www.nasmm.org>. Be sure to ask for references and arrange for an initial consultation to see if their services meet your needs.

Kelli Squire, a certified care manager and dementia support specialist, is owner of About Time Senior Solutions and is a member of the Care Connections Editorial Advisory Committee.

The Treasures We Kept



In preparation for this issue on dealing with a loved one's things, several members of our Editorial Advisory Committee wrote about an item that they chose to keep after their parent or other loved one passed—and why it was special. Here are their stories:

Many years ago I bought my father a wicker basket. I told him, "This is for tomatoes. It's a tomato basket". After he died and after my mother moved to Boulder, I was poking around her condo and found the basket. She was using it for something or other, not tomatoes. When she died, I took the basket home and didn't use it for tomatoes. But it's still my father's tomato basket.
—Lynn Malkinson

A hand-painted sugar bowl, creamer, and salt shaker are my most treasured possessions from my late grandmother. They are not fancy, just heavy clear glass, painted with a simple flower design on one side. But they were everyday items in my grandparents' small farmhouse, always present and being used (the pepper shaker had been broken somewhere along the way). By the time my mother and her five siblings sorted through Grandma's modest possessions after her death, what was left to the 17 grandkids was fairly insignificant, so I was thrilled to claim these three



little items. Many years later, I still look at them and smile, remembering my dearly loved grandmother and sunny summer days spent down on the farm. – *Susan Damon*

Of course, I kept the recipe boxes that contain the directions for the foods my mother loved and made for us: noodle kugel, apple pie, Mandelbrot, eggplant Parmesan, and sour cream coffee cake. When I look at her handwritten recipe cards I can almost feel her gentle touch. What is it about someone's handwriting that seems to reach out and explain exactly how they feel at the moment they wrote the line? If the curve of a letter such as B or C swings too far to the right the person is said to be very generous. If the letters are straight and stiff and lean toward the left, the person is supposedly self-centered. My mother's handwriting speaks to me of kindness and femininity, and I find myself luxuriating in her handwritten notes until my eyes well up with longing for her or even for just a taste of her eggplant or the banging of her pots in the kitchen. When I was clearing out my mother's apartment this past August, a mint green, cotton button-down shirt with three-quarter length sleeves begged me to take it home. It looks like my mother in her younger years when she was passionately interested in health matters. Mom was one of the first New Age people to juice carrots, eat granola, and take nutritional supplements, and she was overly interested in her friends' and family members' health issues. It made perfect sense. She loved the color green, the color associated with health. And green perfectly highlighted her green cat eyes, dark brown hair, and fair complexion. The cotton green shirt is crumpled now. It rests in the ironing basket where it will stay until I'm able to caress it, iron the wrinkles out, and hang it in a place where I can look at it without weeping for my mother. The green shirt will hide in the bottom of the basket under clothes eager to be worn, until I am

ready to wrap myself in it and feel comfort, not the grief that accompanies the inexplicable feeling that a daughter feels when she has lost her first friend, her best cheerleader, and her devoted goddess who implored the moon and stars to enchant her girl's life. When I finally iron the green shirt, it will hang limply reminding me of the voice that I can hear as clearly as if my mother were standing next to me, reminding me of who I am and where I came from. – *Barbra Cohn*

My mother's Kansas home was filled with china, quilts, and other lovely things passed down to her by her mother, mother-in-law, and sisters. I used to sit with her on the living room couch as I pulled out one piece after another and asked about its story—its provenance. Mom loved telling me about these treasures, and remembering how they came to her often reminded her of other stories that kept us entertained for hours. My favorite piece, one of the few that I chose to keep after Mom died, was her hot chocolate pot: a simple white teapot, with straight lines, covered with Delph-blue irises, that my grandmother used to serve hot chocolate to Mom and her friends when they were small. Though I never knew my grandmother (she died long before I was born), I heard about her talent for making ordinary things seem special, and I can imagine how much my mother and her little friends must have enjoyed this elegant treat. I've never used the pot (to serve hot chocolate to little girls or big), but I know it was Mom's favorite thing, and it pleases me to see it in my cupboard and to remember the time we spent talking about her treasures and her dear mother. It feels like a gift both from my mother and my grandmother; a piece that connects us all together. – *Emily Cooper*

VISIT WITH A CAREGIVER

Peggy Arnold has spent many hours in the last five years working with her siblings to respectfully deal with their deceased father's things. A well-known and prolific artist, he left behind not only the usual collection of "stuff," but also a studio packed with his artwork and materials related to his work.

Care Connections: Peggy, I understand that your family has been working since your artist father's death in 2012 on what to do with the contents of his studio. Disposition of physical items after a death is often a chore families inherit. Can you tell us a little about your father and some aspects of this process that are unique to him, as an artist, and perhaps also common to many of us?

