

INSIDE LOOK:

The Benefits of Romance As We Age



"We have the same basic needs and desires in our later years," explains **Richard Marino, MD**, Medical Director at The Cedars. "We need friendships and companionship. Relationships

improve the quality of our lives, and can actually *extend* our lives."

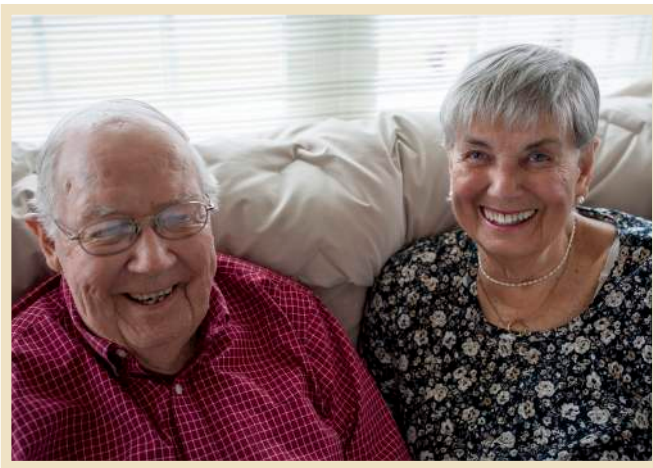
it has been observed that mortality rates slightly decrease just prior to major holidays and life events, suggesting that spending time with those that we love has a beneficial effect on our survival. Research has shown that sexual activity and other forms of physical and emotional affection lowers the risk of depression in seniors.*

That's why Dr. Marino makes it a priority to support healthy, consensual relationships that form at The Cedars—and why loved ones should, too.

"Our staff respects the privacy of our residents," he says. "We work closely with families to resolve any concerns about consent or their loved one's care, and we work closely with residents to customize their treatment plans to let them live the lives they choose."

Relationships formed later in life can be just as strong and mutually beneficial as bonds forged earlier in our lives. "Seniors bring a lifetime's worth of experience into these relationships," adds Dr. Marino. "These relationships change their lives." 📧

* Ganong and Larson, American Sociological Association, SAGE, 2011



"Relationships improve our quality of life, no matter what stage of life we're in."

—**RICHARD MARINO, MD**

MATTERS OF THE HEART (continued from cover)

"So many seniors imagine that assisted living means giving up your privacy," Laretta says. "That just isn't true at The Osher Inn. The staff know that this is our home. From the moment we shared our relationship with them, they went out of their way to make sure we had our time together."

They worked out a signal with their nurses. When Laretta's walker is outside Bob's door, caregivers need to alert the couple before coming in. And staff found other ways to support their relationship, too. "My eyes aren't very good anymore," Bob confesses. "Laretta reads me the menu in the dining room before we order. So the waitstaff started leaving just *one* menu at our usual table—they know it's all we need."

Caregivers and families can be challenged when loved ones form new relationships later in life, explains Richard Marino, MD, Medical Director at The Cedars. "As a society, we don't always recognize that many needs and desires stay the same as our bodies age. As senior living communities, we don't always respect the privacy of consenting adults. At The Cedars, we know needing help with activities of daily living doesn't mean you need help deciding who to share your life with."

Studies show that just like receiving the appropriate level of care, a loving, consensual relationship can enhance and extend the lives of seniors (see sidebar at left). As we age, we may lose some of the people we love, but not the desire to love and be loved in return.

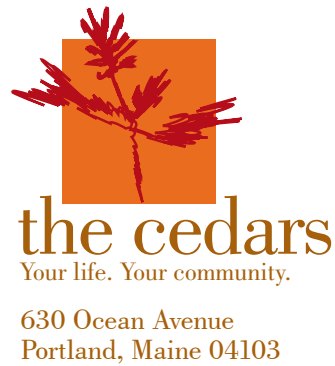
Bob cheerfully admits to being a hopeless romantic, and he loves surprising Laretta with tokens of affection. "I gave Laretta my wedding ring," Bob says. "She wears it on a gold chain." It's the perfect symbol of their relationship: an acknowledgement of the rich lives they enjoyed before they met, and a celebration of the rich life they share today. "It's like finding a second life, finding her," he says, squeezing Laretta's hand. "And it's a good life." 📧



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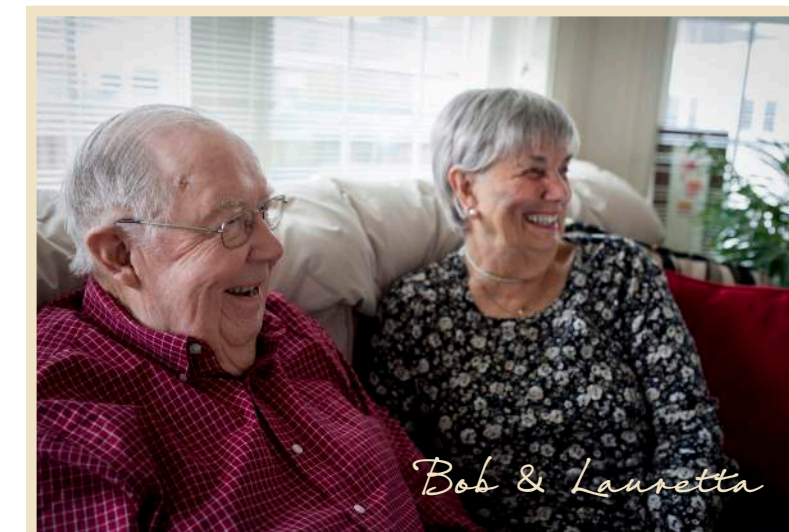
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the cedars NEWS

F A L L 2 0 1 4

MATTERS OF THE HEART: Finding New Love in Our Later Years



BOB NEEDED A PLUS ONE. His daughter, Kathryn Callnan, President and CEO of The Cedars, wanted him to join a family birthday celebration in Old Orchard Beach. He'd only been living at The Osher Inn for one month, but he knew *exactly* who he wanted to bring. "I'd noticed Laretta in the dining room," he explains, eyes twinkling. "This was my big chance."

