

# Mt. Vista offers Supports for Alzheimer's & Dementia

The Mt. Vista Support Group offers help in a number of different ways, providing relevant information, relating personal experiences or just listening and provide sympathetic understanding.

We always have a great turnout with new families joining us for an evening of sharing and learning. Our Chaplain, Barry Hadley, often opens the evening with prayer followed by introductions and sharing some history and memories about a special family member who lives at Mt. Vista. The groups is also given the opportunity to voice any concerns or questions they may have.

Laughing and sharing the joys and frustrations of caring for loved ones after the onset of dementia brings out many wonderful and heart warming stories. Families are often alone when they are caring for a loved one and the support group gives them a place and a group of people who have "walked in their shoes".

The staff members that work and care for the elders at Mt. Vista enjoy telling the family members about the day-to-day events that occur with their loved ones and the families love hearing from the staff. Mt. Vista has had an active support group for many years and all who have participated will testify to the benefit of sharing.

One of the best things about attending these sessions, other than meeting a great group of people, is getting to sample the wonderful food and refreshments that are provided each month by our very own Dining Services Dept. All are welcome, just drop in, no reservations are needed. Look for the posting on the main entrance doors to Mountain Vista every month for a hint of what will be presented and by who. The presentations are usually very brief, the main focus of the support group is sharing. Together we will learn more about dementia and Alzheimers, provide resources, share ideas and enjoy each others company. If you have any questions feel free to contact Dinah Tolini, Social Worker, or Kathy Wray LPN, Clinical Care Manager.

**Mountain Vista's Monthly Support Group meets the last Wednesday of each month from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm in the conference room.**

### Key Resources for Alzheimer's Information:

- Alzheimer's Association - [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)
- [www.everydayhealth.com/senior](http://www.everydayhealth.com/senior)
- National Center for Biotechnology Information, U.S. National Library of Medicine - [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)
- 24/7 Helpline: 1.800.272.3900

Mountain Vista Retirement Community is owned and operated by American Baptist Homes of the Midwest, a not-for-profit provider of senior housing and healthcare since 1930.



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Mountain Vista Retirement Community

# MOUNTAIN VISTA



Winter 2011-2012

Retirement Community

## Finding the Time...

It is hard for me to believe that I have been the Administrator at Mountain Vista Retirement Community for almost two years! I am amazed how quickly



Mike Maschka, Administrator

these last two years have come and gone. In fact, I think I am dealing with some whiplash. The typical thoughts come to my mind... "Where has the time gone?" and "Time goes by so much faster when you are older." Speaking of time, one of the biggest challenges in my position is "finding the time" to meet all of the demands that come with being the Administrator of a large senior living campus. I struggle with the desire of wanting to be "all things to all people" with the goal of never disappointing anyone. I can already hear folks asking, "How's that working out for you, Mike?" The short answer is, "not very well!"

In my role as the Community Administrator, I find myself very humbled, more often than not...humbled by the residents and families we serve; humbled by the employees who look to me for guidance and direction; humbled by my own shortcomings and failures that all of us have to recognize in ourselves in order to grow.

I have always tried to maintain a "sober estimate" of myself so, as I look back over these last two years, I can boast of many successes as well as admitting that I have made my fair share of mistakes. Even though several years of experience as an Executive Director for another large senior living community prepared me for the Community Administrator role here at

Mountain Vista, I did not and could not know how demanding the position would be with the added component of overseeing our Medicare/Medicaid licensed Health Center. I have been particularly aware of how time constraints have limited my ability to spend more time with the residents, families and employees, or so I thought! I have discovered that there is always time to be more visible if I make the deliberate choice to "find the time." In doing just that, it

...to serve our Elders and extend to them the love, respect and dignity they deserve...

keeps me grounded and reminds me of why I do what I do. That is, to serve our Elders and extend to them the love, respect and dignity they deserve, especially as they face the challenges of declining health.

With the sometimes frantic Christmas season coming to an end, it is my sincere hope that each of you were able to "find the time" to do the things that bring you and your loved ones much joy and peace.

Mike Maschka, Administrator  
Mt. Vista Retirement Community



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## History of Christmas Traditions



### Christmas Stockings

There are many tales of how the Christmas Stocking originated but here is the most popular one: A long time ago (in about the 4th century) it was said that St. Nicholas (now called Santa Claus) threw three bags of coins down the chimney of the home of three very poor sisters. Each of the bags landed inside the three stockings left hanging from the mantelpiece to dry by the fire by the sisters on Christmas Eve. It has been a tradition now for many hundreds of years to hang stockings there in the hope that we may have the same good fortune.



### Father Christmas

Father Christmas is based on a real person, St. Nicholas, the patron of children, a man with a very generous and loving nature who used to give gifts anonymously to the poor. It is said that he used to throw gifts through the windows, as well as drop them down the Chimney. The Dutch called him Sint Nikolaas, which eventually evolved into Sinter Klaas. As the name became more globally known, it was eventually translated into the name "Santa Claus".



