A Time for Sharing

“Does anyone know what a talking stick is used for?”

“Yeah. When you’re in a group of people and you’re holding the stick, you get to talk and everyone else has to listen.”

“That’s right. We’re going to make talking sticks today. Everyone gets to choose a stick, and we’ve got lots of things to decorate them with – beads, flowers, feathers, leather straps, jewelry, bells. This was originally an American Indian tradition and we’ve adopted it. Maybe you can use your talking stick with your family, so you can talk about your feelings at home.”

The Kids Circle facilitators, Joyce, Peggy, and Sharon, encourage the children to talk about their feelings, to recognize the fact that humans at every age experience a rich range of emotion. Actually, we all need this kind of encouragement; it’s hard for most of us to talk about our feelings because we’re often discouraged when we express how we feel. It’s a difficult situation – we’re unaccustomed to our emotions and uncomfortable with them, yet they tug and pull on our daily lives like the moon on the tides. And, although we can’t see or touch emotions and regularly deny their existence, we know they are real. Joyce, Peggy and Sharon have found an effective way to confirm the importance and reality of emotions: communication with other humans through conversation, action, creation, and art.

So, they made talking sticks one rainy afternoon at Kids Circle. Some of the parents came to help their children decorate their sticks. One of the fathers said to his sons, “My favorite part is the bell. When it rings, everyone knows to listen. And, I like the fact that we made it together.”

Cancer is a devastating illness, a heavy burden, a drain on those diagnosed and their loved ones. But, cancer is also a gift. When you’re given a time limit on your life, you hold every hour of every day and night as a perfect, precious miracle. You make sure the people you love know it, and you realize the moments that matter are the small ones – small, innocent gestures like making a talking stick with your sons one rainy afternoon.

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Options for Giving

For over 14 years The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura has served as a valuable resource for our community. Thousands of people have benefited from its many programs and services, as well as the hope and inspiration it provides. What if you could help ensure that this critical support would be available for years to come? What if you could do this while simultaneously creating a legacy for yourself and your family? You may be surprised to learn that careful and creative estate planning can help you accomplish both goals.

There are several ways you can include The Wellness Community V/V in your estate plans without any additional expense or fees and ensure that it can continue to provide help for years to come. The easiest options are listed here.

1. **Life Insurance**: With the stroke of a pen, you can change an existing insurance policy to add The Wellness Community V/V as an additional beneficiary, or you can purchase a new one for the charity’s benefit. In addition, if you make The Wellness Community V/V the owner of a life insurance policy, you can make annual donations to cover the premium and receive charitable income tax deductions for those payments.

2. **Retirement Plans**: Name The Wellness Community V/V as beneficiary of your retirement plan, or add it as a recipient if another person predeceases you. Retirement plans are especially good vehicles for charitable giving since, when left to a person, they can be decimated by income tax and, if applicable, estate tax.

3. **Bequest**: You can have your estate planning attorney prepare a simple codicil to your existing will or amendment to your living trust, creating a bequest to benefit The Wellness Community V/V.

4. **Charitable Remainder Trust**: If you have a sizable estate, you can work with your advisors to create a trust that will provide you with lifetime income, capital gains tax savings, and an income-tax deduction. You might even want to explore additional strategies that allow your estate to pass to your heirs without estate taxes.

These are just a few of the many ways you can support The Wellness Community V/V and help ensure that others will benefit from the Community’s help. Each of these options offers benefits to YOU as well. We would be happy to work with you and your advisors to help you decide what best suits your needs. Please don’t hesitate to contact Suzanne Drace at 805-379-4777 and begin creating your legacy with The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura today!

A Tax Benefits of Charitable and Planned Giving Seminar will be held on October 27th, presented by Ronald Berman, Esq. Please RSVP by calling 805.379.4777.

**Our Mission**

The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura is one of 22 chapters of the international non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the health and well being of people affected by cancer by providing emotional support, education and hope for people with cancer and their loved ones.
Life is Full of Magic

“It seems fitting that we honor our friend’s memory with something fun. He wouldn’t have wanted it any other way. Thank you all for coming this afternoon. We hope you enjoy it.”

Everyone did enjoy themselves, and almost every chair in the audience was filled. The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura’s Westlake office had transformed from a peaceful sanctuary to a lively, enchanting theater for this special event. To carry on the legacy of former Board Chairman, Daniel Jacoby, TWC held its first annual magic show, Daniel’s Day of Magic, on Sunday, March 13th – the first anniversary of Daniel’s death. A show for the community at large to raise funds for TWC is scheduled for September.

The magician, Barry Garapedian, met Daniel while serving on the Board at TWC and the two became good friends. When Daniel discovered Barry’s mysterious talent, he asked Barry to give him lessons. “Although Daniel was very successful in his adult life,” mentioned Barry, “he was just a big kid. We all have a kid inside of us, and I’m sure that’s why we all love magic.”

Barry began practicing magic at age six and is a member of The Magic Castle, the premiere magic venue on earth. Set in a Victorian mansion hovering over Hollywood, it serves as the private clubhouse for the Academy of Magical Arts. The members of this world-renowned fraternal organization devote themselves to the ancient art of magic’s advancement, promotion, and preservation. Members can also sponsor commoners to attend dinner in their exquisite restaurant while being entertained by master magicians.

