



The Family Caregiver

... Help begins here



December 2011

*Blessings to all this
Holiday Season
from the board and staff
of Polk Family
Caregivers*

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President*

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*Sue McGuire
Vice President*

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*Grace Hardy
Secretary*

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*Kim Andreadis
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*Rebecca Renfroe
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Staff

Sheila Hollowell
Executive Director

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A 501(c)3 not for profit
Florida Corporation

Twelve Days of Christmas - Caregiver's Version

As caregivers when we think of gifts at the holidays, we probably think of the obvious: a cure or treatment or healing for our loved ones. But, let's get silly and fantasize about what we want for ourselves. It's all in fun - for the holidays!

**sung to the tune of the 12 Days of Christmas.*

For my **first** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
A full day at my local spa!

For my **second** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **third** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **fourth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **fifth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **sixth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **seventh** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **eighth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Eight maids a-cleaning,
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **ninth** holiday gift, I wish
that I could have:
Nine months of yard work,
Eight maids a-cleaning,
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **tenth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Ten days vacation,
Nine months of yard work,

Eight maids a-cleaning,
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

For my **eleventh** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Eleven hair appointments,
Ten days vacation,
Nine months of yard work,
Eight maids a-cleaning,
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!

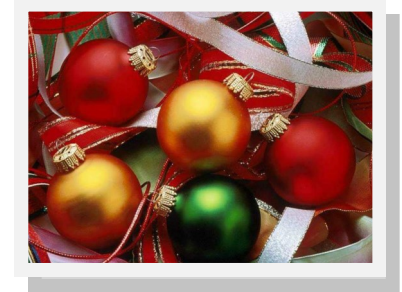
For my **twelfth** holiday gift
I wish that I could have:
Twelve full massages,
Eleven hair appointments,
Ten days vacation,
Nine months of yard work,
Eight maids a-cleaning,
Seven chefs a-cooking,
Six figure paychecks,
Five hours of sleep!
Four calls from friends,
Three neck rubs,
Two gourmet meals,
And a full day at my local spa!



Planning a Stress Free Holiday

The biggest contributor to stress is unrealistic expectations—those that others have of us and those we impose upon ourselves. Expectations of how the holidays should be may keep us from enjoying more meaningful joys.

- Start with adequate time for pre-planning.
- Lay out a timetable and don't get caught in the last minute rush.
- Delegate. You don't have to do it all and you don't have to do it alone. Enlist others, set priorities simplify!
- Set limits according to your personal situation and the abilities of the loved one you are caring for.
- Eliminate stressful long-distance visits that you've made in previous years.
- If certain rituals trigger sadness, change them or create new traditions to replace them.
- Organize your gift list. Shop early to avoid crowded stores and out-of-stock items.
- Bake or cook in advance and keep foods frozen.
- Entertaining at home? Have guests bring a dish.
- Don't volunteer for extra duties. Learn to say no.
- Listen to your body and slow down.



To Make Holiday Time Easier, Think... N.O.E.L.

Here is a handy little rule of thumb to help you through the holidays:

Note the effect of the environment and activities on your loved one.

Observe their normal routine. To decrease anxiety and agitation in your loved one during the holidays, keep the same daily routine as much as possible.

Expect changes in the way you celebrate the holidays with your loved one. Focus on activities that are still enjoyable to him/her, drop the ones that are difficult.

Medicare's Annual Open Enrollment Ends Dec. 7!



When it comes to selecting a Medicare plan one size does not fit all. What works well for your neighbor might not be the best choices for you. Each year plans change what they cost and what they cover. Each year you will want to reexamine how you and your family's personal health picture have changed and what would be the best options. During the open enrollment period it is especially important that people with Medicare choose whether to add, drop or change their choices including their prescription drug coverage. The dates to make changes are slightly different this year than previous years. **Open enrollment ends December 7.**

Election and Annual Meeting

In November Polk Family Caregivers convened its annual meeting and election of new board members at a luncheon held at the Community Room of the Lakeland Public Library on Lake Morton.

Elected this year were Autumn Mathews, Attorney of Bartow; Jen Phillips, family caregiver; Rich Behars, Chaplain at Hope Hospice; Abigail Bourgeois, MPH Candidate Healthy Start; and Jan Wooten, RN, Community/Hospital Liaison with Compassion Care Hospice. Board directors serve for a term of two years, with half of the directors standing for election each year, on a rotating basis.



Left to right: Grace Hardy, Sheila Hollowell, Rebecca Renfroe, Jen Phillips, Debbie Rydberg, Autumn Mathews and Kim Andreadis.

