



New home-care firm lets seniors help seniors

The open house for Seniors Helping Seniors will be at 4:30 p.m. Thursday at the Center at the Park.

Updated: Saturday, September 26, 2009 8:05 PM PDT

By KARLENE PONTI of the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WALLA WALLA — Helping a senior remain happily in his or her home is the focus of the new local business, Seniors Helping Seniors, in-home care services, owned by Duane and Sharron Cinnamon. Duane Cinnamon said, "In 25 years of being in the insurance business, talking with people about long-term care insurance, their No. 1 concern is they do not want to go to a nursing home. They are trying to stay at home but then often they're not happy. Often this discontent comes from a social disconnect with the caregiver, which is usually a younger person. The senior gets depressed, their health declines, they go into a facility and their money is used up, then they go on Medicaid or welfare and who pays for that? We all pay for that."

Cinnamon said the logical solution is to have seniors taking care of seniors. "It's a perfect solution to a growing concern." The senior caregiver and the senior care recipient have more in common as well as similar standards and ethics, said Cinnamon. They can build a more fulfilling relationship, leading to them remaining healthier and happier.

Seniors Helping Seniors provides nonmedical services such as yard work, meal preparation, light housekeeping, shopping, transportation, overnight stays, house maintenance and more. Sometimes all the older adult needs to stay happily and safely at home may be some simple repairs, housekeeping and some yard work done for them.

"Over the years I've seen a void growing," Duane Cinnamon said. "It's a growing concern. And there's much more to it than just keeping people at home and just have a body come in and provide a service. The service is secondary, the relationship is primary. Our mission is to keep them at home as long as possible, in a loving, caring, joyous environment, with a friend coming by to help."

Cinnamon sees the structure as a win-win scenario for everyone: the care recipient, who can remain at home and meet someone near his or her own age, and the family, who have some help and stress relief. The caregiver also benefits. He or she gets to work a few paid hours a week helping someone who can become a friend. Because the care recipient is at home, they don't deplete their financial resources as quickly and taxpayers don't have to foot a huge bill. Again, Cinnamon said, everyone wins.

Care providers will meet specific criteria for Seniors Helping Seniors. They will be part-time workers, self-employed independent contractors, with Master Business Licenses and have passed a criminal background check.

According to Cinnamon, disillusionment with nonpersonal home care is a problem. Cinnamon said, "It's a generation gap. The fastest growing population group is those 85 and over."

He said that, for many seniors, it's more difficult to relate to the culture and habits of a much younger person. "I'm not at all putting down other home-care agencies, but I think this is a more reasonable solution."

This business is the next natural step for him, he has owned several businesses before in addition to his recent 25 years in the insurance industry. These experiences have prepared him for this operation. "Life is step by step, everything in life has prepared me for this moment."

"Who made this country great? Our seniors," Cinnamon said. "Who broke their backs, worked hard, kept their morals, their choices? Who's more important to take care of, our seniors, or nobody? Help them stay in their homes, happy and healthy. Seniors helping seniors is a much more sensible solution."

To get connected or to find out more, Seniors Helping Seniors will hold an open house at 4:30 p.m. Thursday at The Center at The Park, 720 Sprague Avenue. Ribbon cutting will be at 5 p.m. For more information visit seniorshelpingseniors.com/WallaWallaTriCities or call 509-876-2672.

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