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Member, National Academy
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MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Oast & Hook received the following tips from Treena Wood from Home Sweet Home Care in Smithfield, Virginia. We share this information with readers of the *Elder Law News*, and we thank Ms. Wood for her input.

In the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's hard to forget the festive season isn't just about your children, the big dinner, the tree, and the parties. Our parents, grandparents and older relatives are often the loneliest at this time of year. There are things we can do, however, to make sure they feel loved and included.

- **Include them as much as possible.** If the seniors in your family aren't as mobile as they used to be, then offer to pick them up and drop them off, or arrange for a cab or for someone else to do the driving.
- **Recognize their limitations.** Grandma may be used to whipping together turkey dinners for 12, but her hands and eyes aren't what they used to be. You should encourage older family members to take it easy, and you should pamper them for a change. But let them help with smaller, less complicated tasks if they want to participate.
- **Listen to their stories.** Many of our older relatives live in their memories. Encourage them to talk about holidays past. If they keep albums, ask to see the photographs. They may have some wonderful traditions from their childhood that you can incorporate into your own family's plans.
- **Give the best gift of all; give your time!** "Most of the seniors I work with say the best gift of all is spending time with family," said Shirley McGee, owner of Home Sweet Home Care. Unhurried, uncomplicated family time will mean the most to your loved ones and will create memories to last all year long.

- **Don't let it end.** With the excitement over and the families getting back to their normal routines, the weeks right after the holidays are often the hardest for seniors. Make it your New Year's resolution to spend more time with your older relatives throughout the year.

It's often around family holidays that you'll notice your older parent, grandparent or relative isn't doing as well as they once were. If you need assistance with the needs of your senior family members, the attorneys and staff at Oast & Hook can help. Agencies such as Home Sweet Home Care are also available to assist seniors in maintaining as much independence as possible, by providing the appropriate in-home assistance and companionship. Shirley McGee can be reached at 757-356-0342, or www.homesweethomecare.com.

Seminar

Oast & Hook is proud to present a seminar entitled: "Recent Developments in Long-term Care Planning." This seminar is open to the public, and it will be held at the Chesapeake Conference Center, 900 Greenbrier Circle, Chesapeake, Virginia 23320, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Monday, January 23, 2006. For more information, please telephone Jennifer Lantz or Linda Gerber at 757-399-7506.

Oast & Hook

Oast & Hook is an elder law firm. We represent older persons, disabled persons, their families, and their advocates. The practice of elder law includes estate planning, investment and insurance advice, estate and trust administration, powers of attorney, advance medical directives, titling of assets and designations of beneficiaries, guardianships, conservatorships, and public entitlements such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and SSI, disability planning, income tax planning and preparation, bill paying and account management and reporting, care management, and fiduciary services. We also handle litigation involving these issues, such as will contests and estate administration disputes. For more information about Oast & Hook, please visit our website at www.oasthook.com.

Distribution of This Newsletter

Oast & Hook encourages you to share this newsletter with anyone who is interested in issues pertaining to the elderly, the disabled and their advocates. The information in this newsletter may be copied and distributed, without charge and without permission, but with appropriate citation to Oast & Hook, P.C. If you are interested in a free subscription to the *Elder Law News*, then please e-mail us at eln@oasthook.com, telephone us at 757-399-7506, or fax us at 757-397-1267.

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