



# ElderBuddy News

## ElderBuddy – Five Years and Counting.....

### In this Issue:

ElderBuddy News and Views .....	2
ElderBuddy Facilities .....	3
ElderBuddy Memories .....	4

### ElderBuddy Volunteers ...making a difference!

**Aondowase Anum**  
**Lisa Capodanno**  
**Nancy Devine**  
**Jacqueline Fiore**  
**Kristie Freuler**  
**Susan Frie**  
**Erin Galley**

**Narmada Gunawardena**  
**Melissa Heagy**  
**Wanda Hicks**  
**Debbie Huff**

**Sharon Jayakumar**

**Charlene Kellum-Jackson**

**Laura King**  
**Jack Mitchell**  
**Gina Mitchell**

**Marianne Moeller**  
**Anne Oxenham**

**Grace Pinder-Starkey**

**Erast Pohorylo**  
**Tamy Raina**  
**Gabriele Rice**

**Lou Ryan**

**Lois Scarborough**  
**Mark Stocksdale**

**Sharon Tomlinson**  
**Peggy Tsaganos**

**Robert R. Williams**  
**Carol Yost**

ElderBuddy is AstraZeneca's community service program that works with The Family & Workplace Connection to match AZ employee and retiree volunteers with elderly people in need of companionship. Through ElderBuddy, each volunteer acts as a "friendly visitor" for an older adult living in a nearby senior housing community.

This kind of program is so valuable because loneliness is more prevalent among the elderly for a number of reasons. Their spouses, siblings or long-time friends may have died. Extended family members are often spread across the country, so visits with them are infrequent, if at all. Finally, older adults are more likely to experience mobility limitations, such as declining vision and lack of transportation options, which effectively bar them from community involvement that they may have enjoyed for years.

A 2006 University of Chicago study found that loneliness is a major risk factor in increasing blood pressure in older Americans, and could increase the risk of stroke and heart disease. Older adults are also at a higher risk for depression. By providing a sense of social connectedness, The ElderBuddy Program enhances the quality of life, as well as the health and well-being of the older adults it serves.

Now in its fifth year, ElderBuddy continues to foster unique one-on-one relationships between volunteers and local seniors, providing ongoing support and encouragement that enables each friendship to blossom in its own way. Some of our volunteers have been with the program since it began back in 2003, and all agree that there's much to be gained by participation in the program. One volunteer says her life is more interesting because of her elder's very outgoing personality. Several volunteers point out that their own elderly relatives live far away or have died, and their "elder-buddy" fills a void in their lives for this kind of relationship.

Declining health sometimes forces the elderly residents we serve to move into a more supportive environment. Overwhelmingly their volunteers have chosen to continue visiting with them in their new homes, even though they may not be nearly as conveniently located. This is just one more example of the close bonds that are formed between our ElderBuddy duos.

Do you have a couple of hours a month you'd like to invest in a stimulating new friendship? Do you know someone you think would enjoy being part of ElderBuddy? If so, call or e-mail our ElderBuddy Coordinator today!

*Kathy Hyde – 302-479-1696 or [khyde@familyandworkplace.org](mailto:khyde@familyandworkplace.org)*



## ElderBuddy News and Views

Lately I've had the pleasure of bringing some new ElderBuddy twosomes together. It's such a privilege playing a part in these budding relationships.

Early this year, **Kristie Freuler** met her new friend **Flossie** at Gilpin Hall. **Susan Frie** also had the pleasure of meeting **Celestine**, who she'll be visiting at Kentmere Nursing Care Center.

In spite of February's uncooperative weather, two new ElderBuddy pairs got together: **Mark Stocksdales** will be spending time with **Mary** at Ingleside Retirement Apartments, and **Wanda Hicks** now holds the title of "Most Determined Visitor" after using a hoe to chop through ice and snow so she could meet her new Buddy, **Alease** at Luther Towers. *Way to go, Wanda!* And in early March, **Erin Gralley** began her new friendship with **Anna** at Gilpin Hall.

The December holidays presented a great opportunity for fun for all. **Robert Williams** donated an artificial Christmas tree so his buddy, **Marie**, and her neighbors at Ingleside could decorate their area. **Lois Scarborough** helped her friend, **Eva**, get all "gussied up" for the holidays with a new hair-do and holiday earrings. Many of our twosomes exchanged holiday gifts and cards, and enjoyed sharing their holiday experiences with each other.

**Aondowase Anum's** friend, **Len**, at Gilpin Hall has very limited mobility, so Aondowase helped him "sort out socks and other items that were out of place and made them easily accessible for him." Now that's a gift that keeps on giving!

**Gina Mitchell** highly recommends the programs offered at the Downs Cultural Center at Ingleside as a "great opportunity to interact with your buddy without leaving the building." She and her friend, **Tru-Dee** attended an excellent concert there recently. And Elvis Presley (look-alike, of course!) paid an entertaining visit recently to Gilpin Hall, where **Grace Pinder-Starkey** got to enjoy the show with her buddy, **Gennie**.

**Carol Yost** says *Congratulations* are in order for her friend, **Jean**, at Ingleside. Jean recently became a first-time great-grandmother and has enjoyed spending time visiting the new baby, **Matthew**.

We'd also like to welcome some new volunteers, **Anne Oxenham**, **Sharon Tomlinson** and **Debbie Huff**. We'll do our best to get you all matched up and visiting soon.

The ElderBuddy Program, funded by AstraZeneca, matches employee volunteers with elderly residents living in local nonprofit senior housing and looking for companionship. Volunteers act as "friendly visitors" and develop a one-on-one relationship with the resident. The Family & Workplace Connection coordinates the matches and provides ongoing support and guidance to ElderBuddy participants. For more information, contact Kathy Hyde at 302-479-1696 or elderbuddy@familyandworkplace.org.

The ElderBuddy News is published quarterly, and is a great way for all of us in the ElderBuddy Program to keep in touch and share our ideas. If you have information you'd like us to include, please contact Kathy Hyde at 302-479-1696 or e-mail to elderbuddy@familyandworkplace.org.

## ElderBuddy Facilities

One of the major reasons the ElderBuddy Program has been so successful over the years is the ongoing support of the program at the senior housing facilities where our ElderBuddy volunteers are placed. Staff at each of the facilities actively promote ElderBuddy to their residents because they know how valuable social connections can be for the elderly, especially those with limited mobility and access to the community. We are very grateful to the staff at each of these facilities for their support, and we commend them for their tireless efforts on behalf of their residents.

**Gilpin Hall – 1101 Gilpin Avenue, Wilmington** Working with ElderBuddy since its inception, Gilpin Hall, founded in 1824, has been providing a secure and caring environment for its residents for more than 180 years. In addition to their intermediate and skilled nursing care, Gilpin also offers adult day and assisted care programs, as well as respite, hospice and therapy options. Cathy Connor, Director of Marketing and Admissions, and Susan Townsend, Activities Director, work closely with ElderBuddy staff to create and support relationships between their residents and AstraZeneca volunteers.



Gilpin Hall, Gilpin Avenue, Wilmington



Cathy Connor, Director of Mktg. and Admissions (center) enjoys a card game with Gilpin residents, Flossie Turnier (left) and Marie Terhune

**Luther Towers I – 1201 N. Harrison Street, Wilmington** Luther Towers I is a high-rise apartment complex offering area seniors who are able to live independently an opportunity to reside in a friendly older adult community in the heart of downtown Wilmington. As a HUD housing facility, Luther Towers has been providing a comfortable yet affordable rental option for older Delawareans since 1972. Luther Towers I manager, Dee Oldham, and Social Worker, Cynthia Whisker, recognize the value a program like ElderBuddy brings to the elderly, and have been working with our staff to connect their residents with our volunteers since 2003.