"And we've been together ever since!" Laretta says.

Talking with Bob Callnan and Laretta Torraca, they feel as though they've been together for years, not less than six months. Both widowed, they had each raised large families with loving partners before life brought them to The Osher Inn. When they found each other, they knew right away what a precious thing they had.

"We just melded our lives together," Laretta beams. "At this stage of our lives, we get to do what we want. There's so much to do at this wonderful place, and it's wonderful to do it all together."

Today, you'll find Bob and Laretta sharing meals in the dining room or at a restaurant, apple picking at Sweetser Orchard, cruising Casco Bay on a ferry, or taking in a play or gallery opening downtown with their friends from The Cedars. Their families are incredibly supportive of their relationship and love to include them on family outings as well. "We're going to North Conway this weekend with Laretta's daughter," Bob says, "and to Houlton with my family next week." Yet they still enjoy their independence and still love to spend time on their own—Laretta to practice her art and her beloved piano, and Bob at one of his many exercise classes.

"No matter how old you get, your mind doesn't change. Your heart doesn't change. You may *look* different, but your feelings are the same."

—**LAURETTA TORRACA**

Bob's cozy apartment is on the first floor and Laretta's sun-drenched apartment is on the second floor, and they both plan to keep their own space. But because Laretta needs her medications dispensed by a nurse several times a day, spending time together—and spending the night together—meant sharing their relationship status with The Cedars staff.

Continued >



INSIDE: More on relationships as we age, a conversation with Liz and Sidney Geller about philanthropy, planned giving ideas, the gift of musical therapy, gifts to The Cedars and more >

INSIDE LOOK:

Music and MemorySM Gives the Gift of Music



"We experience a deeper connection to events in our lives that we associate with music," says Nick Viti, OTR/L, Manager of Life Enrichment at The Cedars. "Certain songs conjure up very

rich and specific memories. For anyone experiencing memory loss, music is a powerful tool."

Thanks to a generous new grant from the nonprofit group Music and MemorySM, we have exciting new ways to use the power of music to help residents preserve and protect their memory, calm or uplift their emotions and enrich their lives.

The Cedars received the entire Music and MemorySM program, an assortment of iPod shuffles, headphones and music downloads as part of the grant. Staff are working with families and loved ones to craft customized playlists for each resident, and to choose music connected with events in each resident's life story.

"Do you ever turn up the radio on your way to work when you need extra energy, or drift off to sleep listening to something soothing?" Nick asks. "We all know how powerful music can be to help us regulate our emotions and get through our day. It's so exciting to be able to give residents back the gift of music."

We continue to develop new ways to integrate digital music into the lives of our seniors, and initial results from this program have been overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to sharing the greatest hits from Music and MemorySM in future issues! ✂

Giving Matters to the Gellers

"The Cedars is our number one charity of choice."
— LIZ GELLER



LIZ AND SID GELLER both come from families who prioritize philanthropy and know The Cedars well—and we have benefitted greatly from their ongoing support. We sat down with

Liz and Sid to learn more about why The Cedars is their charity of choice.

What inspires you to keep giving back to The Cedars?

Sid: The Cedars has been good to our families, and our families have benefited from the care The Cedars offers.

Liz: The Cedars is so well run! The state-of-the-art Sam L. Cohen Rehabilitation Center is fabulous and the evidence-based data about rehab patient recovery rates is remarkable. The Osher Inn and The Atrium set a very high standard. Every detail is just so impressive. Because Sid served seven years on The Cedars Board, we know how visionary it really is.

Why did you choose to make a planned gift to The Cedars?

Sid: We had discussed the idea of establishing a Charitable Remainder Trust with Kathy Callnan, The Cedars President and CEO, as a way of making a more significant gift beyond our Annual Fund commitment.

Liz: We know we can't take it with us and we already have provided for our children. So what do you do? You give back, and The Cedars is our number one charity of choice. Some people think that the only way to give is to the Annual Fund—which is critically important to support—but there are many ways to make an even longer-lasting gift to The Cedars.

What are your hopes for the future of The Cedars?

Sid: The Cedars already is the premier facility in the state and with our current strategic planning, will continue to be so. I would like to see The Cedars provide dementia care in planning of smaller, homelike residences.

Liz: We hope that The Cedars continues to grow by keeping on top of the latest trends. Maine has a very significant aging population, so it remains important for people to know how well run The Cedars is. Its longevity speaks volumes! What a wonderfully strong organization it has been for over 85 years, and how wonderful it is to help sustain it. ✂

Visit thecedarsportland.org/support for more insight from the Gellers!

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INSIDE LOOK:

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Please contact Elena Brandt, Chief Development Officer, at 207-221-7002 for more information.

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