



The practice of Qigong requires a high degree of concentration and focus. Here, Gardens resident Jean Wright displays one of the many poses learned in the class.

## Focusing Body and Mind

**1**ike so many Gardens residents, when **Jean Wright** moved into the Gardens four years ago with her husband, **Warren**, she was eager to try something new. Having been a professional ballet dancer, who started training at age three, she was accustomed to discipline and movement in her exercise. But when she dropped into the Gardens' weekly Tai Chi class to check it out, she discovered a very different way to focus the body and the mind. The relaxing experience was especially welcome just after completing the move into their new home at the Gardens. "I tend to be a person who does a lot of running around," says Jean, "and this is very calming. It has become one of my favorite things to do here."

The weekly class, taught in the Gardens Wellness Center by **Joe Bojanek**, is a form of Tai Chi known as Qigong. He brought the class to the Gardens several years ago and structures each class to match the interests and experience of the residents who attend that day. "I'm bringing the heart of these arts and making them accessible for this group," says Joe. "People can experience a revolution in their wellness, right here, without requiring any equipment. The practice of qigong can eliminate pain and suffering, both emotional and physical," he says.

"The class is partially mental mindfulness – thinking inside your body – and it is physical, too. That's especially important here," says Jean, who is a second-generation resident of the Gardens. Both of her parents lived here for many years. "We work on posture, breathing properly and preventing falls by working on balance," she says. "And you can participate whether you need to sit or you can do it standing."

The practice of Qigong requires a high degree of concentration



Instructor Joe Bojanek

"People can experience a revolution in their wellness, right here, without requiring any equipment. The practice of Qigong (a form of Tai Chi) can eliminate pain and suffering, both emotional and physical," instructor Jo Bojanek says.

and focus. That's why, Joe says, it appeals most to those who have a strong belief that what they do matters, who are open to new ideas, and who know intuitively that it is their challenge to control to a greater degree the variables that affect their overall well-being. "The experience is about positive thinking," says Jean, "and a sense that what I do can make a difference in how I feel."

EDITOR'S NOTE: The staff of the Wellness Center arranges programs and classes, such as Tai Chi, yoga, and swimming pool exercise, based on residents' interest and need. Joe praised the staff saying, "They have been very supportive and caring for the residents. They do an excellent job."

## A Love Story

**Up Close...** *Continued from page 1*

volunteer in the audio-visual booth during resident-organized programs that are presented in the Gardens' auditorium and often fed live on the campus closed-circuit TV channel. They keep physically fit with ballroom and line dancing classes offered in the Gardens' Wellness Center.

Each of them participates in the Gardens' governance; Jack serves on the Finance Committee of the Gardens board of directors, and Barbara represents the Terraces neighborhood on the residents' Gardens Club Council (resident association council). Jack also volunteers on the Hearing Committee, a resident-organized group that raises awareness of hearing loss and ways hearing may be improved. "The change can be so subtle, people often don't realize that they can no longer hear well," says Jack.

The couple revels in the companionship of their marriage and in their friendships at the Gardens. "The dining room was what sold me on the Gardens from the start," says Jack. "Not the food – although it's good, too. But it was the socializing that takes place at every meal here. The camaraderie at the Gardens is wonderful and stimulating."



Barbara and Jack Miller in their well-appointed living room.

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## The New Leaf

June 2015

A Continuum of Care

### The New Leaf

Mt. San Antonio Gardens is a nationally accredited Life Care senior community in Claremont and Pomona, California.

*The New Leaf* is a newsletter for friends and family of residents, board and staff, as well as individuals who have inquired about life at the Gardens. (909) 624-5061 info@msagardens.org www.msagardens.org

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Tuesday, July 14 or Thursday, September 17

