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Cobb Business

A WEEKLY REPORT OF PEOPLE AND EVENTS

In-home care proves popular

Elderly often just need companion

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Maria Stavas remembers when her grandmother began having strokes and suffering from dementia when she was 88.

"She would sometimes climb out the window and wander down the street in her nightgown," Stavas said. "We had to hire a gal to come in and pose as a cleaning lady, because my grand-

each other twice a week.

During these visits, Friedrich balances Phillips' checkbook, does her grocery shopping and drives her to the hair salon — tasks Phillips can no longer perform because of a degenerative eye disease.

By far, the highlight for both women is lunch.

"I wish Anne could come over every day and go to lunch," Phillips said. "But then I would have



want to accept help. It was a very stressful situation.”

Stavas' experiences with her grandmother helped her see the need for a service like Home Instead Senior Care.

A national company, Home Instead provides companionship and nonmedical home care for the elderly.

Stavas and her husband, Ken, of Acworth, are the owners of a Home Instead office in Kennerly, where they match elderly clients with caregivers in Cobb and eight other north metro Atlanta counties.

Caregivers spend four to 24 hours a day with their clients, preparing meals, running errands, cleaning up around the house or just sitting and talking.

“We look for honest, compassionate people who will empathize with the seniors and become part of the family,” Ken Stavas said.

That is exactly what Anne Friedrich has done with 80-year-old Annie Phillips.

Though they've known each other only since January, Friedrich, 42, and Phillips chat like old friends when they see

In addition to visiting seniors who live alone, Home Instead workers also look after clients whose spouses and relatives work or need a break.

For instance, caregiver Juanita Holmes stays with a client five nights a week so the client's wife can sleep.

A former nursing home employee, Holmes said she has seen the benefits of programs like Home Instead, particularly for seniors recovering from serious injuries.

“They seem to get better quicker when they're at home in their own surroundings,” Holmes said.

The Stavases, who this month celebrated the seventh anniversary of their Home Instead office, estimate that they have served more than 1,000 seniors. Theirs was the first Home Instead office in Georgia.

Hourly fees for Home Instead services range from \$11.50 to \$19, depending on location and the type of assistance required.

For more information on Home Instead Senior Care, visit www.homeinstead.com or call 770-425-4240.



ANDY SHARP / Staff

North Cobb resident Annie Phillips, 80, and caregiver Anne Friedrich have known each other only a few months but chat like old friends during Friedrich's twice-a-week visits.