Peggy: Sure. Paul Arnold was a professor of studio art and art history at Oberlin College [in Ohio] for nearly 45 years. In 1962, he spent part of a sabbatical in Japan studying Japanese woodblock printmaking with Toshi Yoshida, a master printer. As Dad later said, he was "hooked," and he passionately pursued the technique for the rest of his life. He and our mother raised four children. He was beloved by his family, his colleagues, and the community of Oberlin.

CC: I understand that most of your focus since his death has been with his art.

Peggy: Yes, his art is the tangible part of his legacy and lives on. His studio housed hundreds of woodblocks used in printmaking, as well as the prints themselves. We eventually secured a permanent storage space and have worked hard at photographing and cataloging everything, but are still trying to figure out a grand plan for dealing with all the art. We also unearthed about 150 watercolors we thought had been destroyed in a flood. Some of the prints are in galleries and art

museums, and one is in the Library of Congress, but there is much more to consider.

After Dad died and we began to explore his "cave," we came upon clues about the life he lived independently of us. We found simple things like old Christmas ornaments, hidden compartments, notes from other artists, letters from relatives. Things that revealed the force of his being and the range of his activities and influence.

CC: It seems we may discover, after a death, things about our closest relatives and friends we weren't privy to. We naturally continue to learn about someone after they're gone.

Peggy: Yes. We entered his studio just as he left it. He fully expected to return, but his health declined rapidly and he never did, so we kept finding things that seemed frozen in time, like archeologists exploring Pompeii. Since the studio was his retreat from the world, it was full of clues that filled out our picture of him. We knew our father as a father, but this was his other life, about which we were only vaguely aware.

CC: Did you find anything that surprised or shocked you?

Peggy: Well, the hidden book shelf certainly did, but, for the most part, everything we found supported our experience of him and, if anything, taught us how much people loved him and how deeply he had affected the lives of his students, friends, and colleagues. The experience has also made me think of my own life and those people who will eventually deal with my stuff. I am about to redo my will, so I'm giving more thought to my own legacy, and I realize there are both things that I want to share and others that I'd rather remain private. I need to deal with that!



CC: Very interesting. I'll have to think about that myself. Did your father give the family any guidance about handling his art?

Peggy: About the woodblocks, he jokingly said, "Just burn them all—have a big bonfire." Otherwise, he wanted the family to decide how to divvy up the prints and everything else.

CC: How did that go?

Peggy: Well, the personal items weren't really a problem. We all got together and picked out things we wanted, one at a time, and drew straws if two or more of us wanted the same thing.

CC: Sounds easy. How have the four siblings handled the disposition of the art, which I gather is the heart of your father's legacy?

Peggy: As you might expect, each of us plays out the roles we assumed all our lives; nothing is new in how we relate to each other and in the way we related to our father. I'm the oldest and worked most closely with the art while Dad was alive, as well as writing his life story, so we were in constant communication about that. But I live far away, so my brother, a lawyer and the only son, has heroically born the brunt of the organizational side of the project, and it's monumental. Dad also wanted his other two daughters to be involved and consulted about decisions. That's another story.

CC: Can you say any more about the ongoing relations among your siblings?

Peggy: We're in contact while we work on this project, but the relationships are complicated and now involve other generations, so I can't predict what that will look like down the road. You can imagine the alliances, affections, personality differences, old wounds, triumphs, and competitions that will continue to play out in the future. I've always been the mediator, but I think this is bigger than all of us and only time will tell.

CC: Thanks for your time, Peggy. Your situation is unique because your father left behind physical things of value that had to be dealt with; you called this his tangible legacy, his legacy as an artist. At the same time, your story is familiar, even universal, because he was a man embedded in a family with all the complex emotional history that that implies. I suppose this could be seen as his legacy as an ordinary man.

This interview was conducted by Lynn Malkinson, a member of the Care Connections Editorial Advisory Committee.

Should My Parent Move In?

by Sharon Esposito

When your parent becomes ill or can no longer live alone, the question of where they should live and whether they should move in with you naturally arises. After all, your parent took care of you, fed you, bathed you, nursed you through illness, and was always there when you needed them. Isn't it reasonable that at some level you would want to give back to them the care they gave to you? There can be other factors, such as financial concerns or pressure from family members, including your parents themselves, which may make you consider having them move in with you. While this arrangement may work very well for some people, it is not for everyone. It is a serious commitment, and one that should be undertaken only with much forethought and planning.

Start with an open and honest discussion with all the individuals involved. Talk honestly with everyone about the issues, your concerns, your desires, and the positives and negatives, and try to sort out what you want or wish you could do versus what you realistically can do.

