

A Tennis Whiz

At age 14, Andrea Jaeger won her first professional tennis tournament. At 18, she reached the finals of Wimbledon. At 19, a bad shoulder all but ended her career.

Many a world-class athlete may have become bitter or discontented with life at that point. Jaeger, however, turned her competitive spirit to a new endeavor -- a non-profit organization called The Silver Lining Foundation that attempts to bring joy to children suffering from cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. Her work there has also inspired her to take correspondence studies in nursing and child psychology.

Jaeger not only created the program, but runs it full-time, year-round, unpaid. "I'm inspired by these brave kids, and humbled," she has said. "They lose their health, their friends, and sometimes their lives. And yet, their spirit never wavers. They look at life as a gift. The rest of us sometimes look at ourselves as a gift to life."

Jaeger added: "You get very spoiled on the tour. The courtesy cars, the five-star hotels, the thousands of people clapping for you when you hit a good shot. It's easy to forget what's important in life. I forget a lot less lately."

Jaeger has a good outlook on life. She is involved in a noble calling. But so are the associates of Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home. It is a mission of serving others with needs. And we do it well.

One important principle for successful living -- one understood by the children Jaeger meets -- is that the secret of contentment, whatever our circumstance may be, is the realization that life is a gift, and not a right. We should thank God everyday for it.

--Beecher Hunter