

## CHAIRMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

### Winter — The Season of Reflection

*"It was You who set all the boundaries of the earth; You made both summer and winter."*  
~ Psalm 74:17

God, in His wisdom, created the seasons, each bearing unique gifts, strengths and insights. As we get in balance with the rhythms of nature, we see how our own lives reflect the energy and purpose of the seasons.

Spring, the time of planting, and summer, the season of patience and growth, called on us to initiate projects and work towards specific goals. We nurtured seeds of ideas, discarded "weeds" of distraction, and persistently tended to the goals we set, anticipating positive results.

If we grew impatient with our own spiritual progress on our life path, we had only to look to the fields for reassurance. The slow but steady growth of an acre of corn showed us that true transformation can't be rushed. We saw the divine timing in the need to first create deep roots to gather nourishment; then a sturdy stalk to withstand the strong winds of storms.

In the same way, we, too, needed to dig deep into our hearts to find the spiritual nourishment we needed to grow. Through prayer, meditation, journaling and expressing gratitude, we developed strong roots to anchor us, and the courage and self-esteem to stand tall in our truths. Confident in our growing awareness of God's presence in our lives, we could weather any

challenge to our faith. Because we'd taken the time to focus on the things we considered important for a purposeful life, we began to experience more of them each and every day.

Then, in God's divine order, came the fall. Just as a single stalk yielded bushels of corn, it was the time to celebrate our accomplishments, express deep gratitude for all the blessings we harvested, and share our bounty with others.

*"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home."*  
~ Edith Sitwell

Now, winter completes the circle of seasons, bringing us to the time for slowing down, deep introspection, and a chance to replenish body, mind and spirit.

Shorter days and falling temperatures bring us indoors, encouraging us to share warm fellowship with like-minded friends and enjoy the reassuring and familiar comforts of family.

As we seek escape from winter's chill, we find solace in the unchanging progression of the seasons, each coming in divine order, and offering us a unique opportunity to nurture our own "inner garden" in harmony with God's plan.

Now, in the relative quiet of winter, we instinctively shift our focus more inward, and take stock of where we are in our lives, and where we desire to be.

It's the time to be even more mindful of what our bodies need in terms of rest and nutrition. Stretching, drinking more water, taking a brisk walk in the chilly air – listen to what your body wants to do, and honor it.

Simple pleasures with friends and family seem richer by the warm glow of firelight or candles. An old-fashioned game night can get the brain humming and the laughter flowing. Music truly does bring people together on many levels. Share an inspirational movie to warm the heart on frosty nights.

While simple fellowship is particularly sweet this time of year, the

(continued on page 2)



Robert Nees, Jr.

### In This Issue...

Chairman's Perspective.....	1
Richness of Spirit.....	2
Going Home for the Holidays.....	3
There's Holiday Magic in the Air at OHI.....	3
Helping Others Help You.....	4
Guest Testimonial.....	4
Scholarships: A Golden Bridge to a New Life.....	5
OHI Scholarship Fund.....	5
Serving Up Sunshine.....	6
OHI for life® Skin Care System.....	6
Our Offers.....	7
Connect and Share.....	7
The 5 P's to Optimum Health.....	8

(continued from page 1)

time we mindfully invest in ourselves is so important for creating a strong spiritual foundation for the coming seasons. Winter invites solitary pursuits that enrich us, like journaling, meditating, and reading inspiring books. If you're going on a long drive to gather with family or friends this season, consider getting an audio book to enjoy on the way. The time will fly by as you deepen your spiritual awareness.

*"The holidays are only holy if we make them so."*

~ Marianne Williamson

No matter what your religious beliefs, relish the transcendent energy of joy and unity this Holy season brings to all. Let your spiritual light shine, and be a beacon for others with your happiness, compassion and gratitude.

*"If you asked me for my New Year Resolution, it would be to find out who I am."*

~ Cyril Cusack

Just on the other side of the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, we greet the arrival of 2015. This time of looking forward prompts us to mindfully reflect on our past. Looking back on 2014, it was a year of transformation and growth for OHI, and all those we touched.

On the physical level, we made significant upgrades in guest rooms, classrooms, and the grounds to create the most nurturing space for your transformative stay with us. New classes we introduced at OHI San Diego quickly won your overwhelming approval. "Pray, Eat, Live," with delicious maintenance recipes and raw food preparation tips, is already a new favorite.

Another change we implemented in 2014 that will definitely continue in the New Year is a one-minute Alpha experience included in every class. Expressing gratitude, conscious breathing or a brief

guided meditation all serve to quickly uplift guests into a state of higher consciousness, where it's easier to touch into God's grace.