(continued on page 9)



Our Advertisers

Thanks to the agencies and businesses that help support Care Connections with their advertisements. For information on joining them, please call 303-678-6116 or email InfoCaregiver@bouldercounty.org.

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

starts at Life Care Center of Longmont.

Post-acute Skilled Nursing & Rehab
balance programs | surgery aftercare
on-site physician services



**Life
Care
Center**
of Longmont
303.776.5000
2451 Pratt St.
LCCA.com

66617

The care you
need
to live in the
home you
love.



TRU

PACE

Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly

- Coordinated healthcare services & support
- Day program, social activities, physical therapy
- A Medicare and/or Medicaid funded program
- Serving seniors 55+ in Boulder & southwest Weld Counties who need nursing-home-level care

Call now to see if TRU PACE
is right for you!

844.350.PACE (7223) or 303.665.0115
or visit pace.trucare.org



Creating connections.
Honoring lives.
Embracing possibilities.

Boulder's only accredited continuing care
retirement community.

FRASIER

350 Ponca Place | Boulder, Colorado
303-499-4888 | FrasierMeadows.org



SENIOR INDEPENDENT & ASSISTED LIVING

Hover Manor
1401 Elmhurst Drive
Longmont, CO 80503

Beatrice Hover Assisted Living
1380 Charles Drive
Longmont, CO 80503

www.hovercommunity.org

(303) 772-9292

Are you a caregiver
looking for resources?

The Colorado Respite Coalition can help.

*Respite for you
= better care for
your loved one*



COLORADO RESPITE COALITION
www.coloradospitecoalition.org

Visit our website to learn more about:

- Care providers in your area
- Family, financial and community resources
- Local support groups and upcoming events
- Trainings and educational resources

Be Vibrant. Be You.



Reserve your space today!

Assisted Living & Memory Care in Lafayette, CO

(303)440-6050 | www.thepeaksatoldlaramietrail.com

Loving Family Home Care

Dignity Care LLC

303.444.4040 • www.dignitycare.com

Locally Owned & Operated Since 1997

Licensed Medical Private Pay Agency
Nursing • CNA • Companion Care

The Kapsak Law Firm, LLC

You need a plan. We can help. Contact
our office for assistance with:

- Estate Planning
- Wills and Trusts
- Powers of Attorney
- Medicaid Planning
- Estate and Trust Administration
- Guardianships and Conservatorships
- Disability Planning

Tel.: 303-651-9330

Www.Kapsaklaw.com

info@kapsaklaw.com



The Rev. Deborah Hanson, Deacon, RN
Administrator/Owner/Operator

Office 720-537-9355 | Direct 720-606-1113 | Fax 720-242-9984
deborah@landmarkmemorycare.com

1744 S. Public Rd, Lafayette, CO 80026
www.LandmarkMemoryCare.com

A Day Place ADULT DAY CARE PROGRAM

Engaging social, cognitive, creative, &
physical activities for adults and seniors

AVAILABLE WEEKDAYS:

9:30am – 3pm + extended hours, *Includes lunch and snacks*

.....
INQUIRE AT:

303-435-9948 OR adayplace2017@gmail.com
803 3rd Ave. Longmont



Ellen Knapp MA, LPC, CSA
Geriatric Care Manager • 18 Years Experience

- Caregiver support and coaching
- Medical care management and advocacy
- Assistance with daily activities

Call for a free phone consultation.

720-217-9614 • ellenknapp.com • ellen@ellenknapp.com

Hudson Integrative
Aging In Place and Transition Services

HudsonIntegrative.com 303.442.6444

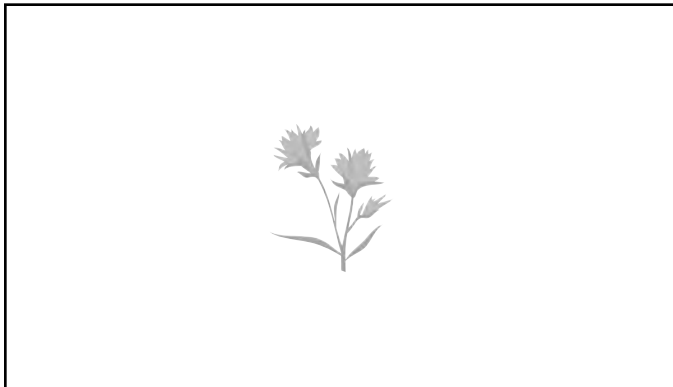
Not all memory loss is the same.



If you have questions, please call our 24/7 Helpline.

