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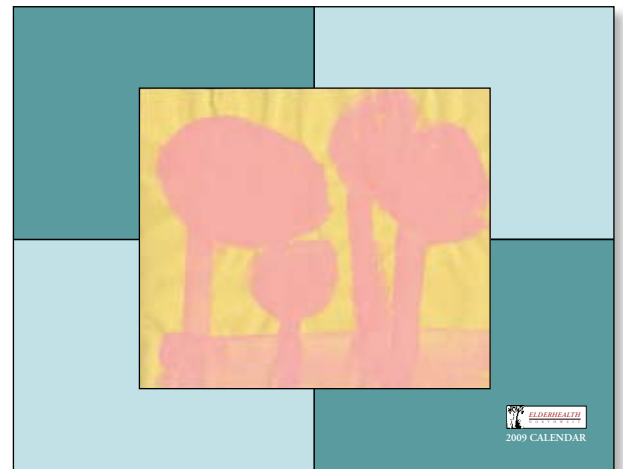
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## A planned gift touches lives at ElderHealth

Occasionally in the Northwest, our autumn skies will open up and a bright ray of sun flashes down on the water. ElderHealth Northwest recently received a very generous bequest from a friend named Helen Redmond—this gift came as unexpectedly as the flash of sun at the end of a cloudy day on the Puget Sound.

This donation is now helping to support hundreds of individuals who come to ElderHealth for help with things like health care, meals and rehabilitation. These services help them to remain independent and living in the community rather than in institutions.

Helen’s generosity was also a reminder to us that each person has the potential to create a legacy that lifts up the lives of people who we might never know personally. We would like to thank Helen and others who may have already created a bequest to ElderHealth unbeknownst to us. Your generosity has ripple effects that touch the lives of many people. If you would like information about planned giving please feel free to contact us at (206) 224-3772.



## OUR 2009 CALENDAR

We recently sent you our first-ever ElderHealth Northwest calendar, comprised of art created by participants in our adult day health programs. If you didn’t receive yours or need an additional copy, please give us a call at (206) 224-3757. Note: we have a limited supply of calendars.



# ELDERHEALTH

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## N O R T H W E S T



Keeping in touch with Big Screen Live

—See page 3

WINTER 2008—2009

## Heads Up Program Celebrates 6th Anniversary... AND Starts a Second Program!

by Marti Spicer, M.S., OT/L,  
Heads Up Program Coordinator

**E**lderHealth Northwest's Heads Up Program is an innovative adult day health offering which has been serving younger adults with acquired brain injury for six years.

At this year's Heads Up anniversary party, each client was spotlighted for their unique contributions to the group and their hard-won gains. Then, after the toasts and mini-speeches, we had a ribbon cutting and demonstration of the new Nintendo Wii sports system, which had been donated to the program by a participant's supportive family. We look forward to adding variety to our day with the Wii's gross motor sports; it's another fun way to help interact and build balance, coordination, and attention span.

Our adult day health program now has a sibling in Snohomish County! In 2008, the staff at the original Heads Up location in Seattle helped with training and materials for a second program in Marysville. They have been thriving since May, and we are thinking we will soon start letter and art exchanges! Also, professionals from the Veterans Administration and other programs in Oregon and Washington visited Heads Up to see our services with the goal of creating more vitally needed services for younger adults with brain injury. We are happy to share and further develop quality programs.



*From left: staffer Katherine joins Heads Up participants Bill and Kaare with a Microsoft volunteer on United Way's Day of Caring.*

In 2008, we started a second Heads Up in Marysville, serving all of Snohomish County.



*Doyal arrived at Heads Up in 2004 wheelchair-bound. Now he celebrates his walker independence.*

# What a "Brother" Can Do

by Nora Gibson, Executive Director

I can hear the whirring sound of a motorized wheelchair coming down the hall towards my office. In drives Charles Maxie, a man in his mid-sixties who suffered a life-altering stroke at the age of 35. He stops by my desk and with his one functioning arm reaches back into a bag and drops a box of candy on my desk. "Happy Fathers Day,"

he says, "I understand you were both a mother and a father to your children." There's some truth to that: my ex-husband and I shared parenting of our two children and at times needed to be both mother and father. At that moment I was struck by the fact that Maxie has had such a powerful influence in shaping the lives of both of my children in ways that I never could have imagined.

Charles Maxie, also known as Coach Maxie, was raised in Seattle as part of a close

knit family which was woven into the fabric of the African-American community. Maxie was a well-known local high school football player at O'Dea High School, a Catholic all boys school and long a football powerhouse in this state. He was known as "Choo Choo," fast like a train and always on time, as he put it. He played ball in junior college and coached football. In 1974 he described himself as being on top of the world (see photo: a blast from the past!) His world changed dramatically when he suffered a massive stroke while travelling in St Louis. Maxie was left with total hemi paresis of his left side and has lived the last 30 years with significant disability. The good news is Maxie has never had to live in a nursing home despite his level of disability. Through the support of adult day health at ElderHealth for many years and recent, additional help from the PACE program at Providence ElderPlace, Maxie has been able to stay in the community.