Events like Daniel’s Day of Magic give families and friends connected with TWC a joyful reason to come together, which is rare considering the harsh realities they frequently face while helping their loved one fight cancer. Watching Barry miraculously pick the right card or make one long piece of string from ten tiny bits draws their attention away from the pain in this life and directs them toward everything splendid and joyful.

Life is full of magic – we just have to see it that way. If we can’t see anything magical in the general vicinity, we ought to create some. When you or someone you love is facing the devastations of cancer, it’s often hard to keep this attitude. But, for seven years, Daniel carried on with the knowledge that an incurable tumor could and would cut short his life. As his mother, Janine Jacoby, said, “The cancer was a gift. He got up and did all the things he wanted to do. He went on an expedition to Antarctica and took those beautiful photographs – I don’t think he had ever held a camera before! He went scuba diving, sat with sharks, went bungee jumping … cancer changed his life.”

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In the last two weeks of his life, Daniel also envisioned and founded Interfaith Inventions. This non-profit organization brings together leaders from the Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, and Christian communities to create interfaith youth camp programs. Last summer, eighteen Muslim, Christian, and Jewish children from communities in Albuquerque, New Mexico, participated in the first “Children of Abraham” Interfaith Summer Camp. This summer, Interfaith Inventions held a similar retreat in Ojai, California. With these camps and retreats, Interfaith Inventions hopes to instill in children respect and understanding for people of all faiths.

During his life, Daniel instilled in many people a sense of joy and appreciation for living. After the magic show, his mother told friends, “Because of him, I appreciate all the beauty in this world. Every time a tree blossoms, it’s glorious, and it’s better to spend our time enjoying that than wasting it watching the news or complaining about things. He kept telling us, ‘Love the people you are with, make sure the people you are with love you, do good works, and remember that I’ll be watching you.’ He’s probably watching us right now – laughing. We did a lot of laughing and a lot of crying. We prefer the laughing.”

Nydia Galbusera (center), a volunteer Aliado (“Ally”) of The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura Latino Outreach Program, her mother, Margarita Suarez (left) and her daughter Ludmilla Galbusera (right) enjoying Daniel’s Day of Magic.
“Celebrating Life” Festivities Mark National Cancer Survivors Day

When Peggy Fleming was diagnosed with breast cancer, she described her battle as “another Olympics, a life Olympics.” The champion figure skater once again beat out the competition, and now a seven-year survivor, she helped The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura honor local cancer survivors at the organization’s National Cancer Survivors Day festivities June 3-4. The annual event focuses on life, support systems and the medical community working to cure cancer.

“Balance is the key to living a vital and satisfying life,” Peggy said. “The Wellness Community works tirelessly to provide mind/body programs and support groups for people faced with cancer so that everyone has a chance at becoming a survivor.”

This year’s “Celebrating Life” festivities kicked off with a dinner and auction at the Westlake Hyatt. Peggy Fleming gave the keynote address; Board of Directors member and event co-chair Keith Gregory presented cancer survivor Virginia (Ginny) Kreuzberger with a “Celebration of Life” award for her work as a member of the Board of Trustees and Professional Advisory Board of The Wellness Community V/V, as well as her work as a volunteer, nurse, and Charter Diamond founder.

The following day, The Wellness Community V/V hosted a free family picnic for cancer survivors. Food was provided by Kiwanis Club of Thousand Oaks, and Ginny Kreuzberger was present to speak informally with participants.

“Peggy and Ginny are shining examples of how support and hope is vital to survival,” says Dianne Masry, co-chair of The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura’s National Cancer Survivor’s Day. “I have three family members who have survived cancer, including my father-in-law, Ed Masry, and I give many thanks to advocates like Ginny, and to the support systems and medical community that make survival possible.”

For a number of years, Kiwanis Club of Thousand Oaks has been providing the most delicious grilled meals to cancer survivors, their families and friends at our annual Cancer Survivors Day picnic; here’s a picture of just some of them, but we extend our heartfelt thanks to all!
Of course, there is struggle. One of the boys hasn’t been coming to Kids Circle because his father is getting ready to die. The facilitators struggle with what to say to the children about how families cope with sadness, grief and death. They struggle to discuss these serious, profound issues in ways that are simultaneously appropriate for six-year-olds, ten-year-olds and fifteen-year-olds. They struggle to just let the little ones be, let them have their own experiences without any projection or judgment, which adults tend to bring into their relationships with children.

Kids Circle used to be a very structured, educational four-week program, but the facilitators realized that something was missing. The children weren’t having any fun! Childhood should be a time of enjoyment, magic and imagination. Just because these children have to face the difficulties of having a parent or grandparent fight cancer doesn’t mean they can’t have a bit of joy in their lives. We saw a spark of this joy when one little boy stood on his chair to tell everyone about his talking stick, “I made it all by myself! I’m gonna tap people on the head with it, sleep with it, and when I stick it up in people’s faces, it means, ‘QUIET! I’M TALKING!’”