800.272.3900

alzheimer's  association



Helping Hands. Compassionate Care.
Find solutions in our four Boulder County communities.

Take comfort that help is within reach at Brookdale. Dedicated to supporting family caregivers, we're here to make life easier through our exceptional blend of hospitality, service and care. Call a community near you to learn more.

Brookdale Longmont Assisted Living (303) 682-1066	Brookdale North Boulder Independent Living (303) 444-0200
Brookdale Boulder Creek Assisted Living (303) 473-0333	The Meridian Boulder Independent Living (303) 494-3900

 **BROOKDALE**
SENIOR LIVING SOLUTIONS
ALL THE PLACES LIFE CAN GO™



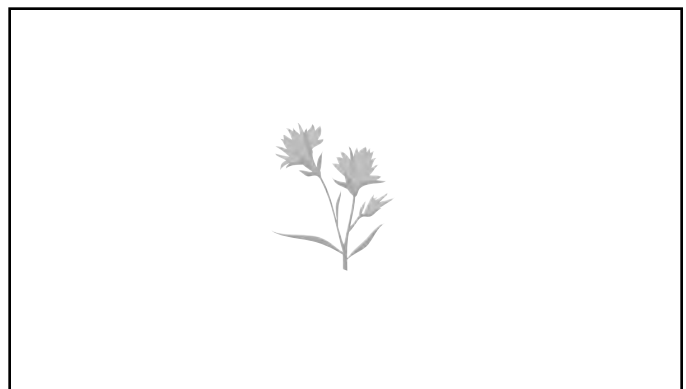
The Aging Services Foundation of Boulder County proudly helps to produce this publication.

In 2016, the ASF contributed over \$100,000 toward services for older adults and family caregivers in our community.

With your support, we build a community in which everyone can age well.

Pledge your support today
www.AgingFoundation.org





- Medicaid Planning
- Guardianships & Conservatorships
- Wills & Trusts / Special Needs
- Probate Administration & Litigation

 **Brandon Fields PC.**

Elder Law, Estate & Special Needs Planning



303-449-5602
brandon@elderlawboulder.com
1510 28th St., Suite 205, Boulder, CO 80303
www.elderlawboulder.com



Care Link, Inc.



Adult Day Services

- Free Assessment & Trial Visit
- Meals & Snacks
- Fun Structured Activities
- Medication Assistance
- Transportation Available
- Daily Exercise
- Daytime Care

3434 47th Street, Suite 100
Boulder, CO 80301

(303) 532 - 2477



AltaVita
SENIOR RESIDENCES

Independent, Assisted & Memory Care
(303) 300-3700



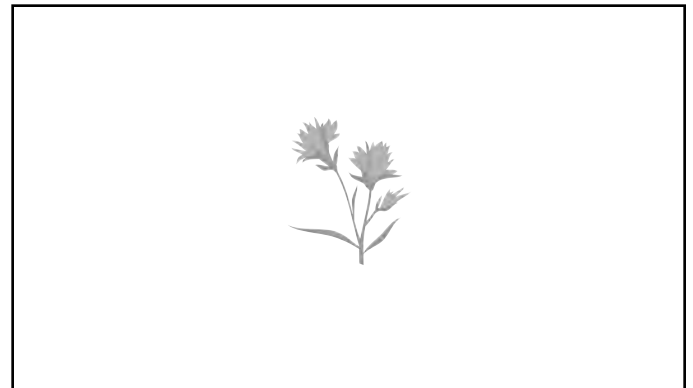
Honoring the
spirit
within

www.altavitaliving.com

Friends




of the
Longmont Senior Center




Follow your heart
Love where you live

GOLDEN WEST
Senior Living in Boulder



For over 50 years, Boulder nonprofit Golden West has provided quality housing with services for seniors.

303-444-3967 | gwboulder.org 

Let our family care for yours.

Homewatch CareGivers®

Serving Boulder, Longmont, Louisville & Lafayette since 1994

- Bonded & Insured
- Long-term office staff and care givers
- Meals, Meds, Light Housekeeping
- Errands, Companionship
- Respite Care, Alzheimer's, Disabled



303-444-1133
homewatchcaregivers.com/boulder

Vincent, Romeo & Rodriquez, LLC

- * Wills, Trusts & Probate
- * Medicaid Planning
- * Elder Law
- * Guardianships
- * Care Coordination
- * Probate Litigation
- * Disabled Child Plans
- * Conservatorships

