



Bears for Elder Welfare

March 2015

Issue II, Volume III

CLUB MISSION: BEARS FOR ELDER WELFARE STRIVES TO PROMOTE CAMPUS AWARENESS OF ISSUES IN AGING, TO CULTIVATE APPRECIATION IN ELDERS, AND TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS INVOLVEMENT IN ACTIVITIES PROMOTING ELDER WELFARE.



February & March

February began with a social at Cordonices Park, and ended with volunteering events as well as an arts and craft event where we created bookmarks for elders. In March, we fundraised at ShareTea and through a bakesale for Meals on Wheels, a non-profit organization that provides meals to elders. The bakesale and ShareTea was an awesome success, making over \$300 in total. Thanks for the support everyone!

UPCOMING EVENTS

2ND GENERAL MEETING: Apr. 9, 7-8PM @ 209 Dwinelle
Join us with a Meals on Wheels Guest Speaker!

CENTER FOR ELDER'S INDEPENDENCE:
4 Apr. 15, 1-1:45PM: BINGO, Cards, and Dice
Apr. 16, 1-1:45PM: BINGO, Board Games, Uno
11 Apr. 20, 1-1:45PM: Spring Awareness Bingo
Apr. 29th, 1-1:45PM: Picture Frame Bingo

AMISTAD HOUSE:
18 Apr. 3, 12-1PM: Serve food and chat with elders for Persian New Year!
25 Apr. 10, 12-1PM: Participate in arts and crafts with elders!
Apr. 24, 12-1PM: Participate in arts and crafts with elders!

April 2015

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FOOD INSECURITY WITH ELDERS



Members of B4EW served food to elders at Amistad House for their 2014 Thanksgiving lunch.

Photo Credit: Kathy Bach

By **Spencer Liem**

Education Officer

What's for lunch/dinner is often a passing thought of every college student every day. Being in Berkeley, students can easily see their position of privilege compared to those less fortunate who may not always have a hot meal easily accessible. What makes things even worse, however, is that many of these nutritionally deficient and food insecure individuals may not only be living on the streets; they are all around us.

Elder food insecurity has been a growing issue for quite some time. Food insecurity is defined as the capability to purchase and consume sufficient amounts of food for a healthy life in socially acceptable ways. Over 2.7 million seniors were at risk of hunger in 2005 and this number is set to increase dramatically with the baby boomers

retiring. As of 2008, over 50 million were already at risk or considered food insecure. Of food insecure seniors, only 38% are deemed "below the poverty line" which shows that although there is a correlation between socioeconomic status and hunger, it is not causal. In the United States, the Southern region is at the highest risk, with close to 10% of the population being at risk of hunger and food insecurity.

While many research studies have been done on food insecurity of different age groups in the United States, those age 40+ are set for the biggest increase in food insecure individuals within the coming two decades. Those experiencing functional impairment (i.e. dementia) are often at a higher risk of food insecurity, which has been

shown to increase the likelihood of developing depression, heart attacks, asthma, and other long term health complications.

Many organizations such as Meals on Wheels and Feeding America are focused on tackling the issue of hunger risk and food insecurity. This can be done through health programs and nutritional plans that help elders and other individuals get back on their feet health-wise. Because elders often have specific, unique nutritional needs, programs directed at helping them must be specialized and tailored more closely to avoid other complications. In the end, it is important for us to recognize the issues and ramifications of the impending increase in food insecurity and it will take a collective effort to alleviate the consequences of an ever-increasing population and a stagnated food supply.