

Bears for Elder Welfare

September 2014

Issue I, Volume II

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.

Welcome back to Cal! Now that the school year is back on a roll, we hope that everyone is as excited as we are to participate in our events to promote elder welfare this year! We have a bunch of fun activities planned out including visits at Amistad house, a senior home, and one-on-one time to visit the elders.



A picture to conclude one our October 2013 social where we played games such as Charades.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Thursday, September 4:
Calapalooza! See you outside of Wheeler!

Tuesday, September 9:
First General Meeting! Located at 136 Barrows, 7-8 pm.

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[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BEARSFOR ELDERWELFARE](https://www.facebook.com/bearsforelderwelfare)

SUMMER HIGHLIGHTS

Over the summer, Bears for Elder Welfare hosted two activities, both at Amistad house. During the first social, members served brunch to the elders for the Father's Day celebration. Afterwards, they were able to sit down and have a nice chat with the elders.

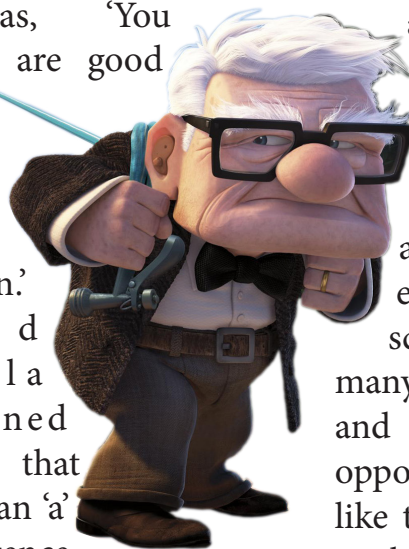
Junior Jasmine Yu comments, "Angela and I went and got to talk to a Chinese couple and it was super cute how the husband



tried to learn English and was telling us what he had learned, which was, 'You are good

person.'

And Angela explained to him that you need an 'a' in the sentence because it was, well, English."



During the second social, members went back to Amistad to serve ice cream and meet the residents.

Other volunteers have had the opportunity to be paired with elders to provide companionship and to assist them with errands. During the school year, there will be many events just like these, and more! Volunteering opportunities and fun socials, like the one pictured above, are but a few of the activities we have planned.



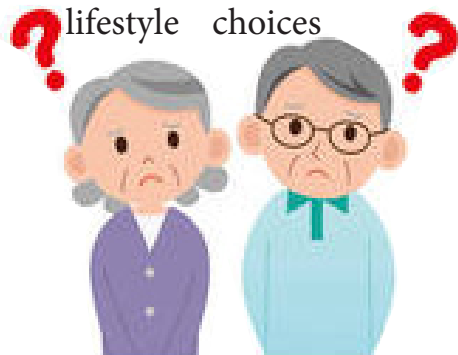
DEMENTIA IN THE ELDER POPULATION

By **Spencer Liem**
Education Officer

What exactly is dementia? According to the Alzheimer's Association, it is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily activities. Alzheimer's is the most common. Memory loss, loss of speech, or results of stroke are notable signs of dementia. It is often termed as senility in popular culture and is perceived to be a normal part of aging when in actuality, it is a disease. The disease has a strong supposed link with genetics too.

The scientific side of dementia shows that it causes damage to brain cells and affects their ability to communicate with each other,

compromising a variety of functions. Currently, there is no one way to diagnose dementia and there are few treatment options for most forms of dementia. Substance abuse, lack of exercise, poor diet, and unhealthy lifestyle choices



likely increase chances of developing dementia. Typical therapies consist of medication and non-drug therapies such as cognitive exercises (like what we do!)

Dementia is expensive,

costing America nearly \$214 billion in 2014. The increasing age of the population predicates that this number will continue to grow. More than 5 million Americans live with the disease and 1 in 3 will die from dementia. With 500,000 people dying each year, it is the 6th leading cause of death in America. As daunting as it may seem, there are ways to alleviate some of these issues. Volunteering with Bears for Elder Welfare allows students to work with elders, with or without dementia, and gives elders a way to be engaged by meeting people and pursuing new hobbies. Providing stimulating and social environments are some of the ways caretakers and retirement homes help elders, and it is important for us to do what we can to make sure these programs achieve their goals.