Denver Metro
(303) 770-0673

Boulder County
(303) 604-6030

Visit our website at: www.Elderlawcolorado.com

Mesa Vista of Boulder

Long Term Skilled Nursing
Short Term Rehab

Secured Memory Care Unit
Secured Behavioral Unit

Please Contact Us Phone: (303) 442-4037
Fax: (303) 442-2348

IMMEDIATE AVAILABILITY



ASSISTED LIVING & MEMORY CARE

720.545.1575 575 Tantra Drive | Boulder



Songs of Faith

- ✓ 4 companion large print hymn books
- ✓ 2 sing-along CD's

90 Favorite songs for all Christians traditions
Lower keys ♦ Guitar chords ♦ Scripture readings
Big discounts for quantities

Visit: www.MusicByWoodSong.com

Call: 303 506 4897 ♦ Write: woodsong@aol.com

See *Songs of Faith* in all major activity catalogs

When you need
expert care at home



Boulder Community Health
HOMECARE

- Skilled Nurses and Therapists
- Home Health Aides
- Medicare Certified

CALL 303-441-0444

A service of Boulder Community Health, JCAHO Accredited



HomeCare of the Rockies Bringing the Best Care to Your Home

HomeCare of the Rockies provides quality, non-medical, in-home care, and something more -- peace of mind for you and your family.

- Licensed, bonded, insured
- Flexible schedules
- Trained caregivers, matched to your family's needs and preferences
- Post-hospitalization care
- Alzheimer's & dementia care specialists

HOMECARE
of the Rockies



720-204-6083

HomeCareoftheRockies.com



SYNERGY
HomeCare

The Most Trusted Name in Home Care

Companionship • Homemaking
Meal Preparation • Personal Care

Call for your FREE Care Assessment!

(720) 204-5788

www.synergyhomecare.com



Should My Parent Move In?

(continued from page 8)

One of the first things to consider is whether you and your parent will get along if you live together. The relationship between a parent and an adult child living apart often includes a degree of unresolved emotion and conflict, issues that may be somewhat hidden when the relationship involves only occasional visits. Conflicts are magnified when an adult child steps in to assist a parent requiring help and can be worsened when a parent moves in. Think about your relationship with your parent. Is your parent capable of respecting your privacy and understanding your authority in your own home? Can you respect their lifestyle and decisions? Will your parent understand and respect your relationship with your spouse and your children, without offering opinions when they disagree about something you are doing? How will this impact your life? Your spouse? Your children? It may be hard to honestly answer these questions without feelings of guilt or obligation; however, it is better to think through the issues beforehand in order to prepare yourself for difficult situations.

Be sure to get your parent's input. They may not admit that they need help. Step one may be to convince them that they can no longer live alone. They may prefer other arrangements than moving in with you if they are not willing to make the sacrifices needed to live together. When your thought process is complete, write down the sacrifices that you and your parents are willing to make, as well as the benefits you will get from your decisions. You may need to remind yourself of these in the future.

Once you've made the decision that you and your parent can get along together, consider if you have adequate space in your home to add a family member and their personal belongings. What

will the living conditions be? While it may seem simple that Mom or Dad could have the spare bedroom, consider that they will be moving from their own house or apartment into a much smaller living space. Is there adequate space for each of you to have privacy? Will you have separate bathrooms and living areas? Are there modifications that will need to be made to your home in order to meet your parent's needs? Are there safety risks that must be addressed? You must be both willing and financially able to make any necessary changes.

Finally, you must decide if you can realistically meet your parent's needs. How much care does your parent really need—not just today, but if and when they require more care in the future? Are you prepared to provide this care? Is your parent able to dress, bathe, take medications, and make meals independently? If you work, can your parent be left alone during the day? If not, are you willing either to adjust your work schedule to meet their daily needs or to hire a companion or home care agency to help? What about your parent's social needs? Does he or she have a social support system? Will they be sitting and watching television all day, waiting for you to come home? What will happen if your parent requires more care in the future? Have you developed a long-term plan of care? Remember that this decision may not be permanent. Now might be the time to think through the circumstances in which you might need to move your parent to the next level of care if and when it is necessary.

In the final analysis, it is clear that the decision to have Mom or Dad move in with you is a difficult one and requires a great deal of honest reflection and planning. If you have a good relationship with your parent, you stand to gain from caring for them during the later years of life. However, a loving and caring relationship between a parent



and child does not necessarily translate into blissful cohabitation.

Having a parent live with you can be a wonderful experience. If circumstances make this possible, it is a true gift and well worth the compromises and sacrifices that both sides will need to make. However, it's essential to do what you want to do because you think it is best for everyone involved, not because you think you should be a "good" child or because you will feel guilty if you don't. Remember that whatever decision you and your parent make together will be a positive one.

This article first appeared in the March/April 2005 issue. Sharon Esposito is owner of Action HealthCare Services, Inc., a care management agency in Longmont.

