

CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

Connections for Caregivers

Will Kesling: A Man of Many Talents

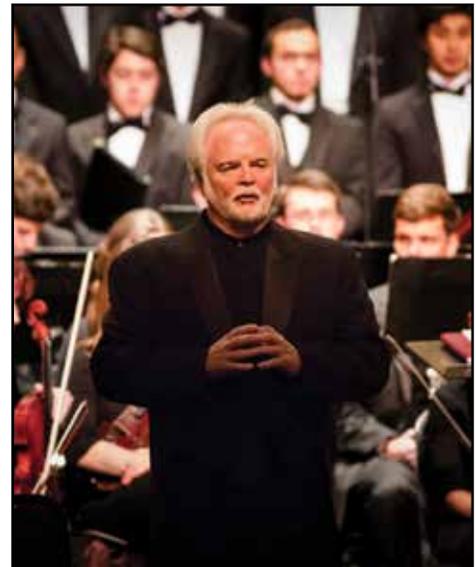
By Danielle Greenberg

Balancing your professional life with a role as caregiver is often a difficult and sometimes overwhelming challenge. Some people can't do it, and have to give up their livelihood – or at least put it on hold. It was fortunate for the community and for those to whom he has given care that Dr. Will Kesling did not have to do that.

Instead, Kesling was able to find the time to take care of

his mother and wife, while still remaining a well-respected conductor and part of the UF faculty. Dr. Will Kesling is not just your average man, between being a professor and Program Director of Choral Activities at the University of Florida and being a caregiver at home for both his mother and wife, he is more like a superhero.

Kesling is an extremely talented conductor, having conducted orchestras all over



A Message From Cheryl Robinson



Summer is here and we are all looking for ways to beat the heat. Hopefully we are finding

ways to stay cool and slow down the pace. It is essential to be mindful of our own heat index, like what's getting us upset, and what works to cool us down. In this issue, we highlight a caregiver who has spent most of his life finding that balance in all aspects of his life. We also learn about an advance directive – POLST – that will soon be available in Florida.

When implemented, this directive will help avert those heated times of crisis when important medical decisions need to be made. And then we can read about geriatric care management as we talk to one of our own local gems. Greg McGann has been working with our elders and families for 30 years. As a professional counselor as well, he has been teaching us techniques to beat the heat so to speak- So, here's to a more peaceful and balanced summer with that occasional breeze to help us stay cool.

Cheryl Robinson, LCSW

the world including, Russia, Czech Republic, Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Spain, Korea and many more outstanding destinations. He has worked at the University of Florida for more than 11 years and has been directing choirs for more than 38 years. Many of his choirs have received international recognition due to his unbelievable talent and skill.

When Kesling is not spending his time impressing sold-out audiences, or influencing students' lives in the classroom, he is at home taking care of his 87-year-old mother who has advanced Alzheimer's. He has been a caregiver for "37 years and

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Dr. Will Kesling

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counting.”

Kesling was also a caregiver for Janet, his wife of 30 years, who was diagnosed with relapsing remitting multiple sclerosis in February 1977. Unfortunately, she passed away in November 2007.

Kesling says that the key to coping with his busy lifestyle and taking care of his loved ones is to coordinate the responsibilities of work and taking care of his mother.

“The job is not difficult because I love what I do,” he said when speaking about working at UF and allocating his time to each important aspect of his life. “There is a stress level that comes with being a caregiver because you have to meet their schedule to care for them, and you have to coordinate your professional life to make a living in order to pay for the other care that you cannot give.”

As a caregiver whose job is not solely taking care of someone, it is important to manage your time efficiently, and be sure to provide the correct amount of care to the patient.

When discussing his mother’s condition he compared her situation to that of the movie *50 First Dates*. He says “every day is a new day,” and he approaches each day differently depending on his mother’s state that day.

Dividing your time between two extremely important responsibilities is not an easy task to accomplish, but Dr. Will Kesling seems to have mastered the challenge.

Calendar of Events

Becoming a Savvy Caregiver

Savvy Caregiver Training is a free six week training course for persons who are caring for family members and friends with dementia and/or Alzheimer’s Disease.

Wednesdays: 1:30 – 3:30 pm, beginning Sept.3 in Starke

Thursdays: 1:00 – 3:00 pm, beginning Sept. 4 in Gainesville

Mondays: 1:00 – 3:00 pm, beginning Sept. 8 in Trenton (at Ayers Rehab)

Class size is limited to 15. Register by calling Tom Rinkoski at (352) 378-6649, extension 126, or via e-mail to rinkoskit@agingresources.org.

Dementia in the Movies

6-8 pm at the offices of Elder Options, 100 SW 75th Street, Suite 301

Tues., July 29 *Savages*

No charge and popcorn provided. To register contact Tom Rinkoski at (352) 378-6649, ext. 126 or via e-mail at rinkoskit@agingresources.org

Community Coalition for Older Adults

Second Friday of the month, Senior Recreation Center, 5701 NW 34 St. Contact Shirley Bloodworth at sgblood@bellsouth.net for information.

