



The Golden Gram

Dear Friends & Supporters,



I don't know about you, but I feel like the sun has come out again! And, it's shining hope on us all.

Now, that's not to say that this past year hasn't been a challenging one. When the arrival of COVID-19 arrived just over a year ago, life was altered. The Rona Barrett Foundation certainly felt its impact as we provided wellness services for the low-income senior citizens residing at the Golden Inn & Village (GIV).

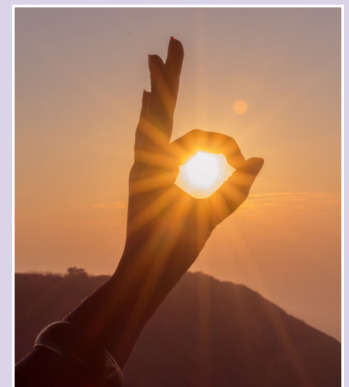
Immediately, safety and health protocols were put into place, as the elderly were among those most vulnerable to the virus. To aid in prevention of a potential spread, the residents had to self-isolate and visitors (including myself) were not allowed at the GIV. Our caring staff quickly addressed the seniors in isolation situation.

To ensure that these seniors did not go hungry during the pandemic, our nutritious meal program was expanded from three-days-a-week to six-days-a-week. While many of our other social activities had to be placed on hold, our Senior Behavioral Health program maintained personal counseling services to aid with the emotional stress caused by the crisis.

All of these services were provided at no charge to the residents.

Today, those two programs are still in operation thanks to your generous, ongoing financial support. As the sun continues to shine more and more each day, we aim to make the other programs and services available to the senior residents, who have truly been resilient through the jolts of the past year. They too believe in hope.

One wonderful example of how hope comes to life is with the GIV's recent Audiology Clinic. One of our elderly male residents was so excited to receive not only a medical exam, but a new hearing aid as well. "I can finally hear again," he told a member of our staff. It was a special moment.



As we move forward, the Rona Barrett Foundation knows that there will be many more special moments like that, because we are committed to giving these seniors the golden years that they deserve. Let's keep shining!

With gratitude,

Rona

SENIOR GARDENING PROGRAM



"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." – Audrey Hepburn

Spring has sprung at the Golden Inn & Village (GIV)! With appropriate COVID-19 safety and health precautions in place, the Senior Gardening Program is in full bloom.

When the GIV first opened its doors nearly five years ago, ideas were already in motion to have activities that would take place inside the building, as well as outdoors too. Located on the facility's beautiful patio, four raised gardening beds serve as the centerpieces for this back-to-nature program.

"It's so wonderful to see the residents showing their green thumb skills," said Anna Widling, Director of Wellness Programs & Services of the GIV. "And, the raised beds make the activity so accessible for our seniors."

In addition to seasonal flowers showcasing some color, the gardening program also includes herbs and an occasional veggie or two.

"The other day I was walking past the gardening beds while a resident was planting flowers and overheard him say, 'There's nothing like playing in the dirt!'" said Anna. "I have to admit, it made me smile!"

Meet The Board of Trustees LISA CLEMENT, MD



"I am honored to be a board member of the Rona Barrett Foundation," said Dr. Lisa Clement, who has served as a Trustee for more than five years. She's especially proud of the development of the Golden Inn & Village. "The residences we are creating for seniors with low incomes are modern, spacious and very much appreciated by the occupants. As a bonus, we have meal services and fun activities to create the environment of a home and community. We hope to add more wellness services to help our residents maintain optimal health."

And, she is committed to the future plans of the Rona Barrett Foundation. "We are working hard to create new accommodations to be called Harry's House, named after Rona's father." The new phase is planned to be constructed on the adjacent lot of the existing Golden Inn & Village.

As a medical professional, Dr. Clement has a passion to serve others. "I have always been intrigued by science and the field of Internal Medicine has given me the gratification that comes with helping others. I was trained

at USC, first a Masters in Human Anatomy where I had the unglamorous job of teaching gross anatomy to medical students. This was followed by medical school at USC, then a residency that I finished at Cottage Hospital. Santa Barbara was my dream city and I practiced medicine there for twenty years."