Mom's Room



by Kaelin Kelly

This is a sacred place
 A place of unveiling
 A place of transition
 Let all who enter here
 Hold respectful curiosity
 For the process unfolding

This is a private place
 Your room, your sanctuary
 A place where you can choose
 What you do
 Who comes in
 What surrounds you
 So much is out of your control now
 Respect for your wishes
 Is the least we can do

This is a peaceful place
 Though you don't always know it
 The angels visit
 And dance on your pillow
 Dad comes
 And holds you in his care
 Nana, Papa, your family who loved you
 Those who came before
 Whose heritage you carry
 They are here to bear witness
 To the journey you undertake
 That all present have traveled
 And know joyfully its ending

This is your room
 It will all end here
 Let all who enter
 Acknowledge the process
 And hold the respect
 For so much unknown

You walk alone today
 But each one will follow
 The path so inevitable
 We'll each have our own room
 Our dancing angels
 Our loving ancestors
 Our personal exit
 And hopefully that respect
 That allows us our journey
 To do it "my way"
 With witnessing and love

*From A Caregiver's Journey:
 Poetry by Kaelin Kelly*



COMMUNITY RESOURCES

This column provides information about events, classes, services, and other resources of interest to family caregivers in Boulder County. Please remember that it is each person's right and responsibility to research a service provider before taking action. See "Information and Assistance in Boulder County" on the back page for ways to learn more about these and other resources. (To share information about a resource for family caregivers, please email InfoCaregiver@bouldercounty.org or call 303-678-6116. The deadline for the March/April 2018 issue is January 24.)

AgeWell – Longmont United Hospital (Centura Health) holds **Advance Directives workshops**, about considering and clarifying one's wishes for end-of-life medical treatment, with program director Peggy Arnold, on Thursdays, January 11 or February 8, 9:30 – 11 a.m. (\$5 fee for Longmont residents, \$6 for non-residents); **A Neurologist Looks at Dementia/Alzheimer's**, with Pierre Pavot, D.O., neurologist with Colorado Institute for Neuromuscular & Neurological Disorders, on Thursday, January 25, 9:30 – 11 a.m. (free); and **The New Surgery Experience: Improved Results with Integrative Medicine**, about stress-reducing therapies that can assist in decreasing pain and improving healing time after surgery, on Thursday, February 22, 9:30 – 11 a.m. (free). All presentations are at Longmont Senior Center, 910 Longs Peak Avenue, Longmont. Pre-registration is required, at 303-651-8411.

Erie Community Center hosts an **Alzheimer's Association Support Group**, conducted by trained facilitators, for current/former caregivers, family, and friends of persons with dementia, on the first Thursday of each month, 4 – 5:30

p.m.; and **Living with Alzheimer's for Care Partners: Early Stage (3-part)**, about understanding the diagnosis of early-stage Alzheimer's/dementia and coping with the changes that come with it, on Thursdays, February 8, 15, and 22, 1:30 – 3 p.m. (free); all at Erie Community Center, 450 Powers Street, Erie. To register or for more information, call 303-813-1669.

Longmont Senior Center offers **Dementia: The Unexpected Journey**, about breaking the stigma of living with dementia and focusing on embracing one's new world in a positive way, for persons with dementia and family care partners, with Kelli Squire, Dementia Support Specialist, on Wednesday, January 3, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. (\$5 fee for Longmont residents, \$6 for non-residents); **Adjusting to Life's Changes Support Group**, about dealing with the feelings of loss that can come with life's changes such as retirement, caregiving, decreased independence, changes in abilities, and more, with Peer Counselor facilitators, on Thursdays, January 4 through February 22, 3:30 – 5 p.m. (free; register with Brandy Queen, at 303-651-8414); **Living with Alzheimer's: Successful Communication**, about creating opportunities for positive interaction by using effective communication techniques and observing and responding to different behaviors, presented by the Alzheimer's Association, on Tuesday, January 9, 3 – 4:30 p.m. (free); **Family and Care Partner Dementia Series: Understanding Changing Personalities, Behaviors, and Relationships (5-part)**, also with Kelli Squire, on Tuesdays, January 9 (The Four A's: Anger, Aggression, Anxiety, and Agitation), January 16 (No, They Aren't Crazy! Hallucinations, Delusions, and Paranoia), January 23 (Wandering Is a Human Need to Explore,