Luther Towers I residents, (from left) Letitia Boyette and Marie Edwards join their friend, Barbara Richards for lunch in the Pineapple dining hall

Luther Towers I Manager, Dee Oldham (left) and Social Worker, Cynthia Whisker (right), talk with ElderBuddy Coordinator, Kathy Hyde




### **Ingleside Retirement Apartments – 1005 N. Franklin Street, Wilmington**

This retirement community for independent seniors also helped us launch the ElderBuddy program, and has been actively supporting it ever since. Debbie Dalecki, Social Worker, is the ElderBuddy liaison at Ingleside, and provides ongoing efforts there to make her residents aware of the program and the benefits it offers to those who are involved. Many volunteers who visit Ingleside really enjoy the “dinner and a show” option that allows them to join their buddy for a meal, and then accompany them to a show or concert in the Downs Cultural Center located right there at Ingleside. One of our volunteers says she feels like she’s “going on a date” when she spends an evening like this with her Ingleside friend. Ingleside is also a HUD housing facility, making Ingleside’s rental fees affordable for retired adults.

### **Luther Towers II – 1420 N. Franklin Street, Wilmington**

Affiliated with Luther Towers I and located within a couple of blocks of it, Luther Towers II offers high-rise apartment living to Delaware’s seniors in the downtown Wilmington area. As a HUD housing facility, it provides a pleasant, comfortable and affordable residential option to low-income older adults. Manager,



Linda Dugan, and Social Worker, Karen Mckillip, have also been working with the ElderBuddy program since it began. Although none of our volunteers are currently visiting in Luther Towers II, we have had some wonderful relationships created there in the past, and look forward to creating more budding friendships there in the near future.

In 2007, two new facilities began working with ElderBuddy to help enrich the lives of their residents.

### **Kentmere Nursing Care Center – 1900 Lovering Avenue, Wilmington**

Kentmere became involved in the ElderBuddy program in an interesting way. Several residents at Ingleside and Luther Towers who were matched with an ElderBuddy volunteer, experienced declining health and needed to move into a facility where skilled nursing care was available. When they moved into Kentmere, their volunteers decided that they wanted to continue their ElderBuddy friendship, and began visiting them in their new homes at Kentmere. The Activities Director, Erin Jones, thinks the program is of particular value to her residents because a majority of them have limited mobility and cannot get out into the community as much as they would like.

### **Ingleside Assisted Living – 1605 N. Broom Street, Wilmington**

This new facility is an expansion of Ingleside Homes, and was opened in October, 2006 to offer an affordable assisted living option to local seniors, who need regular assistance with their activities of daily living, so can no longer live independently. It is located just a few blocks from Ingleside Retirement Apartments, and is a unique model created through collaboration among all levels of government, private donors, banks, corporations, Ingleside residents and their families. As residents move into Ingleside Assisted Living (IAL), Jenna Schwind, Activities Director, is making sure they hear about the ElderBuddy program and how it can enrich their lives. Although no volunteers have been placed at IAL as yet, we hope to get some relationships started there very soon.

ElderBuddy is grateful to all the residents and staff at the facilities for helping to make this program more widely available to local seniors and for their many contributions to the success of the program.

## **ElderBuddy Memories**

ElderBuddy would like to wish a very happy birthday to **Hazel Poole** at Ingleside Retirement Apartments, who celebrated her **100<sup>th</sup> birthday** on January 6. Although Hazel is currently not active with ElderBuddy, she helped us launch the program back in 2003, when her ElderBuddy volunteer introduced her to computers and the Internet. Hazel has a passion for embroidering, but was having a hard time getting out to purchase supplies regularly. Her volunteer showed Hazel how to order the supplies (and do lots of other things) online, and Hazel has been doing that ever since. In fact, she has become quite the Internet expert, and was recently mentioned in a Time magazine article, *Senior Netizens*, about the increasing popularity of the Internet among the 50+ population. Although arthritis has made it hard for Hazel to do much embroidery these days, she can still type just fine. So recently she became a mentor on a website, [www.dmc-usa.com](http://www.dmc-usa.com), dedicated to the art she loves so much, and so far she has taught 2 students how to cross-stitch. In addition, she corresponds by e-mail with people in the Embroiderer's Guild throughout the world. Hazel is living proof that life can be dynamic and exciting at any age. When asked what advice she might have for others, Hazel says, "I have had nothing to do with growing older. God gave us each a job to do, and I guess I am not done yet!"