

# insight

## Perspective

From the Executive Director

On September 25, more than 140 people, including seniors from the wider community, participated in Pilgrim Haven's annual health fair. Participants found a wealth of information from Pilgrim Haven staff and pharmaceutical representatives. They took tests to measure bone density, blood pressure, and body mass index and enjoyed some healthy refreshments. It was a great day of spirited conversation about living well. And the event underscored how committed Pilgrim Haven residents are to successful aging.

Heredity, environment, and a lifetime of behaviors all affect aging. But the choices made in retirement are just as important. Choices about diet, physical exercise, intellectual stimulation, spiritual reflection, and social engagement shape the quality of aging. Pilgrim Haven residents understand this – and they embrace the power of their choices.

They eagerly sign up for our cognitive development courses, Neurobics and Posit Science Brain Fitness, both part of our Masterpiece Living program. And they are enthusiastic participants in exercise programs and outdoor excursions.

Our community provides a variety of services to support residents, including the on-campus therapy program featured in this edition. Residents, however, ultimately take charge of their own wellness. That in itself is a sign of successful aging.

Karen Jenney

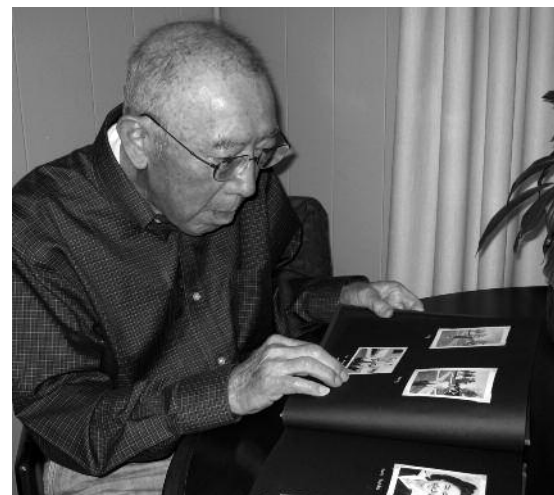
## Painful Past Prompts Successful Journey

Roy Kuramoto isn't shy about saying the worst thing that happened to him as a child contributed mightily to the outstanding adult he became.

Kuramoto, a Pilgrim Haven resident since moving here in 2004 with his wife, Yemiko ("Amy"), retired in 1990 as corporate vice president of the pharmaceuticals division of Syntex Industries in Palo Alto.

But before seeing years of success in the pharmaceutical industry, Kuramoto faced some of the nation's darkest stateside days as an internee at the Gila Bend War Relocation Camp south of Phoenix, Ariz., from 1942–1945.

"It was very disturbing," says Kuramoto, a Japanese-American sent from his native Los Angeles to the camps at the age of 14 along with his parents, four brothers, and two sisters. "I wondered, 'Why am I being



Roy Kuramoto looks through an old photo album in his Pilgrim Haven home.

shipped away when I've done nothing wrong?' Everything I had done up until then had been right and yet I was still being shipped out because of my ancestry."

Among the younger internees, the big concern was what they would do when the war ended, Kuramoto says. His option, given that his family could not support him, was to join the Army. But even there he continued to meet with discrimination.

*continued inside*



Roy Kuramoto at age 18.

“If you were in the service and had the uniform on, there were still places that wouldn’t serve you,” he says.

The subsequent drawdown of the military resulted in his being discharged with full benefits, including college tuition through the G.I. Bill, only one year after enlisting. He moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, to finish his bachelor’s degree in pharmacy at the

University of Utah. It was there he met Amy, soon to become his wife, who avoided being interned by virtue of living in Wyoming during the war.

Academic work eventually took him to the University of Wisconsin for his master’s degree and doctorate in 1950 and to Columbia University in New York as a professor in 1955, where Amy gave birth to the first of their three children. As time passed and he and Amy traveled farther east, the prejudice they experienced diminished.

By 1958, Kuramoto was working for what was then Ciba Pharmaceuticals, and in 1966 was asked to return to the West Coast to help the company build its production capacity. It was a move the couple made with some trepidation. “One of the first questions I asked when I interviewed in California was, ‘Where can I live and where can I not live?’” he says. “They said there were no restrictions. I liked to hear that, but was it really true?”

It was, he says, and he has relished being back in California ever since. During that time, he came to see the many hurdles he faced not as obstacles, he says, but as incentives to succeed – a philosophy that has carried him far in life.

“I think picking people up and moving them forced them to do things they wouldn’t have done,” he says. “I’m sure if I didn’t get sent to the camp I wouldn’t have ended up moving across the United States. People ask, ‘Why aren’t you bitter?’ And I say because it made me do things I wouldn’t have otherwise done.”