Discover, and Be Free), January 30 (This Is Not My Loved One: Exploring Relationship Changes), and February 6 (When Things Go Wrong, Go With It); all 9 – 10 a.m. (register for all sessions or individual ones; \$5 fee per session for Longmont residents, \$6 for non-residents); **Social Sign Language: Visual Communication for People with Hearing Loss**, about finding ways to replace or enhance spoken language with silent language using modified American Sign Language, for persons with hearing loss and friends and family, with Rebecca Herr, MA, on Thursdays, January 18 through March 8, 3:30 – 5 p.m. (free); **Mental Health First Aid for Older Adults (2-part)**, a public education program that looks at the risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in older adults, promotes early intervention, and teaches how to help an older adult in a mental health crisis, on Thursday, January 18, and Friday, January 19, 1 – 5 p.m. (free; must attend both sessions; register with Julie Phillips at Julie.phillips@longmontcolorado.gov or 303-651-8469); **The Basics: Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer's**, an introduction to Alzheimer's/dementia, presented by the Alzheimer's Association, on Tuesday, January 30, 3 – 4:30 p.m. (free); and **Transcending Dementia: Spirituality and the Self**, about how the Self (the essence) of the person with dementia can still be nurtured through art, music, nature, and other mediums, on Thursday, February 15, 3 – 4:30 p.m. (free). All presentations are at Longmont Senior Center, 910 Longs Peak Avenue, Longmont. Pre-registration is required; unless otherwise noted above, register at 303-651-8411.

Lafayette Senior Center presents **AARP Elder-Watch: Current Top 5 Scams in Colorado**, about types of fraud and how to protect oneself, on Tuesday, February 13, 12 – 1 p.m., at

Lafayette Senior Center, 103 S. Iowa Avenue, Lafayette (free); **Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters**, about recognizing and responding to the signs of dementia, presented by the Alzheimer's Association, on Thursday, February 15, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m., at Lafayette Public Library, 775 Baseline Road, Lafayette (free); and **Dementia: The Unexpected Journey (4-part)**, about breaking the stigma of living with dementia and focusing on embracing one's new world in a positive way, with Kelli Squire, Dementia Specialist, on Tuesdays, February 13 through March 6, 2 – 3 p.m., at Lafayette Public Library (address above; \$25 for Lafayette residents, \$35 for non-residents). Pre-registration is required, at 303-661-1492.

Boulder County Area Agency on Aging offers **Powerful Tools for Caregivers**, a 15-hour course that gives family caregivers the tools to help them take care of themselves, reduce their stress, communicate effectively, and thrive—not just survive—while caring for an older loved one, starting in February (dates and location to be announced). There is no charge, but donations are appreciated. Financial assistance for respite care (substitute eldercare during class periods) is available. For more information, call 303-678-6116 or email InfoCaregiver@bouldercounty.org.

For persons who have difficulty reading, Audio Information Network of Colorado (AINC) provides **free audio access to publications** such as magazines, grocery ads, calendars of events, public service announcements, and nearly 100 Colorado newspapers, both in English and Spanish. For more information, call 303-786-7777.

For a complete list of **caregiver support groups** that meet in Boulder County, call 303-678-6116 or email InfoCaregiver@bouldercounty.org.



Making It Home

by Debbie Setlock

Assisted Living Administrator Debbie Setlock offers advice on making an assisted living community feel like home, whether it's for you or for the loved one in your care.

When the decision is made to move into an assisted living community, making your new space into a home becomes an important first step. Regardless of the size or arrangement of your new home, any space can be created to offer the elements that are important to the person moving in.

Some assisted living communities have one or two bedroom apartments or studio units with small kitchens. Other communities may be smaller in size, often having a “family feel” to the property. Residents in these smaller communities may have individual bedrooms with common living room areas for gathering.

When looking for an assisted living community, ask about the options available to personalize your new home. Is painting an accent wall an option? For small units (single bedrooms, for example), you may be able to bring in a refrigerator or other small appliances. Don't be afraid to ask about the options. Senior communities understand the trends in resident choice and personalization. Exploring these options can give you an idea about how creative and customer-focused a particular community is. When touring communities, you may be able to look at a model room, and sometimes occupied rooms also are available for viewing. This can give you some good ideas about how you want to furnish your apartment when you move in. Floor plans can offer important details for how you might arrange your furniture. With smaller accommodations, a few new pieces of furniture may be needed to maximize the space available (corner curio cabinets, wall-mounted televisions, wall cabinets, etc.).

It's possible that downsizing possessions may be needed, so choices about what to bring to your new home will have to be made. It can be fun to explore and purchase new accessories. Try designing your new home with the items that you will use in your life now, along with the items that offer you comfort and pleasure. Change can be difficult and the process can be hard, but the outcome of a home tailored to your current lifestyle can be just right for an exciting new future.

Debbie Setlock is the Administrator of Cinnamon Park Assisted Living in Longmont.