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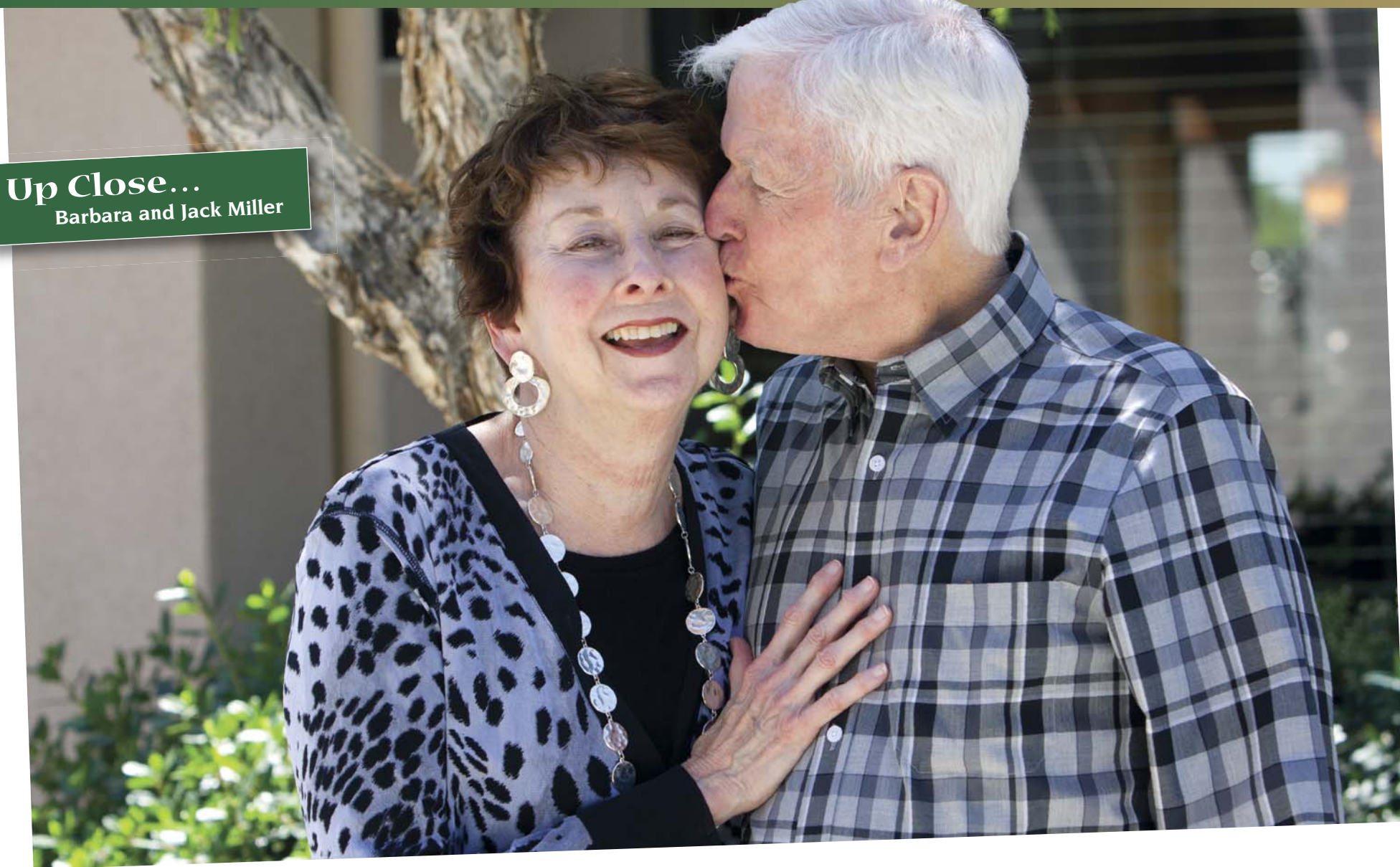
Learn how Dorothy M. Jenkins made choices for her future 14 years ago.



# The New Leaf

June 2015

**Up Close...** Barbara and Jack Miller



## A Love Story

**t**he delight **Barbara and Jack Miller** take in each other's company is obvious. Having found each other, quite unexpectedly, later in life, they are clearly relishing every minute together, and having one heck of a good time. About to launch on a weekend birthday jaunt up the coast, Jack marvels, "I can't believe I'm celebrating my 84th year. I used to think at that age I'd be old and feeble."

Barbara, a retired teacher, moved into the Gardens from Glendora in the summer of 2011. Jack, a 38-year resident of Claremont and recent widower, arrived in 2012 with his canine roommate, Katie, in tow. "It was very comforting to have her with me," he says. In fact, Jack credits Katie with the couple's introduction in 2012 on the Gardens campus. After all, who could resist that sweet face and wagging tail? Barbara loves the story but recalls some human intervention, and readily admits taking the initiative to eventually ask him out. "That was the beginning in July 2012," she says happily. Balancing romance with practicality, the couple took their first step toward commitment by discreetly putting their names on the Gardens' waiting list for those interested in a two-person residence. "That raised a few interested eyebrows," chuckles Barbara. When word came that a Terraces home would be available in two months, life

Balancing romance with practicality, the couple took their first step toward commitment by discreetly putting their names on the Gardens' waiting list for those interested in a two-person residence.



Barbara and Jack enjoyed decorating their spacious Terraces home on the Gardens campus, their first home together as a couple.

for the couple turned into a flurry of activity. There was a wedding to organize, and a new home to decorate, adding their own personal touch and a warm traditional feel to their spacious, comfortable home. The couple wed in August 2013 and moved into their new home the following weekend. "It was a whirlwind, but we had lots of family, on both sides, helping us," says Barbara.

Barbara and Jack share interests and enthusiasm for the Gardens' lifestyle, the people and amenities. It's no surprise that they enjoy greeting guests at public events on campus, and hosting meals with individuals interested in applying for residence. They both

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**The Road Ahead**  
See invitation on back page.



MT. SAN ANTONIO  
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A LIFE CARE SENIOR COMMUNITY



# A Continuum of Care

Shabaz Amanda Phos and RN Michael Sansosti discuss patient, Bill Andrus' daily activities.



Although she lives at the Health Center, B.J. remains well-connected to the Gardens community. A frequent visitor to the Gardens library often turns into social visits with old friends.



## The Health Center

**B.J. Barnes** is a planner. When she moved to the Gardens in 1999, she knew exactly where she wanted to live: An apartment in a specific building with a panoramic view of Mount San Antonio – commonly known as Mount Baldy – which inspired the name of the Gardens. She moved into that slice of paradise and has loved it for 11 years. As she anticipated her increasing need for assistance, she decided, "I might as well plan a move to the Oak Tree Lodge [for assisted living support]." Again, she waited for the ideal room to become available, with a perfect view of the 300-year-old oak tree in the courtyard.



Health Center Rooms are individually decorated.

this, the nursing staff was fantastic," says Loren. "We could sleep in a bed right next her, and they provided anything we needed." It was also reassuring to her family to watch the constant, round-the-clock care given to their mother. "They took such good care of her."

To her family's surprise and great relief, B.J.'s health improved dramatically, though she still needed the extra support provided at the Health Center. So again, she was able to move into a room she wanted, which opens onto another beautifully landscaped courtyard.

Despite her change of venue on campus, B.J. remains well-connected to the Gardens community. "When I go over to the Gardens library, I run into people I know all the time. And I still get together with my old Claremont group of friends, who have moved here over the years. We've scaled back our activities, but we still try to meet for an occasional breakfast or lunch. There's just an amazing group of people to enjoy who live here."

"When I moved to the Gardens, I thought of it as a gift to my children. Now it is my gift to myself," she says.

In addition to providing a continuum of care for Gardens residents, the Health Center also welcomes local community residents, whether they need rehabilitative, recuperative, or long term care.

## Care for the Greater Community

When long-time Claremont resident and avid bicyclist Tom Deno had a serious bike accident that damaged both of his knees and required surgery, he was surprised to find the Gardens' Health Center as an option for his post-surgery recovery and rehabilitation. Despite having friends who lived at the Gardens, Tom says, "I had no idea the Gardens had such a place."

Without any previous experience with a nursing facility, Tom wasn't sure what to expect. "The people here were tremendous. It was like having a bunch of mothers watching over me. This was definitely the place to go." The quality of care even impressed Tom's physician friend, who had tasked herself with making sure Tom got the very best care during his ordeal.

During his rehab stay, Tom had a roommate who is a Gardens resident and was also there for a temporary condition. He saw firsthand how easy it is for residents to stay connected to their friends and spouses whether they are in the Health Center for a



Tom Deno is riding his bike again after a full recovery at the Gardens Health Center.

temporary condition or for long-term nursing care. "You're not isolated here. I think that social aspect adds a lot to the experience."

