



Alderwood Park  
Convalescent Center  
2726 Alderwood Avenue  
Bellingham, WA 98225  
360-733-2322  
[www.alderwoodpark.com](http://www.alderwoodpark.com)

# Alderwood Park *Quarterly*

## Featured Resident

### Gary Rindahl

Gary Rindahl thought “this is the place for me” after he crossed Snoqualmie Pass and arrived on the western side of it on December 1st of 1976. He felt welcomed by a sunny, 61 degree day, having left Duluth, Minnesota where it was -26 degrees below zero. “AND, there were no mosquitoes.” He had come for a two week vacation and never left.

Gary was born and lived for 31 years in Grand Marais, Minnesota, on the banks of Lake Superior, where it was hot in the summer and COLD in the winter. “And I HATED the mosquitoes.” Gary tells everyone that he was born in Duluth, as “most people know where that is.” Grand Marais is halfway between Duluth (located about 110 miles southwest) and Thunder Bay, Ontario, right on the northern shores of Lake Superior.

Grand Marais was a town of about 900 people and Gary feels fortunate to have grown up there. He was the second of five children, with one older brother and three younger sisters. His dad, Alfred, worked as a meat cutter and at the post office before becoming the Cook County auditor. “Dad ran for Governor once, but a Republican in Minnesota...not a chance!” Gary spent a lot of time with his dad fishing, hunting and on the golf course that was conveniently located right across the street from where Gary and his family lived. His mom, Gladys, was a homemaker and kept busy raising five children. He

remembers his mom watching him dig a pole vaulting pit in the back yard with a smile and shake of her head. “My mom and dad were my best friends.” Gary reflects fondly.



Gary lost his dad about ten years ago, and his brother in 2002. He tell us his three beautiful sisters are all married and still living in Grand Marais, as is his mother who is now in a nursing home there. He talks with her nearly every week.

Gary was an industrious fellow growing up. His uncle taught him to fly and he soloed in a J-3 Piper Cub on floats on his 18th birthday. “I was spoiled,” Gary recalls. “I don’t remember a spanking in my life.” Gary was active with 4H, music, and sports. He was a musician and an artist, enjoying painting and sculpting. His parents entered him in a singing competition (that he won) in Moose Lake, and he was the first student in his school’s history to earn an A+ in art class. When he later attended the University of Minnesota in Duluth, his sculptures were displayed in the Tweed Gallery. Gary says he loved school but he found the university setting as too impersonal and left after the first semester.

“I started working at the age of 11,” Gary recalls. His first job was at the golf course across the street mowing the greens. One memorable job was as a snowmaker at

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## Employee News

## Employees of the Month

### Anniversaries

#### July

Debbie Monaghan ..... 25 years!  
Carol Ann Andrews..... 18 years  
Steve Smith ..... 11 years  
Marcia Parker ..... 4 years  
Jill Starkey ..... 4 years  
Mandy Morgan ..... 2 years  
Andy Griffiths ..... 1 year

#### August

Sue Morrison..... 18 years  
Karen Day..... 13 years  
Elizabeth Estis ..... 7 years  
Rebecca Carter ..... 6 years  
Lori Cords..... 5 years  
Lori Millman..... 5 years  
Matt Chilcote..... 3 years  
Emily Norton..... 3 years  
Taffy Prosser..... 1 year  
Amy Worden..... 1 year  
Andrea Garza ..... 1 year

#### September

Charles Settles ..... 5 years  
Barbara Dinge ..... 3 years  
Alison Johnson ..... 2 years  
Dani Wiley..... 1 year

#### July 2009

Jason Hodges, NAC

#### August 2009

Lynette Clark, LPN

#### September 2009

Rebecque Asher, Gardener



### Recreation News

A **BIG THANKS** to all of our families and staff who donated candy for residents to pass out on Halloween night. It was a lot of fun for everyone!

- ✓ Families are welcome to join us for all recreation programs. Check the calendars posted in residents rooms, or stop by the recreation office for a calendar to take home with you.
- ✓ Families are welcome to join us for our scrumptious Thanksgiving meal served at the 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. meal times. If interested, please contact the front office.
- ✓ In December all Christmas carolers are welcome! Please call ahead to let us know when you are coming.
- ✓ **NOTE:** If you are planning on taking a resident out for the holidays, please give the nurses at least a 24 hours notice so we are able to have everyone ready to go on time. Thank you!

### Volunteer News

Alderwood is always looking for new volunteers to join our team. You can become a Bingo Buddy, help out with arts and craft projects, accompany us on community outings, help out during special events, or simply visit with our residents one-to-one. Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer can call Mea at 733-2322, or simply stop on in. People of all ages are welcome to join us.

We are in need of a few current volunteers to help us out with our Bellis Fair Mall outing happening on Thursday, December 10. Staff and volunteers escort residents through the mall for a little Christmas shopping and lunch. If you are interested, please call Shannon or Mea at 733-2322.

the Lutsen Ski Resort. One night it was -58 degrees and his boss insisted that they still go out to make snow. All of the equipment instantly froze up, as Gary knew it would.

Gary married his high school sweetheart right after graduating high school. They were married for nine years. Their son, Douglas, was born in 1966. They are both still living in Grand Marais. Gary worked in construction and started up a country band. "The Usual Groop" was a popular local band and played most weekends at weddings and other events for nine years. Gary played guitar and was the lead singer. He was nicknamed "Brother Love" as he closed every performance with the song "Brother Love's Traveling Salvation Show." They traveled to gigs in a rickety van named "the Squeaker" that Gary had artfully painted. One highlight of Gary's music career was that of playing as the opening act for a Roy Orbison concert in Duluth, meeting him and watching his entire show from backstage. "He was a little, short guy with a southern accent but boy, on stage he was huge." Gary muses.

Gary had been hospitalized when he was eight with rheumatic fever that affected his legs. In the early 1970s, after having developed severe rheumatoid arthritis, "the crippling began." Still Gary continued to do tile work ("I don't know how I did it") until he woke up one January morning in 2008 and couldn't use his left side to get up out of bed. He had suffered a stroke. "At first it was really hard to adjust and I felt pretty hopeless," Gary recalls. "It was tough for a while but you gotta accept it and make the best out of what it is."

After spending more than a month at St. Joe's Hospital, Gary came to Alderwood Park. He chose to remain here, knowing that this was the type of care that he needs. I asked Gary if it was especially challenging to no longer be able to play music and create his artwork. It happened over a period of time, and he adjusted, he stays, stating, "You can't worry about what you can't change." He enjoys visiting with other residents and staff members much of the time and "cruisin' around." Gary has a power wheelchair and spends much of his time out and about in the community. He focuses on what he can do rather than what he can not. His room is very homey, softly lit, and there is usually a jigsaw puzzle in process.

Along with his positive attitude, Gary has a strong support network of "true friends" he has made here in Whatcom County. His friend Randy visits nearly every day. Being interviewed for this article has reminded Gary of a million more stories. If you meet him while visiting here, perhaps he'll tell you some. I wonder how he got the Frank Sinatra Drive road sign on the wall above his window....

### Quote for the Quarter:

*I can't decide where I want to go  
until I know where I am.*

*-Annie Chapman*

### Notes from the Administrator

## 2009 Holiday Season

Can you believe that in a few more days we will be looking at the end of the year and 2009 will go into the history books? Was it a good year, or not-so-good year? When we think of the economy, layoffs, loss of buying power, wages frozen or reduced, the year was not so good. BUT, when you think of working together to get a project completed—like someone's home repaired, sitting with a friend as their husband goes through surgery, knitting a special throw for someone

who is fighting cancer, etc., the year was great and memorable. Friendships mean a great deal more than money. Here at Alderwood Park we also will be putting this year in



the books. Some of our residents have left us and left small dents in our hearts, but others have come to spend some time with us and have helped to heal the dent. As we see the beautiful leaves and plants of the season, we think that in a few months we will again start over in nature. But we will always have friendships and sharing—this is not seasonal but continuous.

During this holiday season, my wishes are with you to enjoy friends and family. Please think of adding residents in nursing homes to your acquaintances list in the New Year. You will be surprised how much they will add to your life. Remember, it is not the gifts but the friendships that last.

*Carol Ann Andrews, RN  
Administrator*



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## Department Directory

Administrator..... Carol Ann Andrews  
 Director of Nursing..... Mary McKinney  
 Assistant Director of Nursing/ ..... Christina Webster  
 Quality Assurance Coordinator  
 Medical Records/..... Debbie Monaghan  
 Admissions Coordinator  
 Rehabilitation Coordinator ..... Rebecca Carter  
 Recreation Director/..... Shannon Wefer  
 Marketing Coordinator  
 Resident Accounts..... Beth Armstrong  
 Dietary Manager ..... Kari Wilbert  
 Social Services Coordinator ..... Marcia Parker  
 Barbara Dingé  
 Laundry Supervisor ..... Elizabeth Estis  
 Housekeeping Supervisor ..... Sarah Juchmes  
 Maintenance Supervisor ..... Steve Smith

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