Creating Natural Balance

by Dorothy Kane



Feng Shui (pronounced fung-shway) is a Chinese philosophy dating back thousands of years. It is based on the understanding that environment creates the life you live, and you affect your environment through placement of furniture, color, and the elements of wind, water, fire, earth, and metal. Feng Shui pays attention to the details in an enclosed space like your home or office. By bringing awareness and balance to your surroundings, you too can create beauty and health for your family and for anyone who enters your home.

Some years ago, I became a divorced mother of three teenagers. When my mother became ill, our lives changed again. She returned from an extended stay in the hospital in the early spring of that year, and I gave her my bedroom upstairs. We brought up her bedroom furniture and treasures and made sure that she had flowers to look at all of the time.

Her bedroom was south-facing to the backyard. Trees were leafing; and as she laid in bed, she could see the birds building nests in our bird houses and eating from their feeders. Summer came, and she was up and around. We brought up

her living room furniture and placed mine downstairs. We all became involved with creating a wonderful environment, which also encouraged us to be happy as well.

That summer we built a waterfall in the area of the yard outside Mom's window. She fell asleep to water at night and enjoyed the quiet meditative yard during the day. She healed. As for me, I started a new career. From understanding that surroundings are so important to our health and well-being, I decided to study Feng Shui. Now I help hundreds of people by creating a "nature" indoors, either metaphorically or through the actual placement of elements.

As caregivers, knowing how to create a space that supports everyone in the home, including ourselves, is important. Some specifics:

Clutter – An imbalance in the world we stand on creates confusion and attracts dirt. Clear the horizontal space, and your mind will become clear. Decisions will come more easily, and your nerves will settle down. Finding things is easier too!

Color – Be aware of the colors that you choose to wear (or have around your loved ones). For instance, red can be overwhelming to wear or look at when you don't feel your best. Conflict and the fire of passion can show up when wearing or being exposed to red. Blue creates a quiet feeling. Sleep comes more easily when the room is blue. Green is a healing color. It's easy on the eyes—and also symbolizes growth and money. Yellow, if not too bright, can pick up one's spirits. It's used in Feng Shui for better psychological balance. White can sometimes be hard on the eyes for someone lying down. Not many people can live with white walls. Black can be depressing. Avoid it if you can in both clothing and housewares. Remember to wear your best colors—you will look good. Your loved one should wear

what makes them feel good. As for room colors, always make sure that they are soft and enjoyable to be in.

Smell can trigger either good memories or non-supportive images. Be careful with the scents you wear, such as perfumes or hairsprays, because those in bed have fewer distractions and are less mobile, so they're at the mercy of those who visit. Allergies due to diminished immune systems are another problem. Be kind to those restricted to bed by showing up clean but not scented.

Fresh air, temperature, and lighting will also support your patient's health, and your own. Airing out a "sick" room daily, or at least once a week, increases the "chi," or energy, of the room. Making sure that the room is neither too hot nor too cold for your loved one contributes to their health. Natural lighting is always best, but, if that is not an option, use full spectrum fluorescent bulbs or plant grow light bulbs. If there is an overhead fan in the room, make sure that it is not directly over the bed. Neither should there be a floor fan aimed directly at the patient. Open a window instead to cool the room.

Flowing with what's going on when you are with your loved one is essential to their health. We do not question the time it takes a seed to become a flower or the inevitable changing of the seasons. In the same way, illness in whatever form is a process to health or death. Wherever that process leads, being with someone who is ill is a gift for understanding the way things are.

This article first appeared in the November/December 2001 issue, when Dorothy Kane was a Feng Shui consultant for Willow Interiors.

CARE Connections
Boulder County Area Agency on Aging
P. O. Box 471
Boulder, CO 80306

PRESORTED
STANDARD MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BOULDER, CO
PERMIT NO. 485



INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE IN BOULDER COUNTY

Within Boulder County, there are several ways to access information and assistance about resources and services for older adults and their family caregivers:

- Check out **Network of Care for Seniors and People with Disabilities**, a comprehensive online service directory, at www.BoulderCountyHelp.org.
- Call the **ADRC Help Line**, at 303-441-1617, and Boulder County Area Agency on Aging staff will respond to your message.
- Call the **resource specialist** in your community (numbers below). Services vary by community but include identifying needs, exploring options, finding solutions, and providing in-depth assistance.

Allenspark area	303-747-2592
City of Boulder	303-441-4388/303-413-7494 (bilingüe)
City of Lafayette	303-661-1499
City of Longmont	303-774-4372/303-651-8716 (bilingüe)
City of Louisville	303-335-4919
Erie	303-441-1617
Lyons area	303-823-9016
Nederland area	303-258-3068
Niwot area	303-441-1617
Superior	303-441-1617