"I had the best care I could ever want at the Gardens Health Center," says Tom. "And as a result I made a full recovery and am riding my bike again today."

and nurses to his continued well-being. Because this team works so closely with such a small group of residents, the care partners get to know their personalities and individual needs and preferences intimately. While the shabazim are also responsible for cooking and maintaining the house, their first priority, Georgeann notes, is always the care of the residents.

"If you know the residents well, taking care of them is very easy," says Amanda.

"The people are the best thing," says Bill, who especially enjoys sharing common interests with Registered Nurse (RN) **Michael Sansosti**. Both are avid readers and love fishing.

"It's great," says Michael. "We trade books and when I have some extra time in my schedule, we'll spend time talking about them for 10 minutes or so." The ability to give everyone a little extra attention is very gratifying. Michael, who previously worked in structured hospital environments, enjoys the opportunity he now has to cultivate more personal friendships with the residents he cares for. "Certain people, like Bill, do very well in this kind of setting. It is especially well suited to those who prefer to take the initiative for their daily activities" and who enjoy the interaction and activity that is such an important part of the daily experience in the Evergreen Villas, according to Michael.

Working with the caregivers is also a new experience for Michael. "We work side by side with the shabazim. While the RNs are in

charge of everything clinical, the care partners spend all of their time interacting with the residents, so they can give us feedback on their behavior and needs, enabling us to intervene early."

"Communication is a big thing here," acknowledges shabaz **Amanda Phos**, who began her training for her role long before the Evergreen Villas opened. With just 10 residents in each of the two Evergreen Villas, the care partners get to know each one personally, from their life stories to their health needs and abilities, their food preferences, and their hobbies and interests. "If you know the residents well, taking care of them is very easy," says Amanda. "I think that's the beauty of this place. We base each day's activities on what they individually want to do. And every day is different. When we all come together around the dinner table, we like to talk about the day's activities. It feels like a family."

"It's hard work, and it takes a team to make it work so well," says Amanda. "We're the heart of the home, and that makes it very gratifying to be here."

RN, Michael Sansosti, who previously worked in structured hospital environments, enjoys the opportunity he now has to cultivate more personal friendships with the residents he cares for.



Registered Nurse (RN) Michael Sansosti and Bill Andrus share their love for reading.



"Bill has become physically stronger since his move to The Gardens' Evergreen Villas," marvels his Gardens' resident wife, Georgeann. The couple credits the home atmosphere and the personalized attention of the shabazim (care partners) and nurses for his progress.

## The Evergreen Villas

Last year, when Claremont resident Bill Andrus began to need 24-hour care in their home, he and his wife, Georgeann, chose the Gardens' Evergreen Villas for his new home. The Villas are modeled after THE GREEN HOUSE® concept, which provides a real home for people needing skilled nursing care. In each of the two villas, the residents are supported by a small, self-managed

team of care partners, known as shabazim, and registered nurses. Mt. San Antonio Gardens pioneered what are California's first and only small homes licensed for skilled nursing.

"We wanted Bill to live in a stimulating environment while receiving the care he needs," says Georgeann. Acknowledging the difficulty of making that decision, the couple feels fortunate that

the Villas were an option for them. Georgeann, who served on the Gardens board of directors for six years when the Green House homes were being considered, says, "We are so grateful for Bill to be part of it. It has been particularly heartwarming to see this from the initial concept and then to participate in the reality of seeing it work very well."

While Bill was settling in, Georgeann applied to live at the Gardens as an active, healthy independent resident. She moved into an apartment on campus where she takes a quick walk to the Evergreen Villas. Living on the same campus means easy and frequent visits each day. The couple goes together to lectures and performances held at the Gardens or at the nearby Claremont Colleges. "Our neurologist had said to me, 'Now you can just be a spouse, not the caregiver,' and he was so right!"

"Bill has become physically stronger since his move here," marvels Georgeann. The special design of the great room has inspired Bill to use his walker, unassisted, to make 20 laps around the pleasantly decorated room, averaging 1/2 mile each morning. The couple also credits the home-like atmosphere and the personalized attention of the shabazim



The Gardens' Evergreen Villas grand opening in 2013