Being in gratitude for the opportunity to be of service to you, our guests, has been a Nees family tradition for the past 38 years. My parents, Robert Sr. and Pamela Nees, together with my uncle, the Rev. Russell Nees and Raychel Solomon, were thrilled and humbled to see their idea for a place to detoxify the body, quiet the mind and renew the spirit take form in 1976.

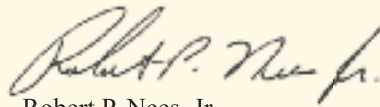
When I was called to take over the leadership of OHI after my father and uncle died in 2002, it was an honor to be the second generation in my family to continue OHI's mission to be a change agent for human kind by improving the physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of everyone we touch.

I am proud to say my son Andrew has joined the OHI team this year, becoming the third generation to continue the tradition of service.

Reflecting on how far all of us have come this year by working together, I am excited and humbled to continue to lead OHI into a bright and promising future.

May the divine grace, joy and peace of the season be with you and yours throughout the New Year.

Yours in prayer,



Robert P. Nees, Jr.

Chairman

Optimum Health Institute  
of San Diego and Austin



## Richness of Spirit



Perhaps you've experienced it – that moment when someone walks into a room, and seems to fill it with light. Their warmth, good humor and charisma radiate to everyone around them. That's what "Richness of Spirit" is all about.

While material wealth is accumulating "things," spiritual wealth transcends

possessions to focus on values that nourish our soul. So many people claim they didn't know they grew up poor until someone else told them. Their home was so full of love, laughter and compassion they always felt abundance. That's what living with richness of spirit does – priorities shift, and material things aren't important.

Another way to express it is sharing your blessings with others after you've overcome your own challenges. A-list actor Leonardo

DiCaprio grew up poor in a dicey part of Los Angeles. When his movie career took off, he began sharing his new wealth with causes like child and animal welfare, the environment and food banks.

Actions that contribute to your happiness and contentment enrich your spirit. Expressing gratitude is one of the quickest ways to begin to enrich your spiritual connection to the divine. Having faith in something greater than you, expressing compassion, sharing your enthusiasm and working to create positive, caring connections with others are guaranteed to raise your joy level.

Many of the classes offered at the Optimum Health Institute (OHI) were created to plug you into concepts and exercises empowering you to enhance your own spiritual richness. Emotional and Mental Detoxification, "You" Validation, Self Esteem, Your Life is a Gift, Body Mind Connection and Advanced Alpha Techniques all focus on rising above any limitations of the physical body to connect to your Higher Self.

## Going Home for the Holidays



Unless August 16 is your birthday, chances are you don't remember what you were doing August 16, 2004. Sure, you might recall where you were living, and the people who were in your life. But specific conversations? What you ate? Where you went that day? Probably not.

That's why the holidays are such an important touchstone for families and friends. We *do* remember specifics of a

particular Christmas, or Hanukkah, or other special traditional observance.

One of the necessities for being happy is having a "community" – one or many family members and/or friends who know you, and have your back.

Here are some ideas for enhancing your family community this holiday season.

- Release all expectations. Forget the "perfect" holiday; focus on things that are positive, fun and interesting to keep you, and everyone else, jolly.
- Start a new tradition of going around the table and sharing your happiest holiday memory that includes at least one or two others gathered there.
- Bring music to the mix. John Denver said, "Music does bring people together. It allows us to experience the same emotions. People everywhere are the same in heart and spirit."

May your holiday gatherings nurture and enrich you in body, mind and spirit.

## There's Holiday Magic in the Air at OHI



A special magic is in the air at the Optimum Health Institute (OHI) during the holiday season. There's a spectacular 12-foot-tall poinsettia tree at OHI San Diego, and individual poinsettias line the Great Hall at OHI Austin. Hundreds of thousands of tiny white lights are woven through the landscape in both OHI locations.

While the decorations are lovely, the real magic is created by the OHI guests. Many, say members of the OHI team, have made a return trip to OHI in December or January a holiday tradition.

"At least 75% of the people at OHI San Diego during Christmas week are repeat guests," said Dan Strobhar, OHI's Garden Manager and Senior Facilitator. Dan himself is marking his 29<sup>th</sup> Christmas with OHI. He joined the team in December of 1985.

People want to get away from commercialism and give themselves the gift of balancing body, mind and spirit with a like-minded community.

Cheryl Green, OHI Austin's Program Director and a 17-year OHI veteran, agrees. "Christmas week is very reflective and sweet," Cheryl said, "while the energy around New Year's is full of anticipation and excitement. The entire time, there's a happy feeling of gratitude, and a rich spiritual fellowship."