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From the Desk of Sam W. Boone, Jr.:

POLST: Helping to Make Care Decisions

By Sam Boone

Editor's Note: This is part of a series of columns that will be presented in this newsletter by Sam W. Boone, Jr., a local attorney whose primary practice areas include elder law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. It is hoped that the information will be valuable for caregivers and family members dealing with issues related to elder law.

A few years ago a woman I never met was living in a local nursing home. This woman had not spoken in more than a year, could only sit or lay down and was totally dependent on others for her feeding and care.

One night she choked – medical staff believe it may have been on some food. She stopped breathing. The family had a DNR order, and there was an Advance Directive detailing end-of-life care. Nursing home staff, in what was described later as an honest mistake, called 911. The woman was revived, taken to the hospital, put on life-support and lived for another week before passing away.

Had POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) existed in Florida at the time, this unfortunate set of circumstances, in opposition to her wishes and her family's, may have been avoided.

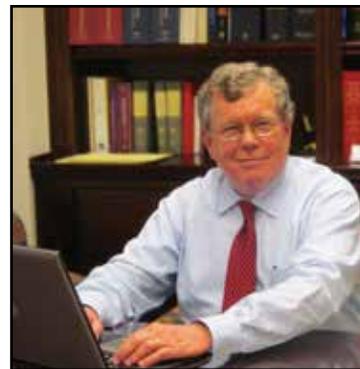
POLST is designed to complement Advance Directives – not replace them. POLST lists the types of treatment that are wanted or not wanted. It is a program that includes education, training and a quality improvement process.

POLST got its start in Oregon in 1991. Florida's POLST program is a project in development at the Center for Innovative Collaboration in Medicine and Law – a joint effort of the FSU College of Medicine and FSU College of Law.

POLST is voluntary and can be revoked or replaced with a new one at any time. In fact, having more than one POLST as a disease progresses is common. It differs from an Advance Directive in that it is generally used with people having a serious illness. Advance Directives are usually completed with an elder-law attorney but POLSTs are usually done in a medical setting. Advance Directives state

preferences and a surrogate, while POLST results in medical orders based on shared decision-making with the patient and medical-care professionals.

So the medical-setting conversation results in actionable medical orders that are recorded in a standardized POLST form kept in the front of the patient's medical records or in their home. The POLST always addresses cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and also can address other end-of-life



healthcare issues, such as the level of medical intervention desired in an emergency, the use of artificially supplied nutrition and hydration, the use of antibiotics and the use of ventilation. They are designed to be recognized across the healthcare community.

Back to the woman I talked about at the top. Today I work with her family. There's no way of knowing for sure if the medical staff at the nursing home would have acted differently had there been a POLST form at the front of her chart or posted at her bed. One would hope that it may have. But the important thing is that a tragic incident like that becomes a learning opportunity. People who are trained in the medical arts want to save lives. But the more we discuss the wishes of the patients and the family, the more likely those wishes are taken into account. POLST is one more step in helping with that process.

To learn more about POLST, go online to www.polst.org.

Sam W. Boone, Jr. is a Gainesville-based attorney practicing elder law and estate planning. He is past-president of the Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys. To learn more about elder-law issues, go online to [www. http://boonelaw.com](http://boonelaw.com), or call (352)-374-8308.

Community-Based Care Transitions Programs

By Laura Vazquez

A free program that has been proven to lower the chances of returning to the hospital means great news for caregivers and family members. If your loved one is in the hospital, or has been in the hospital in the last 30 days, they could be eligible for this free program and you owe it to them and yourself to be aware and use this new resource.

Prempaul Murrhee is the CCTP facilitator consulting for Elder Options and the Gainesville marketing liaison for Greystone Home Health Care.

Elder Options in partnership with UF Health and North Florida Regional Medical Center received funding through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) for a Community-based Care Transitions Program (CCTP). The program is funded for two years with the goal of reducing hospital readmission rates among all Medicare patients by 20%, addressing systemic readmission issues, and bridging the gap between patient, health providers and community services, says Murrhee. The good news is that if the goals of the program are met, the program will be funded for an additional three years.

“The programs also work with a coalition of agencies that include skilled nursing facilities (SNF), home health agencies, health departments and transportation providers among other agencies,” Murrhee said.

Community-based Care Transitions Program is unique in that it works with the patients to actively partake in their own health care needs. To be

eligible for the program, a patient must be enrolled in Medicare A and B, discharged from one of the partner hospitals, and reside in one of the following counties: Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Hamilton, Lafayette, Marion, Putnam, Suwannee, Union, Dixie, Gilchrist or Levy. The program is based off the Care Transition Intervention model developed by Dr. Eric Coleman and involves a transition coach meeting with the patient in the hospital and at their home setting following a discharge from a hospital or skilled nursing facility.

During the visits, the transition coach empowers the patient to do the following: develop a personal health record, perform a medication reconciliation to ensure the patient is able to acquire the needed meds, has a system in place to take their medications, discuss any red-flag warning signs of their condition and ensure there is appropriate follow up with the primary-care provider. The coach will also address any other issues that need attention such as help with accessing needed community based services or small equipment such as providing the patient with blood pressure cuffs, a scale and a pill organizer if they feel that it is needed.