### The Christmas Tree

The Christmas tree is believed to have originated in Germany in the 16th Century. It was first introduced in England by Queen Victoria. After marrying Prince Albert (who was German), they moved back to England to raise their family. Around 1840, Prince Albert decorated a tree with candles. Because of their love for their Queen, the British people copied her Christmas custom of the Christmas tree and decorations, and it has continued as a tradition ever since.

### Kissing Under the Mistletoe

Kissing under the mistletoe is first believed to be associated with the Greek festival of Saturnalia and later with the primitive marriage rites. At Christmas time a young lady standing under a ball of mistletoe, could not refuse to be kissed. It was believed a "Mistletoe Kiss" could mean real romance. It was said that if the girl remained unknissed whilst under the mistletoe that she could not expect to be married the following year.

### Christmas Cards

The earliest known designer of a Christmas card was Sir Henry Cole in 1843. The Penny Post postal service which was introduced in 1840 helped the popularity of sending Christmas cards. Cards in unsealed envelopes could be posted for half a penny. By 1846, one thousand Christmas cards were sold at one shilling each.

## Healthy Eating For the Holidays



**F**ood is everywhere over the holiday season with parties and plenty of family fun. And along with all that fun comes a few unexpected pounds. In fact, the average American gains about one pound. This year however, with these simple tips you can enjoy the food, festivities and avoid those unwanted holiday pounds.

- Have a snack before a party to take the edge off hunger: Eat a small, low-fat snack (fruit, low-fat cheese, veggies) before you leave. This will help avoid the rush to the food table.
- Avoid skipping a meal in prep for the *big meal*: Eat healthy, low-calorie foods earlier in the day, don't skip breakfast or lunch. It will only result in overeating party foods.
- Make one Trip to the Food Table: Choose only the foods you really want, keep the portions small, and skip on foods you can live without.
- Pick-and-Choose Your Foods: Be careful with fried foods, desserts, cheeses, alcohol. Fill up on veggies, salad and fruit first. Then sample 1 or 2 richer items in small portions. To make sure there's a healthy option at the party bring a dish yourself. Go easy on the butter and gravy and skip the skin on the turkey.
- Size Matters: Use a small plate. Serve small portions. Eat slowly and savor each bite. Wait at least 10 minutes before getting second portions, you'll likely find yourself satisfied after the first helping.
- Socialize! Mingling and talking are calorie-free. Move your social circle away from the food table. Enjoy the festivities by catching up with friends and meeting new people and you will get involved and forget all about the food. Grab a low-calorie drink such as sparkling water with citrus instead of alcohol.
- Enjoy a family walk or game: Fit in physical activity before and after holiday feasts. Walking or games of football are perfect after the big meal before dessert!

Torie Chirtensen  
Registered Dietician

## Ruben Martinez - One Volunteer Can Make A Difference



Ruben Martinez, Mt. Vista Volunteer

How often do you hear about volunteers in a retirement community making a difference? My guess, probably not as often as you should. It is common for people to think of volunteering at local hospitals, food banks, animal shelters, homeless shelters and schools, which are, of course, organizations that are in need of volunteers.

However there is another avenue that often gets overlooked, *retirement communities*.

Retirement communities are always looking for good volunteers willing to donate their time even an hour or two a week. The experience you will have interacting with elders in these communities will be as beneficial to you, as a volunteer, as it is to the elders themselves.

I would like to introduce one amazing volunteer at Mountain Vista, Ruben Martinez, and has he made a difference! Ruben has a history of service. First, he served his country, as a United States Marine in Vietnam from 1965 through 1976. He was then with the Credit Union of Denver for years until he retired in 2009.

Although retired, Ruben has not slowed down. He and his wife Geri, of 31 years, have been active members of Faith Bible Chapel

for 18 years serving on the Servant and Leadership Team, hosting Bible Study and helping in any way they can.

These days if you are looking for Ruben, three days a week you will find him at Mountain Vista. During his visits Ruben talks with residents about their lives which often leads to spiritual discussion. This works out well for everyone because Ruben also does Bible reading for residents in both English and Spanish.

Over the years Ruben has developed many close friendships with the residents of Mountain Vista. If he is unable to visit in person, he often calls residents and visits with them over the telephone. And on those occasions when a resident must visit the hospital, there is a good bet they will get a visit from Ruben.

Residents have often told me that Ruben is a great friend, and we are lucky to have a person with such character here at Mountain Vista.

I hope that Ruben inspires you as much as he does me, to make a difference in the lives of our elders. **He is a blessing to us all and an outstanding volunteer.**

If you are interested in joining Ruben, and others, in making a difference in the lives of those living in retirement communities, please feel free to call me at Mountain Vista.

Heather Wheat,  
Volunteer Coordinator  
303-421-4161

## Quick Tips When Talking with your Doctor



While visiting with Mary Swayer, Mt. Vista's Director of Nursing, she made it clear that "The single most important way you can stay healthy is to be an active member of your own health care team." Here are some tips she recommends

to help you and your doctor become partners in improving your health care.

### **Give Information. Don't Wait to Be Asked!**

- You know important things about your symptoms and your health history. Tell your doctor what you think he or she needs to know.
- Bring a "health history" list with you including medications, and keep it up to date. You might want to make a copy of the form for each member of your family.

### **Get Information**

- Ask questions. If you don't, your doctor may think you understand everything that was said.
- Take notes - you may even want to bring a tape recorder to help you remember things.

### **Take Information Home**

- Ask for written instructions, brochures and audio tapes and videotapes that can help you.

### **Once You Leave the Doctor's Office, Follow Up**

- If you had tests and do not hear from your doctor, call for your test results.
  - If your doctor said you need to have certain tests or see a specialist, make appointments at the lab or other offices to get them done.
- "Bring someone with you when you go to the doctor," adds Mary, "because two listeners are better than one." Remember, quality matters, especially when it comes to your health!

## Take Time to be Holy



As we prepare for the holiday season we can anticipate changes not only in the weather, but in the seasons of our own lives. There is not a seasonal time of the year that has a greater impact on our spiritual, emotional, and physical lives than the holidays.

The holiday season is also a time of emotional reflection. Not only because we look forward to a new year, but because we look back on the previous year and other years before. We all carry with us past holiday memories. Some of them were good and some not. The memories evoke the very feelings that we experienced in holidays past. Our elders carry with them the memory of many Christmases, Thanksgivings, Hanukahs, and New Years. Not all of them are remembered with dates, times, places, or even names, but the emotions felt in the past are rekindled in the present. Those emotions are as powerful today as they ever were before.

It almost goes without saying that the season of the holidays is spiritually evocative as well. In a culture that is sometimes reluctant to speak of such things as religion, God, Jesus, Christ, and faith, it can't go without naming those things. In fact, the word holiday is itself a reminder that these days are holy days. We can often times chart the journey of our lives and faith through the memory and reflection of these holidays. We rightly look back on who we were, where we have been, and who we would yet like to be.

Thank God we have these holy days to help us pause and consider the wonder, sacredness and preciousness of this existence. There is a hymn written by William Longstaff that says, "Take time to be holy, the world rushes on." My prayer for the residents and staff at Mt. Vista is that while the world continues in its breakneck pace towards unknown destinations, we will find in these holy days the sacred hand of God and "take time to be holy."

Blessings,  
Chaplain Barry Hadley

## The New Look at Mt. Vista



Mt Vista's New General Storefront and interior.



**D**uring the mid to late nineteenth century, general stores were often the first business establishments built in a town. They were the gathering places for townspeople and farmers who could buy items like hardware or food items in bulk. Over the last several months Mt. Vista has created a new neighborhood, that includes a general store. It has become increasingly clear how important the general store is and how it has become the heart of a community.

The new neighborhood design is a place where people gather and connect with each other, "creating a real sense of community."



The newly designed Chaplain's office



Mt Vista's Beauty Shop



Gray's Store in Adamsville, RI, built in 1788, claims to be the oldest operating general store in the United States and is home to the town's first Post Office, founded in 1804. The store remains operated by Grayton Waite, a six-generation shop keeper.

Photo Source, Wikipedia, Interior of a Moundville, Alabama General store, 1936.

## Mt. Vista Rehab "Celebrates Success"

Seniors who come to Mt. Vista for rehabilitation are able to spend their time in areas of the community specifically designated for short term stays, also known as Rehabilitation or Transitional Care Unit (TCU). These residents receive therapy and training while they recover from a stay in the hospital. In addition to the therapy programs the rehab, or TCU area, provides skilled nursing cares and develops customized care and recovery plans for each resident that are essential to the recovery and rejuvenation of residents.

Part of our mission in therapy is to offer support, motivation and help residents feel good about the progress they make during their stay. To help us achieve this goal we created a program called "Celebrate Success". The program helps residents reach milestones, overcome challenges, recognize and reach their goals. In order to make a residents' stay as enjoyable as possible staff continually monitors residents physical progress and state of mind. In this way we are able to maximize recuperation time return them home, which is, ultimately, our goal.

Many residents, past and present, have overcome incredible obstacles in their quest to meet their goals. Our Celebrate Success program showcases these people and their accomplishments. Next time you visit Mt. Vista be sure to stop by the *Celebrate Success* board, outside our rehab gym and you will find photos and stories of these amazing people.

We have other ways to "Celebrate Success". As a reminder to our "graduates" of their time at Mt. Vista, along with their personal accomplishments, residents receive a keepsake of the photo that appears on the "Celebrate Success" board. This and other information such as, admission date, rehab diagnosis and goals met, allows them to share the experience with family, friends and neighbors who may not have been able to visit them during their stay at Mt Vista.

Finally, we hand deliver a summary of the residents's

therapy program to their primary care physician. The summary recaps the therapy treatment and the successful results, holding true to our belief and mission to return each individual to their prior or highest level of functioning and back to their home.