Cheryl said there's also a lot of room for humor during the holidays. One frequent guest even brought a blow-up turkey, which she gifted to OHI. Now, every year on the holiday dining table, there's a faux Tom perched next to the sprouts and seed cheese. It never fails to bring a lot of smiles and laughter.



## Helping Others Helps You

Every holiday season since it was written in 1941, “The Little Drummer Boy” strikes a chord. The song tells of people laying their “finest gifts” before the infant Jesus, while the drummer boy has just one thing to give – his talent. He plays his drum, and is rewarded with a divine smile.

Whether we have millions or just our time and talent to give this season, every gift from the heart actually produces measurable benefits to our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness.

A study by the National Institutes of Health discovered parts of the brain linked with trust, social connection and pleasure are activated when we give to charities or volunteer. The brain releases endorphins, producing a “helper’s high.” A Harvard Business School study showed giving money away is more satisfying than spending it on ourselves.

Research also discovered that chronically ill people actually became measurably healthier after giving. Volunteers tend to have lower blood pressure, stress levels and incidents of heart disease and depression.

A University of California, Berkeley, study proved that the elderly, in particular, benefit. Even factoring in variables like age, general health, non-healthy behaviors and exercise habits, volunteers were 44% less likely to die over a 5-year period than non-volunteers.

Giving and volunteering strengthen ties to community, and foster a sense of belonging. When we see someone doing good for someone else, our brain actually creates a chemical reaction that inspires us to do likewise. Kindness truly is contagious.

To find opportunities to give and volunteer in your community, go on-line and check out:

- **Volunteermatch.org:** This site has a list of specific needs in your area during the holidays, and year round.
- **Unitedway.org:** Find out how you can be a mentor, reader or tutor in your city.



## Alicia Wesley’s Awakening at OHI



In 2009 I was diagnosed with uterine cancer. After the surgery I felt I needed to detox my body and mind. I remembered previously reading about the Optimum Health Institute (OHI) and thinking, “I’m going to go to this place.” Three weeks later, I was there.

The OHI Austin campus is in a serene rural setting with gorgeous landscaping. You can hear the birds chirping, and see incredible

wildlife. It’s the perfect place to clear your mind, and it’s so conducive to healing.

It’s not just the beautiful setting – the staff is unbelievable. I love the people here! They will make a great impact on your life.

The food is paramount to the program, but there’s so much more to OHI than just what you eat. You learn that what you allow to rent space in your mind and your heart is just as impactful as what you put in your body.

For me, the Emotional and Mental Detox classes were profound. I had so many epiphanies about what was going on in my life – I had constant awakenings the entire time I was there.

This has been a life-changing experience I will never forget, and it’s helped me put my life into perspective in ways I never did before. It’s still a continuous journey for me. Even after nine months as a missionary, every day I put my life into new perspectives with eyes I didn’t have before.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to be at OHI and for the changes it has made in my life!

## Scholarships: A Golden Bridge to a New Life

It was a few years ago a first-time guest arrived at Optimum Health Institute (OHI) San Diego with a major health opportunity. She'd recently undergone surgery, and her stomach wound refused to heal, her pallor was gray, and she had no energy. In just one week she began to notice improvements. Huge medical bills prevented her from affording the additional two weeks of our holistic lifestyle program.

After reviewing the woman's rather dire situation, we were able to award her with a scholarship to complete the entire three-week program. At the end of her 21-day stay, she looked and felt great. Her wound healed completely, her doctors were amazed, and another person was able to transform her life because of the generosity of people contributing to the OHI Scholarship Fund.

We affectionately call the Scholarship Fund a "Golden Bridge," because it links guests who are in dire need of both healing and financial aid to a healthier, happier future. After a guest has paid for one week of our holistic lifestyle program, if they are dealing with a life-threatening health opportunity, but have no way of fi-

nancing an extended stay, they may be eligible for a scholarship for one or sometimes both additional weeks.

Through the years, thanks to the generosity of so many, we've been able to offer a golden bridge to thousands of guests in need. If you've experienced a transformation in your own life after an OHI visit, and you'd like to share the experience, please consider a tax-deductible contribution. For your convenience you may use the postage paid attached envelope or call us at **(800) 993-4325**. Thank you for your consideration.



Larry Taylor  
Executive Director, OHI San Diego

## OHI Scholarship Fund

### Scholarships Build a Golden Bridge for Those in Need

The Optimum Health Institute Scholarship Fund is something of a "Golden Bridge" linking OHI's past and future. Through generous donations over the years, thousands of guests, many who are in great need of both healing and financial aid, have received scholarships that enabled them to extend their OHI stay. The scholarship offers financial assistance to people who wish to complete the entire OHI holistic healing program in three consecutive weeks to address a health opportunity that is life-threatening. The OHI scholarship covers the cost of the second week and possibly the third week of the program.

To everyone who has supported the Scholarship Fund, we thank you. Your kind donations have helped to support the amazing miracles and transformation that occurs at our missions. We invite readers to consider a gift to the OHI Scholarship Fund to commemorate the 38th anniversary of our healing mission, and to honor the healthy changes the OHI holistic healing program has made in your own life.

You can help us build a Golden Bridge to optimum health for those who are ill, and in need, by supporting the OHI Scholarship Fund with a contribution by check or credit card. Because we are a non-profit religious organization, your donation is tax deductible. Please call us at **(800) 993-4325** for more information or to make a donation. You may also use the enclosed envelope. Your generosity will directly benefit those in need.

## Serving Up “Sunshine”

With its shorter days and cooler (or biting cold!) temperatures, a winter of optimum health demands some changes in our diet.

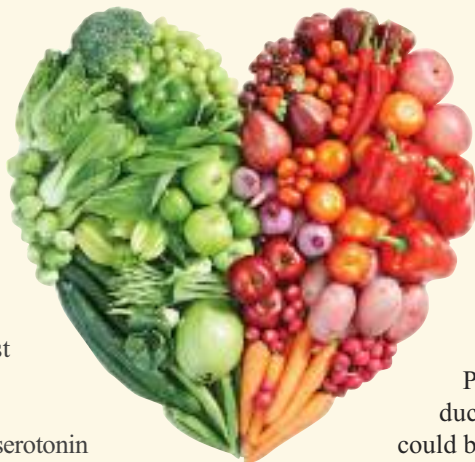
Dwindling light means less natural vitamin D from the sun. Vitamin D helps prevent cancer, bone fractures, diabetes, heart disease, inflammation, and even anxiety and depression. That lack of sunlight can cause serotonin levels to drop, potentially leading to lethargy and food cravings.

While 10 minutes outside daily with the winter sun in its highest position is beneficial, consuming foods rich in D, like mushrooms and almond milk, will help boost vitamin D levels.

Healthy carbohydrate-rich foods that can boost serotonin production are sweet potatoes, yams, pumpkins, and squash.

Year round, but particularly in winter, reach for vitamin C-rich

foods to support the immune system and adrenal glands. Choose yellow, red and green bell peppers, guava, kale, kiwi, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, berries, citrus fruits, tomatoes, peas, and papaya.



Winter is notorious for platters of sugary treats. Sugar overload crashes the immune system, leaving you vulnerable to winter's colds and flu. Factor in other risks, like arthritis, diabetes, heart disease – is a sweet “treat” worth the potential dangers? Take a deep breath, and take control.

Start a new tradition – like bringing a tasty kale salad to the family holiday dinner. Pomegranates are in season in winter – introduce people to the exotic sweet-tart fruit that could become a healthy favorite.

Dehydrate both raw almonds and apples, and have some with you all season long for healthy, energy boosting snacking.

## OHI for life® Skin Care System

Our mission to support guest health and healing from the inside out was the inspiration for the creation of the naturally pure **OHI for life®** line of skincare products, made exclusively for our Optimum Health Institute community.

The **OHI for life® Skincare System** will cleanse, tone, feed, and nourish the skin with certified organic ingredients that are grown without pesticides, herbicides or insecticides. The OHI for life® products carries the OHI Seal of Approval, and are prepared without the use of harmful chemicals, mineral oils, perfumes or animal testing. The **OHI for life® Skincare System** is the ultimate “food for the skin.”



100% of net proceeds after direct and indirect expenses will benefit OHI's Scholarship Fund.



### SPECIAL HOLIDAY OFFER

- Purchase the **OHI for life® Skin Care Systems** at our special Auto Ship Program\* pricing!
- Plus receive a **FREE** mini-size Intensive Antioxidant Masque (\$7.50 value) and **FREE** shipping on your order.
- **SAVE \$20.00** Purchase the **Basic Skin Care System** - (Cleanser, Toner, Day Crème, Evening Crème) Reg. Price \$100.00 - **Special Price \$79.99**
- When you add the full-size **Intensive Antioxidant Masque** or **Gel Body Wash** to your order, you'll save up to an additional \$24.00, for a total **savings up to \$44.00**.
- Add your free gift value of \$7.50, that's a total **SAVINGS UP to \$51.50**

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\* Call for details on the convenient Auto Ship Program.

## OUR OFFERS

### For our community members who have completed the Program

Get a FREE room when you book your 4th week within a 12-month period. Oh and better yet, when you book your 4th-week stay, bring a friend or loved one who has never stayed with us before and they pay only for the program tuition. **Some restrictions apply.**

### Extended Stay Savings

Stay in any best-available, single or double-occupancy room and receive 10% off your entire 3 week stay or 5% off your entire 2 week stay. **Some restrictions apply.**

### Early Bird Special

Ideal for the one who plans and books early with us. Receive \$100 off any best-available, single-occupancy room for your 1st week when you book your reservation 3 weeks in advance. **Some restrictions apply.**

### Find Out More

Call us toll free at **(800) 993-4325** to speak to one of our expert reservation staff for details or see all our offer details on our website at [www.optimumhealth.org](http://www.optimumhealth.org)

**Internet access now available in select rooms at both OHI locations.**

## Connect & Share. Let's Get Social!

**Our best way to share OHI news and special offers is through email.** We offer our OHI Community some great savings throughout the year, but in order for you to be eligible to take advantage of the exclusive email offers we must have your valid email address on file.

Want to receive email offers from us? Then please call us to update your email address at **(800) 993-4325** or email us at [optimum@optimumhealth.org](mailto:optimum@optimumhealth.org)

To support our OHI community we have expanded our communication lines to include various social media platforms. We invite you to take a few minutes and check out our new social presence.

### Optimum Health Institute Blog website

Our OHI blog site is located at [www.optimumhealthusa.com](http://www.optimumhealthusa.com) This is a robust site with great information on incorporating the OHI program into your daily life, articles on healing, nutrition and creating balance in your life.

### Facebook

Make sure to stop by and “Like” us and join one of our groups. To view information shared on any of our group pages you must first join that particular group.

- Facebook Page - Visit and “Like” us on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/OptimumHealthInstitute](http://www.facebook.com/OptimumHealthInstitute)

On this page we post offers, links to our blog articles and any new updates about OHI.

- Facebook Groups - The OHI groups were set up to encourage conversation and support to guests who become members of the group. We have three OHI group pages. To find our groups just enter “Optimum Health Institute of Austin”, “Optimum Health Institute of San Diego” or “Optimum Health Institute Missionaries” in the Facebook search bar.

### Twitter

Follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/optimumhealthus](http://www.twitter.com/optimumhealthus) By “Following” us on Twitter, you will be updated when any new articles, offers or announcements are posted to our Optimum Health USA blog site.

### YouTube

Our OHI YouTube Channel is [www.youtube.com/optimumhealthinst](http://www.youtube.com/optimumhealthinst). On this channel, you will find our Optimum Health Institute of San Diego and Austin guest testimonial videos!

### LinkedIn

Connect with us on LinkedIn.

OHI has gone social to better connect and support our OHI community! Come on in and connect with us...it will be fun!





**A Mission of  
The Free Sacred Trinity Church**

The Free Sacred Trinity Church and its subordinate religious missions, the Optimum Health Institute of San Diego and the Optimum Health Institute of Austin, are not-for-profit organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Support OHI's Mission**

We are a non-profit religious organization and your donation is tax deductible. On behalf of all those who benefit from the OHI Scholarship Fund, we offer our gratitude!

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**VISIT WITH US:**

Visit our weekly Open House every Sunday starting at 4:00 p.m. in San Diego and Austin. The OHI Program offers visitors, guests and adherents a personal tour of the facility, lecture, prayer circle and an all raw vegan meal. A \$3 donation is appreciated, but not required.

**CONTACT US:**

We'd love to hear from you. To receive special offers and updates, email us at [newsletter@optimumhealth.org](mailto:newsletter@optimumhealth.org) or call us at **(800) 993-4325**. For more information about the OHI Program, please visit our website at [www.optimumhealth.org](http://www.optimumhealth.org)

**OPTIMUM HEALTH INSTITUTE**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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**OHI - San Diego**

6970 Central Avenue, Lemon Grove, CA 91945  
(619) 464-3346 or (800) 993-4325

**Our Mission**

We serve as a change agent for human-kind by improving the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of everyone we touch.

**Core Values**

Holism, Generosity, Relationships, Life-Long Learning, Stewardship and Service.

**Guiding Principles**

Trustworthiness, Respect, Empowerment and Alignment.

**The Five P's to Optimum Health**

**Purpose** to achieve a natural balance and reconnection to the Divine.

**Positive** mental attitude that supports the healing process.

**Persistence** in following the holistic disciplines of the OHI program.

**Patience** with your body and yourself, as you allow your body-mind-spirit to heal.

**Prayer** to a higher source who will share the load with you.