

**This Weekly Newsletter
is brought to you by**

HOOK LAW CENTER
Legal Power for Seniors

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Virginia Beach, VA 23452

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Care of the Caregiver

Sally Abrahms in a recent article in the [AARP Bulletin](#) of November 2012 talks about caregiver burnout. It's a real problem that many adult children of the elderly face. You love your parents or in-laws. However, their desire to continue to live on their own can present additional burdens on their children. In many cases, they can no longer drive a car, so the responsibility to take them grocery shopping, on errands, falls to the children. While many children of the elderly would love to perform these functions if they had unlimited time, the problem is they don't have unlimited time. They may still be involved in raising children or have grandchildren with whom they would like to spend time. She cites a common worry-- should I go away on vacation to an exotic locale? My family now has the ability to afford that trip to Europe or the Caribbean that we always wanted. But what about Mom or Dad? Will I get a call that they have just fallen or are in the hospital? How would I arrange to come back on short notice? These competing interests cause frustration and, in some cases, even exhaustion.

She writes that there are 3 different types of problems that caregivers of the elderly face. First is grief. The caregiver has to come to terms with the grief of losing the person they once knew. Even though that essential person is still there at their core, the person they once knew is changed forever. Sometimes the change in the person is a physical one (ie., their loved one now has a progressive disease like multiple sclerosis), or sometimes that change is in mental capacity, as is the case in Alzheimer's. While you may no longer be able to go to a movie together or hike in the woods, there are simpler things you can still do together that can bring enjoyment to both parties.

Care of the Caregiver (con't.)

Secondly, one must deal with guilt. Caught in between competing demands, the caregiver may develop feelings of resentment. They love their parents or relative, but it's hard not to have negative feelings sometimes. It's comforting to know that this is normal. Once you realize that this is a normal reaction, the resentment loses some of its power.

Thirdly, one must face the sheer fact of physical exhaustion. Taking care of yourself and family keeps most people busy, so when you add in the care of someone with special needs, one can become physically exhausted. In such cases, it is best not to try to do it all by yourself. Seek the help of other relatives or hire some assistance. The burden of care giving is much lighter, if it is shared. It's essential that the caregiver maintain his/her own health.

Finally, Ms. Abrahms counsels that there is no one way to cope with the demands of care giving. "Each experience is unpredictable, ever changing and unique. Your plan will require constant revision."(p.18) The good news is that it is a manageable problem, and there are many people in your same circumstances, and that is a comforting thought. (Sally Abrahms, AARP Bulletin, November 2012)



Adopting a Cat from a Shelter

Hook Law Center: Kit Kat, how would you advise choosing a cat from among the many at an animal shelter?

Kit Kat: Well, here is what I would advise. Most of us cats are really loveable in some way or another, but there are probably one or two that would fit you or your family better than some others. According to ASPCA Action (ASPCA's magazine) Fall 2012 p. 3, the ASPCA has a Meet Your Match Feline-ality program. Dr. Emily Weiss, VP at ASPCA, explains that this program assesses each cat and prospective parent for the best match according to such things as cat temperament, parent's personality, parent's lifestyle and expectations. So check and see if your shelter has this program. If not, this can be informally done by letting the particular shelter know what you are looking for in a cat. Do you want a cat who likes to be held or one who is very active? While not perfect, most shelters do have visiting rooms, and you can spend time with the cat and see how the two of you interact or how he/she interacts with you and other family members.

Remember- there are hardly ever any bad choices. We are just like you people. We all deserve to be loved, no matter what our personality is like. Shy or lively-- we're great animals!



Happy Holidays for the Troops

Hook Law Center is supporting our troops during this holiday season by collecting items for our service men and women who do not receive packages or letters from home. If you'd like to participate with us, please drop off your donations at one of our Hook Law Center offices: 295 Bendix Road, Suite 170, Virginia Beach or 5806 Harbour View Blvd., Suite 203, Suffolk. We will collect items through 12 Noon, Monday, December 10, 2012. A list of acceptable items follows in this newsletter.

Help put a smile on a forgotten soldier's or sailor's face during this Holiday Season!

Thank You

Upcoming Events

- Hook Law Center is presenting a Veteran's Aid & Attendance Seminar at The Ballentine, 7211 Granby Street, Norfolk, VA 23505 on **December 12, 2012** at **6 p.m.** To r.s.v.p., please call 757-440-7400 or 757-399-7506.
- Hook Law Center is presenting a seminar on Long-Term Care Planning and Estate Planning at Lake Prince Woods, 100 Anna Goode Way, Suffolk, VA 23435 on **January 25, 2013** at **2 p.m.** To r.s.v.p., please call 757- 923-5500 or 757-399-7506.

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Happy Holidays for the Troops

Below is a list of acceptable items for US Troops

Mail and Cards

Snacks and Drinks

(Top Request) Protein Powder and Protein Bars
Drink Mixes (ex. Gatorade, Kook-Aid, Crystal Light, etc.)
Tuna & Chicken (Foil Pouches) Beef/Chicken Jerky and Beef Sticks
Sunflower & Pumpkin Seeds, Nuts, Dried Fruit, Granola, Trail Mix
Fig Newtons, Oreos, Cereal Bars, Power Bars, Cheese & Crackers
Snack Cakes (ex. Little Debbie/Hostess), Rice Krispies Treats
Dry Cereal (Small individual boxes)
Microwavable Food (ex. individual soups, stews, & mac & cheese)
Anything Chocolate Food items
Chips, Crackers, Snack Mixes, Pretzels
Condiments (no glass jars)

Toiletries

Body Wash, Hand Soap, Facial Cleanser, Deodorant, Hair Gel,
Shaving Cream, Bobby Pins/Hair Bands, Combs/Brushes
Mouthwash, Breath Mints/Strips, Hand/Body Lotion, Chap Stick,
Nail Clippers/Files, Cough Drops, Eye Drops, Nasal Spray,
Vitamins. Loofah Sponges. Shoe Insole Inserts

Miscellaneous

Fleece Blankets, disposable hand warmers and feet warmers
Air Fresheners, Small flashlights, Laundry Detergent, Dryer Sheets
Dust Masks, Fly Swatters, Bug Spray, Fly Paper
Alarm Clock (alarm or battery-style)
Religious Books, Bibles, and inspirational reading
Anything "fun"
Winter Hats, t-shirts, socks (black cotton or wool only)

Dog Supplies (for Military K-9s and strays)

Chew Toys, Dog Treats, Dog Bones, Science Diet Dog Food
Dog Shampoo and unscented wipes, Flea Collar, Dog Brush
Large Dog Beds, Water Bowls
Dog Booties, Dog Water Bowls

Entertainment and Sports

DVDs (no nudity), Video Games, iTunes gift cards (Top Request),
Scrapbooking Supplies, Pocket Calendars
Game Books (Crosswords, Word Search, Sudoku), Board Games,
Frisbees, Baseball & bat, Posters, Dart Board, Hackey Sacks

Items that **CANNOT** be sent to Troops

Liquor

Nudity (no magazines or videos or movies)

Live Plants

Tobacco of any Kind

Combustible and/or Flammable Items(candles, pressurized cans, lighters, lighter fluid, etc.)

Please drop items at the Hook Law Center office nearest you:

295 Bendix Road, Suite 170

Virginia Beach, VA

or

5806 Harbour View Blvd., Suite 203

Suffolk, VA

by **12 Noon, Monday, December 10, 2012**

in order to be received by our troops in time to celebrate the Holidays