## Residents Get Into The Game With Wii

Marian Van Horn is knocking down the pins like a pro. Surrounded by the sounds of a bowling alley and cheering friends, Pilgrim Haven’s top bowler is enjoying her success.

And she doesn’t even have to lift a ball.

Van Horn and her neighbors are playing Wii, the Nintendo game console that is catching on with older adults across the country. “It’s less like a video game and more like experiencing the real thing,” says Lisa Bartlit, Pilgrim Haven’s lifestyle coordinator.

Played on a 50-inch flat-screen TV in the community’s Fellowship Hall, Wii offers residents a chance to exercise and socialize through bowling, golf, tennis, baseball, and other sports. Players use a hand-held device to roll, swing, and serve.

With its realistic approximation of the games – the wind changes direction on the golf course, the pitcher throws a great curveball –



Marian Van Horn holds the rubber chicken trophy won in the Wii bowling competition.

residents can take up sports they haven’t played in years. “If you have a bad knee, for instance, you can’t golf 18 holes,” Bartlit says. But shooting a round on Wii is

accessible, even if you play sitting down.

Van Horn bowled for many years with her late husband’s work team until stopping in the 1970s. She picked up Wii because she doesn’t have to lift a heavy ball. “That’s very attractive,” she says.

Wii has also caught on with Pilgrim Haven’s sister ABHOW community The Terraces of Los Gatos. In fact, the communities’ Wii bowling teams have traveled to each other’s campuses to face off. So far, they’ve split the series.

Matches with other sister communities may be in the offing via the internet, including a tournament with Judson Park in Des Moines, Wash.

Van Horn is game. And she may even try her hand at golf. “I’m not averse to high-tech things at all,” she says. “I’m not afraid of high-tech.”

# Feeling Better Can Be As Close As Next Door

As Altos seniors recovering from surgery and strokes have some good news: Pilgrim Haven offers a full-service outpatient and inpatient rehabilitation program that's close to home.

The requirements of physical therapy can sometimes be a vicious cycle. The doctor says to go, but the problems that necessitate the therapy make it difficult to get around, thus making it harder to attend the prescribed therapy sessions.



Terry Debra (above) gets assistance from Rehabilitation Program Coordinator Gayatri Shah (left) and Mele Sangupo, a caregiver. (photo right) Jonathan Yu, an occupational therapist, takes a moment for a laugh with Margaret Clauss.

Seniors and their families can put such worries aside, thanks to Pilgrim Haven's successful rehabilitation program. The same benefits enjoyed by Pilgrim Haven residents are available to those living in the surrounding community.

And the benefits are extensive, says Gayatri Shah, Pilgrim Haven's rehabilitation program coordinator. The program includes a highly skilled team of professionals in physical, occupational, and speech therapy. The therapists blend progressive treatment plans with a compassionate and reinforcing team approach to effectively reach each person's goal.

Pilgrim Haven residents have long enjoyed these benefits. They can stay on campus for therapy treatments, which ensures the likelihood of them participating in therapy and reaping its rewards.

"We work with residents according to their schedule," Shah says. "It's easier for them to come to the Health Center, or we go to their apartments."

Another plus for residents and seniors from the greater community is the program's unique approach, which requires fewer drugs. Pilgrim Haven therapists use a combination of pain management and muscle re-education to help seniors recover from muscle weakness and orthopedic injuries.

"That makes a lot of difference to the people we serve because if they are coming with back pain or shoulder pain, a doctor will provide medicine" to tackle the pain, Shah says. However, many people don't like the side effects of medication. By working with the nursing staff to maximize pain management, therapists help speed recovery while minimizing the required medications.



Whether recovering from a hip fracture, knee replacement, or stroke, seniors can do their short-term rehab at Pilgrim Haven's Health Center before returning home. Afterward, they often choose to return to Pilgrim Haven for further outpatient care.

As for Pilgrim Haven residents who have had a stay in the Health Center but later return to assisted or residential living, many continue to take advantage of the on-campus therapy. "Rather than going somewhere else to follow up, they come to us because we're already in their area," Shah says. "And there's a trust issue, too. They've already gotten better with us and they trust that if they keep coming to us they will improve further."

## Dog Days at Pilgrim Haven

Under any other circumstances, it might not be very polite to say Pilgrim Haven is going to the dogs. But in the case of regular canine visitors Tito and Duce, that's exactly what has happened. And residents couldn't be happier.

Tito and Duce, a Chihuahua–Jack Russell terrier and an Anatolian shepherd, respectively, are now de facto members of the Pilgrim Haven “staff,” thanks to their owners, Activities Director Rose Clark and Food Service Director Jon Brychta.