Returning to the board to continue service are Mic Gunderson, Executive Director of Kent County EMS in Grand Rapids Michigan (yes he commutes); Debbie Rdyberg, Care Coordinator of Andreadis Financial; Kim Andreadis, Principle, Andreadis Financial Services; and Rebecca Renfroe, Family Caregiver. Retiring from the board are Grace Hardy, Marketing Director of Valencia Hills and Sue McGuire, Vice President of Regions Bank. Much appreciation to them both for all they have contributed to the organization. Many people are better off because of their contribution. Copies of 2011's Annual Report are available on the website at www.polkcaregivers.org.

Martini Benefit a Big Success

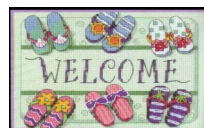


Polk Family Caregivers extends their deepest appreciation to Andreadis Financial Services and Art Tubbs Prudential Insurance for the 2011 Martini Party Benefit. Total money raised was \$1,510. Liquor for the benefit was donated by Perfect Solutions for Seniors Homecare, one of Polk Family Caregivers many collaborating partners.



Gifts donated for the silent auction were provided by Anthony's Health Hut; Bonefish Grill; Starbucks; Carla's Hair Salon; Heather and John Smith of Dickens House Bed and Breakfast in St. Petersburg; Gina's Costume Rental; Doug Braverman of Yellow Book; Melanie Young, The Gold Lady; Valencia Hills, Magnify Credit Union; Edna Williams Arbone RE9 Travel, Debbie Rydberg Party Lite, Tom and Jann Wells, Art Tubbs, Paul Saari, Dentist.

Welcome to New Partners



Welcome to our new and re-newing collaborating partners. Thank you for sharing your time and talent.

Perfect Solutions for Seniors

Hawthorn Inn of Winter Haven

Celebrating Caregivers: National Family Caregiver Month



The same month we gather with family to enjoy our Thanksgiving feast and give thanks, we also celebrate the blessing of family caregivers. Since 1994 November has been designated as National Family Caregivers' Month.

Family caregivers provide much needed help for loved ones facing limitations due to aging, illness, and declining health problems. There are an estimated 25,000 people in Polk County who are family caregivers. That is one family out of every four families who are helping to care for someone they love.

Though being a caregiver is a task undertaken out of love, we recognize that does not lessen the daily effort it takes to balance family, work, life, and the difficult tasks of caregiving. Though everyone has good intentions we know it can become overwhelming and stressful.

Because we applaud your efforts and commitment, from all of us to all our community of family caregivers, we wish you peace and prosperity and our support and recognition during this National Family Caregiving Month.

To Those Whose Profession is Caregiving

The holidays are a season of hope. It is a time of faith and renewal. It is a time of reflecting on the many blessings in our lives. This is the season where most people are concentrating on spending time with their families and loved ones, sharing gifts, visiting with friends, and the activities that go with holiday time, the rushing to finish the last minute shopping, baking, decorating and making those crazy airport jaunts on the worst possible travel day of the year.



But for those in the people helping professions, such as case managers, social workers, home health aids, elder care helpers, nurses, EMT's, counselors, hospice workers and other professional caregivers, holiday preparations most likely mean something even more complicated. These professionals spend their valuable time making the bustling holidays better for others — many of whom are clients and patients who they don't even know very well — while leaving their own needs pushed to the back burner. They will deal with personal holiday demands with whatever left over bits and pieces of time and energy remain after all their clients, families, and volunteers are cared for. These are the professionals who will be on call Christmas Eve, who will work on Christmas Day, who will not have an uninterrupted dinner at home with friends and family, but will eat a quick snack from a hospital tray or unwrap gifts when their shifts have ended. To you we extend our blessings. This Holiday Season amid the flurry, we pause, to say thank you from Polk Family Caregivers and all the people whose lives you improve. Know that we are aware of your efforts and are thankful for all of you and the work you do.

Polk Family Caregiver Donations

Polk Family Caregivers is a Florida registered 501(c)3 nonprofit charity that accepts tax deductible donations to assist in our mission of providing education, information, guidance and support to family caregivers through events, programs, and services such as Caregiver Support Groups, Caregiving Classes, The Care Helpline, the website and the quarterly newsletter.

DONORS

Personal donations are graciously accepted to benefit family caregivers.

COLLABORATING PARTNER

For \$65.00 annually, businesses, corporations, agencies, health and medical care providers and other professionals who wish to serve family caregivers and demonstrate their commitment and support, can become Collaborating Partners.



A Florida 501(c)3 tax exempt organization.

Enclosed is:

- My donation in the amount of \$_____ in honor of _____.
- \$65 — 1 year Collaborating Partnership

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Signature _____

Return with check to:

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**POLK FAMILY
CAREGIVERS**



Help Begins Here