My son Will did "forced" volunteer work (kind of an oxymoron) at our downtown Seattle adult day health program when he was in the 8th grade. He actually

grew to enjoy the work and got to know Coach Maxie. One afternoon, Maxie waived me over: "Hey CE (short for CEO), get over here!" I got over there and he said, "I've got two words for your son: Wide Receiver."

At the time, Will was particularly disaffected with school and wanting the "freedom" of going to a large public high school. He really connected with Maxie, who encouraged him to apply to O'Dea High School. Although Will didn't take up football, it did change his life. Maxie asked me to write a note to Will giving him advice for life. It included, "Never forget the little guy," and "Don't let anyone take your faith from you."

My daughter Anne played basketball for Holy Names Academy. She works hard at everything she does and was extremely nervous about her performance as her first game approached. I mentioned this to Maxie, who said, "You tell Anne to hustle, hustle, hustle and focus on the 'D.' The rest will come." When I told her, she immediately expressed her relief. "He's so right, Mom, that's what I'll focus on." With that mantra in her head she did well and was voted MVP of her team.

I took Maxie to one of her games. It was a daunting task loading him into my Volkswagen Jetta.

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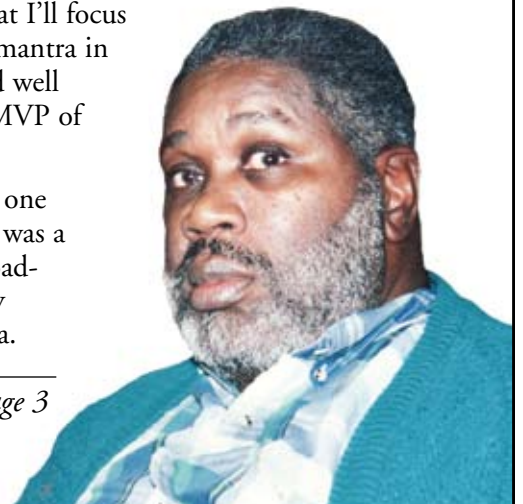
*Maxie in recent years.*



Photo: Lani O'Conner & Kristina Goudey



*Maxie (circa '74) with grandmother.*



# Big Screen Live Comes to Gaffney House

**G**affney House is well known for its welcoming environment. Stop in during the early evening and you're likely to find a houseful of residents sitting down for dinner with spouses, children, grandchildren and other loved ones.

But sometimes family members are simply too far away to visit. That's where Big Screen Live helps out. This computer software is specifically designed to help older adults stay connected with friends and family.

All Gaffney House residents are set up with an email address and a home page through which they can easily read and respond to email. They can also send and receive photographs.

Harda is a resident who had gone years lacking contact with family members in Denmark. Gaffney House Manager Jennifer Herrmann set up Harda's account and she soon heard from a Danish cousin. "She received a letter in Danish and photographs of the family," Jennifer says, "which she cherishes. She first looked at them on-



line, and then we printed out photos. She carries them in her purse and frequently brings them out to show guests."

Gaffney House is home to up to 16 residents needing specialized dementia care in a non-institutional environment. Based on Big Screen Live's success there, it will also be tried out at ElderHealth Northwest's other supported living home, Buchanan Place, and at one of our adult day health centers as well.

For more information about Big Screen Live or other services at Gaffney House, contact Jennifer at (206) 838-1935.

## NORA'S CORNER

*continued from page 2*

He's still built like a running back but only has use of one side of his body. We managed to get into the gym and I was struck by how many people there recognized him. The referee came over and said, "Hey Choo Choo, how's it going." Several of the older Catholic sisters knew him and came up to talk to him. After all these years and life events, Maxie remains a part of the community he was raised in.

He always checks in about my kids and still gives wonderful advice. After Will graduated from college he took a job working in a bank. Maxie was impressed and said, "Tell him to stay where the money is." Will however, hated working

in the bank and quit his job. When I told Maxie, he did a double-take and said, "Hold on there, for a minute I forgot, your son is a white guy. He can quit jobs — a brother can't quit no jobs like that!"

The world has changed dramatically since the November election and, regardless of your politics, what a "brother" can do is defined on different terms now. I've been really impressed with Maxie's accomplishments and what he can still do, despite (or maybe because of) his significant challenges. He still serves as a knowledgeable mentor to my children and possesses incredible faith and optimism. These are some of the wonderful things that can occur when you are still part of a community.

## CONTACT ELDERHEALTH

**DAY CENTERS & RESIDENCES King County**

**(206) 528-5315**

**ADULT DAY HEALTH CENTERS**

North Seattle (Ravenna)  
South Seattle (Rainier Valley)  
Downtown Seattle (First Hill)  
Kent (near IKEA)

**SUPPORTED LIVING HOMES**

Gaffney House (Capitol Hill)  
Buchanan Place (South Seattle)

**ELDERHEALTH AT HOME**

**(206) 371-2490**

**DAY CENTERS Snohomish County**

**(425) 355-1313**

**ADULT DAY HEALTH CENTERS**

Snohomish County (Everett & Marysville)

**DAYBREAK SENIOR RESPITE PROGRAM**

Snohomish, Mill Creek and Edmonds

**VOLUNTEERS**

**(206) 224-3790**

**DONATE**

**(206) 224-3772**

**OUR E-NEWSLETTER**

Sign up today at [www.elderhealth.org](http://www.elderhealth.org)