Duce

The two canines don't have much in common other than their species, gender, and temperament. Tito, named after Latin bandleader Tito Puente, fits in a handbag and weighs in at a dainty 10 pounds. Meanwhile, Duce, bred to guard sheep from wolves on the steppes of Turkey,

stands at dining-table height and tips the scales at a more sturdy 105.

However, both have succeeded in winning the hearts of residents with their patience and affection, their owners say.

Fellow dog lover Tara McGuinness (former Pilgrim Haven executive director and now an ABHOW regional manager) suggested Clark get a dog she could share with the community when she began working at Pilgrim Haven in 2000. But it took a while to find one that would be a good fit for her small home and her lifestyle. During a 2003 visit to the Santa Clara Humane Society, Tito turned out to be the one.

“I brought him to work and everyone fell in love with him,” she says. “Now we put little bells around his neck so we know where he is. He even does his own room visits.”

Tito visits Pilgrim Haven two or three times a week, but never on Fridays, because that's the day Duce roams the halls.

Brychta says Duce, also a shelter dog from the Peninsula Humane Society in San Mateo, actually looks forward to Fridays now,



Rose Clark and her dog, Tito.

both for the drive from their home in San Francisco and the visits with residents.

“We visit assisted living and throughout the Health Center,” he says. “It's really amazing that when he walks through the Health Center, there are some folks who haven't spoken in months who talk to him for five minutes. It's good for them and it's good for Duce.”

Perhaps less so for Duce's and Tito's owners. Clark says she often plays second fiddle to her pup. “We get phone calls from the Business Office asking if Tito is here,” she says. Then, laughing, she adds, “I'm not welcome anymore without him!”

## Board Members Happy to Help Neighbors

Neighbors are naturally inclined to help one another, and the Pilgrim Haven Advisory Board is fortunate to have many who give generously of their time and service just to help a fellow member of the community.

One such neighbor is Marilyn Stratz, who lives only a block away from Pilgrim Haven. A board member for three years, she is chair of the community outreach committee.

Before retiring, Stratz wore a variety of hats working for a subsidiary of Siemens. She also was active in her children's schools, serving on PTA boards at Santa Rita Elementary, Egan Junior High, and Los Altos High School. The invitation to serve



Marilyn Stratz

on the Pilgrim Haven board came from Marge Bruno, former mayor of Los Altos. "I was retired and thought it was time to do something more for the community," Stratz says.

She already had formed a connection with Pilgrim Haven while her

three children worked there during high school, and she had become acquainted with the excellent lifestyle residents enjoyed when her daughter-

**"I feel compelled to help any way I can because Pilgrim Haven contributes so much to the community."**

– Rick Meyer

in-law's grandmother lived there. "She loved Pilgrim Haven and so did her family," Stratz says.

An active member with her husband, Al, at St. Nicholas Catholic Church in Los Altos, Stratz sums up her involvement with Pilgrim Haven: "I just think I'm a good person and enjoy bringing some friendship to the residents."

Two-term board member Rick Meyer, also recruited by Bruno, says he is motivated to serve simply because Pilgrim Haven has been such a good neighbor. "I feel compelled to help any way I can because Pilgrim Haven contributes so much to the community," he says.

Meyer should know. He has lived near Pilgrim Haven for 31 years. He fondly recalls Pilgrim Haven residents chatting with his daughter, three years old when the family first moved in and now 34, and helping her and

his other children appreciate the value of having different types of people living around them.

Meyer's experience with his own grandmother, who lived in a different community that did not meet her needs, also compels him to work with Pilgrim Haven, he says. He values the fact that Pilgrim Haven's care is superior for everyone.



Rick Meyer

"I just think it's a real asset to the community and that's why I serve," he says. "I feel that if I help there, I've helped the wider community, too."

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Dog Days

On-Campus Rehab

Inside . . .

373 Pine Lane  
Los Altos, CA 94022  
650-948-8291  
www.pilgrim-haven.org



### Los Altos Landmark

Located in the quaint village of Los Altos, Calif., Pilgrim Haven has been a local landmark for 59 years. The continuing care retirement community offers comfort, security, and a quality lifestyle on an idyllic garden campus.

For more information about Pilgrim Haven, contact Marilyn Sell at 650-948-8384, ext. 103.

Pilgrim Haven Retirement Community  
373 Pine Lane, Los Altos, CA 94022  
CA license #430708050

### Pilgrim Haven Board of Advisors

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### American Baptist Homes of the West

Founded in 1949, Pilgrim Haven was the first retirement community for American Baptist Homes of the West, one of the most respected senior living providers in the U.S. A nonprofit, non-sectarian organization headquartered in Pleasanton, ABHOW operates 11 continuing care retirement communities — including Pilgrim Haven and The Terraces of Los Gatos — and 19 affordable housing communities in four Western states.