“The program has been in operation for more than a year and has reduced readmissions among patients enrolled within the program by 50%,” Murrhee said.

For more information about CCTP or how to enroll, contact Elder Options at 1-800-963-5337.

The Caregiver Chronicle is now available online at www.caregiverchronicle.com.

We also have a Facebook page.

Check it out at

www.facebook.com/CaregiverChronicle.

Like the page to get notices about events and activities between our print issues.

Geriatric Case Management

By Laura Vazquez

Someone working in geriatric case management can be of assistance to the elderly for a large range of services in order to improve the individual's independence and overall quality of life. That, says Gregory McGann, is the reward in what he does.

McGann, a clinical social worker, brought nearly four decades of experience when he opened up his own practice, Omega Counseling and Care Management Services in Gainesville.

"Our mission statement is simply to preserve one's independence and protect their dignity," McGann said.

This simple statement can go a long way for the elderly and their loved ones. Piece of mind is most important and it is the case managers job to put everyone at ease.

Case managers start by completing a comprehensive home assessment where needs are discussed in order to improve quality of life and how capable one is to live in independence. During this consultation one can express his/her concerns and the

case manager can come up with different solutions and resources that will be helpful for the future.

McGann has worked with families in a number of situations that have included arranging in-home services for care and necessities, making medical appointments for people, assisting in decisions that need to be made by offering professional advice, contacting elder-law attorneys, helping with end-of-life planning and informing families about benefits they can receive and how to make the most of them.

Taking care of a loved one can be hard on families and sometimes one might think there is no one to turn to in times of need, but geriatric case managers can assist in just about every aspect of life and it is their sole goal to improve one's quality of life and make sure that independence is given with client's safety in mind.

For national information about care management, go online to www.caremanager.org. to learn more about Omega Counseling and Care Management, got to www.omega-counselingcaremanagement.com.



Useful Resources

Alzheimer's Association – www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp

Elder Affairs – www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php

Comparing health plans, nursing homes, etc. – www.floridahealthfinder.gov

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) www.floridashine.org

Medicare – www.medicare.org

State of Florida – www.myflorida.com

National Institute on Aging (free publications) – www.nig.nih.gov

Caregiving – www.parentgiving.com

Respite locator – www.respitelocator.org

Caregiving – www.rosalynncarter.org

Driving – www.thehartford.com/talkwitholderdrivers/driversatrisk.htm

United Way – Alachua, Bradford & Putnam counties – www.unitedwaycnfl.org

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Management - www.caremanager.org

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John Markham and Sally Dahlem

Owner/Operators with more than 30 years of combined experience in homecare, assisted living administration, skilled nursing facility admissions, case management and medical equipment sales.



This is Your Newsletter!

We want your contributions

**Poetry
Stories**

Recipes for Comfort Food

Information About Meetings or Workshops

**Whatever Helps You Make It
Through the Day**

**Send your contributions to
david@greenbergcommunications.com**

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Gainesville, FL 32608

Caregiver Support Groups

Alz Place/Harbor Chase
3rd Thursday of the month at 9am
Open to all caregivers
Contact Robyn at 352-375-3000 for address

Alterra Clare Bridge
3rd Thursday of the month- 6pm
4607 NW 53rd Ave, Gainesville, Fl 32653
Contact Gail at 376-5151

The Cancer Center at NFRMC
Heart of Healing Support Group/Meditation
Tuesdays 12-12:30pm
Call Joanie at 386-853-0162

Community Cancer Center
Living With Cancer Supports
www.ccnf.com for more information

Community Cancer Center
Lake City Support Group
2nd Wednesday every month 11am - 1pm
4520 W.US Hwy. 90, Lake City, FL 32055
For more information call 386-755-0601

Haven Hospice
Bereavement Supports
Call 692-5123 for more information

Hospice of the Nature Coast
Wings Community Education Center
Grief Support Group- High Springs
Call 386-454-1338 for more information

Lake Area Caregiver Support Group
4th Tuesday of the month from 1-2:00pm
Melrose Senior Community Center
307 SR 26, Melrose, FL 32666
Call 352-475-5347 for more information

Park of the Palms
2nd Monday at 2pm in the Library
Contact: Gail Haynes RNC - 352-246-5601

Park Meadows Health and Rehab Center
3250 SW 41 Pl, GV
Call the Alz Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for
more information

Senior Healthcare Center at Spring Hill
3rd Tuesday of the month- 2:30-4:00pm
3720 NW 83rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32606
Contact Flory at 336-3050

NF Mind Matters Stroke Support Group
4th Thursday of the month from 1-2 pm
South Tower, 4th floor Conference Room-
NFRMC
Call 1-800-611-6913 for more information

United Church of Gainesville
1624 NW 5th Ave, GV
3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm
Open to all caregivers
Contact Lynda at 352-219-3023

VA Caregiver Support
Mon-Fri- 8am- 11pm, Sat. 10:30-6pm
Call 1-855-260-3274