

# Ready



# Hands Inc.

Home Care Services for Seniors

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www.readyhands.com

April - June 2005

## News for Clients and Friends

### To Our Clients and Friends...

We count our blessings every day for the opportunities you have afforded us to grow our business and to serve clients and families in our community. It has certainly been a busy year so far!

We have met many new clients during the past quarter. Some of these are sadly no longer with us. We have stood in admiration watching families draw together to face with dignity the wrenching trials at the end of life. It has been a true privilege to participate in their care.

As the weather warms and spring turns to summer, we wish all of you all the good things that are possible in your lives. Thank you for your confidence and support.

*Sue Benson, R.N.*

*Granger Benson, M.D.*

### Halkame Areri Receives Quarterly Recognition Award

This quarter our award goes to Nurse Aide Halkame Areri. Halkame has only been with Ready Hands since November, 2004. Our usual inclination is to present this award to someone with a longer employment history with our company, but Halkame has made her mark as few



people could. She has worked with five clients and their families as of April, and each one of them has given Halkame rave reviews. "Superstar", "goldmine" and "jewel" are just some of the superlatives clients have used to describe her.

Halkame has a contagious warmth and energy. She is caring and conscientious to a fault. She is also very competent at assisting clients with their personal care needs. Ready Hands is truly fortunate to have her on our team.

**Congratulations and  
Thank You, Halkame!**

### Thank You For Your Referrals!

We owe a big "Thank You!" to the following people and organizations who have recommended us during the past three months (if we have left you out, let us know!):

Barbara Payne, M.S.W. of ElderCare Strategies; Joan Richardson, R.N. of Advanced Care Management; Bob McCoy of Virginia Commerce Bank; Messiah Lutheran Church; Capital Hospice; Inova Fairfax Hospital Social Services; Inova VNA Home Health; Nancy Fiedelman of the Aynsley Group; Susan Wallace of ElderCare Strategies; David Kendall; Margaret Huntington; St. Marks Lutheran Church; Catholic Charities; Lutheran Church of the Redeemer; St. Ambrose Catholic Church

### We Are Pleased To Announce...

#### Ready Hands Passes Re-Licensure Inspection with Flying Colors

Licensed home care organizations must undergo periodic unannounced inspections by a representative of the Department of Health. The inspections are very comprehensive, covering areas such as documentation and record-keeping, personnel files and background checks, quality assurance activities and many others. We are proud to say that our inspection in March was concluded in record time with no deficiencies, and elicited uncharacteristic expressions of admiration from the inspector!

#### Employees Receive Profit Bonus

Ready Hands has always distributed a portion of quarterly profits to its employees. This bonus usually ranges from 7 to 10% of gross wages. We are happy to report a 10% bonus for the first quarter of 2005.

To our knowledge, Ready Hands is the only area home care company that has this policy. It is just one reason that we are able to attract and retain higher caliber employees.

Treating employees well is the first step toward treating clients well. Because employees and applicants tell their friends about us, we never have to advertise. In fact, nearly

### You Can Shake the Salt Habit

If you're an average American, you are probably consuming about twice the recommended amount of salt daily, and about ten times what your body needs for basic health. So, this topic might be important for you. Why? Read on.

#### Sodium Basics

By salt, we commonly mean table salt--sodium chloride. The health implications we'll be discussing here relate to the sodium component. The body needs only around 500 milligrams (abbreviated mg) of sodium daily, which can generally be achieved with a diet completely free of table salt or salty-tasting foods. Most experts recommend that for general good health, we all limit intake to 2400 mg per day, but the average intake for Americans is about double that. Sodium intake is linked to the development of hypertension through mechanisms that are still widely debated. Some people seem to be particularly "sodium-sensitive," but it is difficult to distinguish these from people who are not. High sodium intake also increases the chances of a stroke.

Another important reason to be concerned about sodium is its importance in fluid-retaining states like heart failure and kidney disease. The sodium concentration of body fluid is tightly regulated. When we ingest excess sodium, the body compensates by retaining fluid in order to maintain the concentration at the normal level. That's why people with disorders causing fluid overload should restrict sodium, sometimes to as little as 1000 mg per day. It's also part of the reason that sodium intake can increase blood pressure. But restricting sodium is easier said than done.

#### Restricting Sodium May Not Be Easy

Table salt is certainly the commonest source of sodium. A level teaspoon contains about 2000 mg. Avoiding the addition of salt during cooking or at the table is therefore the first step. But by itself, that won't be enough.

To successfully keep sodium intake down, one must avoid many processed and prepared foods. Canned vegetables and soups are big culprits. Anything that tastes overtly

salty or is cured in salt should also be avoided. Restaurant food, especially fast food, is notoriously high in sodium. In contrast, fresh vegetables, fruits, meat and fish generally have very little.

To get a "flavor" for the sodium content of various foods, here are a few examples. (On this list, one serving is defined as three and a half ounces):

- Cooked bacon, 1021 mg.
- Canadian bacon, 2500 mg.
- Fresh green beans, 4 mg
- Canned green beans, 236 mg.
- Roast beef, 60 mg.
- Corned beef, 1740 mg.
- Canned beef stew, 400 mg.
- Cottage cheese, 406 mg.
- Pizza, 702 mg.
- Pickles, 1428 mg.
- Canned soup, 350 to 450 mg.

In the past, of course, salting was an important means of preserving food. But, why is salt so prevalent in the foods we eat today? For one thing, salt improves flavor. Also, salted foods like soups seem thicker and less watery. Surprisingly, salt increases the sweetness of foods like cookies and cakes. Salt also helps reduce the dryness of crackers, pretzels and similar foods. Despite all of this, you can still learn to shake the salt habit.

#### Tips For Getting The Low Sodium Habit

People adapt to the taste of salt. At first, food may not taste good after you start to cut down on sodium, but after a while you will find that the food you used to eat tastes too salty. Here some tips that can help you get the low sodium habit:

- Avoid seasonings that are high in sodium or have salt as part of their name such as soy sauce, garlic salt, onion salt and celery salt.
- Add flavor to food with herbs, spices and condiments such as lemon, vinegar, garlic, onion powder, pepper, dill, dry mustard, curry powder, basil, oregano and mint.
- At restaurants, ask about the salt content of foods. Some chefs will omit salt when asked. (If they won't, at least they'll begin to notice that customers care about this issue.)
- Read food labels. As a rule of thumb, avoid foods with more than 140 mg of sodium per serving. Foods labeled as "low sodium" have less than this amount per serving.
- Compare labels on similar products and choose the lower sodium brand.
- Finally, consider using salt substitutes, but ask your doctor first. The reason is that many such products are very high in potassium, which can be a problem for certain people.



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We Are Pleased To Announce (continued from page 1)

1000 people have called inquiring about work at Ready Hands in the past two years.

#### Ready Hands Joins Virginia

#### Association of Personal Care Providers

The VAPCP represents companies like ours throughout the state that provide help in the home with activities of daily living. Ready Hands is also a proud member of the National Private Duty Association and the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce.