

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We are social beings . . . social networks keep us healthy. Social isolation makes us unhappy and vulnerable to illness. Not a news flash for nurses. So . . . what do we do about it for ourselves, our loved ones, and those we care for? Hopefully more than say "you need to get out." My mother loved going to get her hair washed and styled weekly at the beauty shop. I now realize that was for the "gossip"! She would always say, "There is so much going on in the world and so much of it needs to stop!" Not sure I "approved" of the "gossip" but it was a ladies' social circle!

So how does this apply to me? Aging in place is ideal (aka aging in the community) and requires knowing local resources and support systems. Failure to do so results in social isolation. Which brings up the value of living with other older adults in long-term care. Having friends, enjoying planned activities, sharing memories--it's all in the planning and recognizing the importance of asking for help. Before this happens, however, think about having friends of all ages as well as getting out and experiencing your world. Admit independence doesn't last a lifetime. Asking for help constructs a safety net to help retain control of most aspects of life and more importantly quality of life. I know I need help opening some jars, carrying 40 pound bags of dog food, and lifting luggage overhead bins. Intergenerational and interdependent-- that is what we are and there is no reason to keep it secret!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alyce Ashcraft". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alyce" and last name "Ashcraft" clearly distinguishable.

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NHCGNE President