Eventually, she heard the Santa Ynez Valley calling her name! "As Santa Barbara grew, my husband (William Alton, MD) and I happily moved to the Santa Ynez Valley to work and raise our two daughters and we have been here for nearly ten years. Although my husband has now retired, I continue to practice in a small solo practice in Solvang."

Outside of her volunteer work and medical practice, she has varied interests. "My husband and I love to ride horses, travel, read novels and cook together. We raise chickens and enjoy sharing the pale blue and olive green eggs with our friends. We have a very large extended family and see them whenever possible."

Meet The Residents of The Golden Inn & Village

CINDY ACOSTA

"Wow, it would be so wonderful to live there one day," Cindy Acosta would tell herself as she drove past the Golden Inn & Village (GIV) on her way to work at the casino, located a couple of miles down the road. One day, her heartfelt wish came true.

In 2012, Cindy's husband was the victim of a hit and run crime and, unfortunately, he never fully recovered from the injuries sustained. She continued to work at the casino, while caring for her husband. Money became tight, as rent and living expenses were almost unbearable. Unbeknownst to Cindy, her husband applied for residency at the GIV. In case anything ever happened to him, he wanted to make sure she would have place to call home.



In 2016, the couple received the good news that they were accepted into the family apartments on the GIV campus. Cindy's husband passed away three years ago and eventually she was able to move into her affordable senior GIV apartment.

"I love living here; it's a miracle," Cindy shared. "I have peace of mind knowing that I have a home to go to this is safe and beautiful."

Cindy believes in giving back: she volunteers four-days-a-week at a thrift store and for the Food Bank. Goodness must run in the family, as her sister, Sandra Perez, volunteers at the GIV hair salon twice a month and her sister-in-law and husband, Janet and Mike Glenn, volunteer with the entertainment group, Back in Time, who have performed at the GIV multiple times.

She's the proud mother of two children and seven grandchildren. Whenever she can, she loves to attend her grandkid's soccer and softball games. "I'm their number one cheerleader," she smiled!



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Don't miss out on special video messages from Rona Barrett and other updates from the Rona Barrett Foundation and news from the Golden Inn & Village.

Send us your email address to: info@ronabarrettfoundation.org

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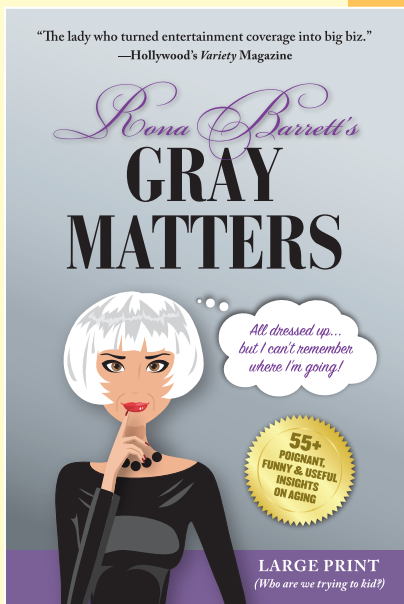
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RONA BARRETT'S GRAY MATTERS

The Founder and CEO of The Rona Barrett Foundation recently published a book, Rona Barrett's Gray Matters. In each newsletter, we'll share an excerpt from the book!

BETTER READ THAN DEAD



A magazine article that caught my eye reported that book readers live an average of almost two years longer than those who do not read books.

Like most of you, I keep books on my shelves that I revisit as I do long-time friends.

I know my mother read to me a lot but, the truth is, I can't recall a specific book from my early childhood. Though when I think back to those lavishly illustrated picture books, they seem more like they were places I visited than those just read about. Books were my virtual reality.

If you think that print is dead and traditional books belong in that great library in the sky, think again! Nearly 75 percent of adult Americans 18 and older report reading a printed book in the past year. Only 6 percent of Americans exclusively read digital books. And, are you sitting down? Young people 18-29 read more printed books than those of us 65 and older!

For me, there's still nothing like reading a book and the feel of turning a real page.

To read more stories and anecdotes about aging, purchase Rona Barrett's Gray Matters visit www.ronabarrettfoundation.org or call 805.688.8887. All sales proceeds benefit the Rona Barrett Foundation and its programs and services for seniors in their time of need.