

# happy@HOME

Published by Quality Living at Home A program of Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association

## Medical Alerts Provides Peace of Mind



**Patient Care Services**  
 Home Care Nursing  
 Skilled Nursing  
 Psychiatric Nursing  
 Maternal/Child Nursing

**Short Term Rehab at Home**  
 Physical Therapists  
 Occupational Therapist  
 Speech Therapists

**Senior Care Solutions**

**Home Health Aides**

**Homemakers**

**Companions & Live-ins**

**Other Services**  
 Newborn Care  
 Wound Care  
 Palliative Care  
 Respite Care  
 IV Care  
 Life Line Medical Alert  
 Vaccines

**SERVING**

Bethel, Brookfield,  
 Danbury, Easton,  
 Georgetown, New Canaan,  
 New Fairfield,  
 New Milford, Newtown,  
 Redding, Ridgefield, South-  
 bury, Weston, Wilton



FOSTERING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### Knowing Help Is There If You Need It

Knowing that help is there if you need it is one of the surest ways for seniors to continue living at home. RVNA endorses two programs to help you to stay where you want to be: The "Are You



### Are You OK? Volunteers Mary Morrisroe and Chicki Mahoney

"live" by a trained volunteer. If you reply "I'm fine," the volunteer directs the system to call the next subscriber. If you say there *is* a problem, or if there is no answer after several tries, the volunteer initiates an appropriate response, which may range from a visit from a pre-designated friend or relative, to a visit by the police, or 911 call for emergency services. Volunteers are trained to listen carefully to subscriber responses sometimes identifying issues when the subscriber says, "I'm OK". This *free* service is available to any resident of Ridgefield or Redding over the age of 60, For more information on the RUOK program, contact the Ridgefield Woman's Club at 203-438-6777.

### Lifeline: Help at the Press of a Button

The Philips Lifeline Medical Alert Service provides its users with simple, fast access to emergency medical help or police 24 hours per day. You'll wear either a pendant or wrist-style "Help Button". Pushing that button automatically connects you to Lifeline's 24/7 Response Center, where a Response Associate will access your profile, assess the situation as you describe it, and contact a neighbor, loved one or emergency services based on your specific need. RVNA will install and show you how to use the device. **RVNA will also offer to be a "notifier" if you are hospitalized.** We will create a plan of care with you and your doctor, to assist in a safe return home.

Please contact the Quality Living at Home Coordinator, Eloise Barron, at 203-438-5555, Ext. 1005 for pricing and more information.

Woman's Club of Ridgefield since 1995 in association with the Ridgefield Volunteer Firefighters Association, and the Philips Lifeline Medical Alert Service, available through RVNA. Best of all, you can take advantage of both programs at the same time.

### RUOK: A Call Every Morning

RUOK consists of a free daily call to each of its subscribers to check on their well-being. Calls are made every morning between 8:00 and 9:00, seven days per week. They are managed by a



**Carolyn Hartigan, Seymour Seidman and Betsy Krysiwicz model Life Line medical alert pendants and wrist band.**

OK?" or "RUOK" program that has been run by the

## medicare minute

Per the **Affordable Health Care Act of 2010**, elimination of the “donut hole” in Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage begins in earnest in 2011. This year, once the donut hole is reached, subscribers will receive a 50% discount on prescription drugs and a 7% discount on generic drugs. The discount will increase gradually each year thereafter until the donut hole is fully eliminated in 2020. Call 1-800-633-4227 for more information.

## caregivers corner

**Can't get to the Ridgefield Library?** The library will come to you! Library volunteers will bring books, audio books and video recordings to town residents who are home-bound on account of mobility issues or ill health, whether short-term or chronic. No proof of need necessary! Simply contact the library's Dorothy Pawlowski at 203-438-2282, ext. 1003.

## Filling the Homecare Gap



### Senior Solutions

by Laura Switzer

**Have you or someone you know ever found yourself caught in a dollars gap** between what your insurance will cover and what you truly need to stay in your own home safely and comfortably. Called the “homecare gap,” RVNA can help you bridge it with our private pay care services program. These services, which can be both medical and non-medical, can help you meet each and every need that you may have, including assistance with bathing and dressing, meal preparation, light housekeeping, physical therapy and skilled nursing. In addition, we can also be invaluable if you or someone you know is suffering from an illness, home from a hospitalization or for any of a myriad of other reasons.

No matter what your particular situation may be, RVNA will customize a plan of care that is for you and you alone. We will ensure you are pleased with the services you purchase through ongoing supervision of all service providers in your home and through regular communication with you. And when you choose RVNA, you can be sure about what you're getting because we are backed by almost 100 years of quality, award winning homecare experience and the integrity, honesty and peace of mind this guarantees.