Once again, it’s time for The Wellness Community’s annual Holiday Home Tour. Why not make plans to stop in, enjoy the warmth and friendship of the holidays, and see how wonderfully this year’s homes are decorated! As usual, you will also have a chance to do some holiday shopping for presents and decorations at the boutique. The Tour will be held on December 3rd and 4th, 10am - 6pm, at four homes located in Agoura Hills and North Ranch. Tickets are $20 until October 15th and $25 after that date; call 805.379.4777 for group-ticket pricing. Tickets may be obtained by mail or phone from The Wellness Community office, or online by accessing www.TwcVv.org and clicking on Special Events. We hope to see you there!
Virtual Wellness Community

Cancer support services are available anytime, anywhere. Visit our website at www.TwcVv.org and click on Virtual Wellness Community. Cancer patients find real-time online support groups facilitated by trained professionals such as our own Anne Gessert. Also available are educational resources, mind-body exercises, and nutritional information.

Our own volunteer and former Board member Diana Malmquist is one of six Ventura County residents selected by Jefferson Award judges to be honored for extraordinary community service. “I’m very honored to be recognized, especially since I feel so strongly about people giving to the community,” Diana said. She was also recognized for volunteer work by being elected Donna Triunfo at La Fiesta del Triunfo Ball. Congratulations, Diana!

Recently, The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura received a wonderful gift: a donation of $4,206.24 collected by children at the Ascension Lutheran School. Their teacher, TWC V/V participant Kathy Pino, presents the check to TWC Board Chair Robin Campbell. Our heartfelt thanks to all!

Daniel Jacoby, participant, volunteer, and President of the Board, left a legacy for The Wellness Community Valley/Ventura. The first payment of this legacy, a check of $60,000, was presented by his parents, David and Janine Jacoby. From left: seated, Janine Jacoby; standing, Zita Rahbar, past Chair of the Board; Robin Campbell, Chair of the Board; David Jacoby; and TWC V/V President Suzanne Drace.
## Calendar of Events

### Weekly:
- **Orientation meetings**
  - Led by cancer survivors
  - Tuesdays, 7pm; and Fridays, 10am
- **Participant and Family Groups**
  - Ongoing weekly support groups in Westlake Village and Camarillo
  - Orientation and interview required.
- **Family and Friends Drop-In Groups**
  - Tuesdays, 6-8pm; and Thursdays, 10am-12pm in Westlake Village
- **Beginning Yoga**
  - Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30pm
- **Tai Chi Chih**
  - Thursdays, 9:30-10am
- **Relaxation/Visualization**
  - Fridays, 1-2pm
- **Qigong**
  - Saturdays, 9-10am

### Monthly:
- **Breast Cancer Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 3rd Tuesday each month, 7-9pm
- **Brain Tumor Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 1st Thursday each month, 6:30-8:30pm
- **Women’s Support Group-Oxnard**
  - Meets on the 3rd Friday each month at The Cancer Center of Ventura County, 1700 N. Rose Avenue, Suite 145, Oxnard
- **Multiple Myeloma Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 1st Saturday each month, 11am-2pm
- **Prostate Cancer Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 3rd Saturday each month, 10:30am-12:30pm

### Bi-Monthly:
- **Knitting Club**
  - 1st, 3rd and 5th (when applicable) Tuesdays, 1-3:30pm
- **Quilting Club**
  - 2nd Wednesday and 4th Saturday each month, 1-4pm
- **Women’s Support Group-Oxnard**
  - Meets on the 3rd Friday each month at The Cancer Center of Ventura County, 1700 N. Rose Avenue, Suite 145, Oxnard
- **Multiple Myeloma Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 1st Saturday each month, 11am-2pm
- **Prostate Cancer Networking Group**
  - Meets on the 3rd Saturday each month, 10:30am-12:30pm

### Special Programs:
- **Kids Circle, Jump Into Art, for children**
  - Weekly, Tuesdays, 4-5:30pm. This program is for children between the ages of 5 and 11 years who have a parent or grandparent with cancer
- **Yoga for Stress Management – 8 week course**
  - Offered throughout the year on Mondays, 11:30am-12:45pm. Call for dates.

### Programs in Spanish:
- **“Bienvenidos A Wellness,” a support group for people with cancer and their loved ones**
  - Meets on the 3rd Tuesday each month, 7pm, Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, 22021 Gault Street, Room 1, Canoga Park. Workshops and social events, call for details, Spanish Helpline: 1-888-707-9355
- **Oxnard – Cancer support group, 2nd and 4th Thursdays, 7pm at The Cancer Center of Ventura County, St John’s Regional Medical Center, 1700 N. Rose Avenue, Oxnard**

### Upcoming Workshops:
- **Frankly Speaking About Lung Cancer**
  - Thursday, November 10
- **Harry Menco, MD, Medical Oncology/Hematology**

### Social Events:
- **Thanksgiving Feast**
  - Friday, November 18, Goebel Senior Center, Thousand Oaks
- **Holiday Party**
  - Friday, December 16, The Wellness Community Valley/ Ventura, Westlake Village

For more information:
Please go to our website: www.twcVv.org