**Theresa Santoro**, RVNA President and CEO and **Steve Schnell** of the Redding Police Department..

## HOME SAFETY ASSESSMENTS IN REDDING AND RIDGEFIELD

Redding and Ridgefield police, fire departments and Quality Living at Home (QLAH) are offering free home safety assessments for seniors to identify ways to prevent falls, fires and theft. Seniors who participate in this free program will receive the following:

- Free home safety evaluation by representatives of the fire and police departments and QLAH.
- Free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, including installation.
- Free replacement batteries for current detectors, including installation.
- Free “Blackout Buddy” combination night light and emergency flashlight.
- Inclusion in the Early Storm Alert email tree, if desired.
- Free optional recording of valuables for insurance purposes.
- Access to a comprehensive resource directory of trades people and contractors.

Call RVNA's Quality Living at Home call center at 203-438-5555 Ext 1005 for your appointment.



By Seymour Seidman

### On Being Yourself

I would ban the word “senior” for it brands that time of life as having capabilities less than others. Should something else replace the word “senior?” No, that’s no more needed than new language for the young and middle-aged. I consider all ages by the one; as the individual, rather than as a collective section of life’s structure.

## Is Your House OK?

### Spring House Maintenance – It’s Especially Important This Year

It’s been a long, hard winter in the Ridgefield/Redding area. Soon it will be time to clean up your house and yard from winter’s ravages and perform some simple maintenance tasks. Here’s what needs to be done, courtesy of the website [www.houselogic.com](http://www.houselogic.com).

**Check your gutters and downspouts.** “Stuff,” including pine needles and nails and debris from the roof, accumulates even after your fall gutter cleaning. Look for signs of wind or ice damage, reattaching brackets where the gutter has pulled away from the house and gently hammering out depressions where water can stand. Next, examine each downspout for blockages. Tap it with a screwdriver handle; it should sound hollow. If the ends run underground, put a garden hose in the gutter and see where the water discharges.

**Inspect you roof for winter damage.** You can stand in your yard and use binoculars. Look for loose or missing shingles. If anything looks unusual, call a roofing contractor.

**Take a close look at your chimney.** Look for cracks, missing mortar, loose bricks or boards, signs of rot, and rusted metal on the flashing and chimney cap. Make sure the cap hasn’t collapsed and covered the flue opening because this can cause a dangerous carbon monoxide buildup inside the house. If any of these problems have occurred, call a certified chimney sweep for a repair estimate.

**Check the siding.** Has any of it come loose or begun to rot? Repair any damaged sections before moisture has a chance to set in. No matter what your siding is made of (wood, vinyl, brick), it may need a spring cleaning. The best do-it-yourself method for any kind of siding is a bucket of soapy water and a long-handled brush. Should you prefer power washing, it should be performed by a professional cleaning contractor.

**Schedule an air conditioning tune-up.** Your serviceman should follow a standard maintenance checklist. If your system wasn’t running well last season, tell him, and make sure he performs actual repairs rather than simply adding refrigerant. Duct cleaning is generally not necessary; indeed, cleaning them with antimicrobial agents can actually be unhealthy. Lastly, on your own, make sure your filters are changed and your floor registers are vacuumed.

**A thorough spring maintenance program** can be daunting. If you can’t take on these assignments yourself, or simply prefer not to, there are ample local home maintenance contractors that will do them for you. (While tempting, please do not climb on the roof yourself. The trip to the ER will be more expensive than paying a qualified and insured home inspector.) For help in finding a contractor, please call RVNA’s Quality Living at Home director, Eloise Barron, at 203-438-5555 Ext 1005.



## TRUE STORIES: QUALITY LIVING AT HOME CONNECTIONS

The Veterans of Foreign Wars invited the Quality Living at Home Director, Eloise Barron, to attend a recent meeting. During the pleasantries, Eloise asked if they knew about a WWII navy nurse living in town who had served at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Wally Goodman, the President, said he had not heard of her and asked her name. Eloise explained that she was unable to offer this information without permission. Wally then leaned over and said, "Well you tell her that this 86 year old veteran who also served at Iwo Jima and Okinawa would be honored if she would join us. The 90 year old WWII Navy nurse, Evelyn Wisner, is now a favorite with the VFW "boys" and attends their meetings regularly. Wally invites other Veterans of Foreign Wars to join them at their monthly meetings. Please call him at 203-431-9198 for more information.



**Veteran of Foreign Wars members with Evelyn Wisner, Navy WWII Nurse.**

Words to live by:

"If you don't love me at my worst,  
you don't deserve me at my best."

Marilyn Monroe

quality living  
at home

FOSTERING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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