

At 75, 'I feel really good'

At 70 years of age, Burton Carlson, perhaps unwittingly, undertook to test the physical condition of his body.

The test was called moving, as from one home to another, a good deal by himself, trips back and forth to the former house over a prolonged period of time, including lugging — the ultimate test — boxes of books.

Carlson and his wife, Andrea Wood, were living in Alexandria, Va.

In 2007, they purchased an attractive older house near downtown Easton.

The script writes itself. The house in Easton has two stories and an attic. The house in Alexandria had two stories and an attic.

Boxes of books in the attic of the Alexandria home, as one might imagine, often were destined for the attic of the home in Easton.

Carlson had retired from long and varied service as a federal government employee, lastly with the Department of Education.

His wife, also a government employee, would retire two years later, departing the Office of Homeland Security.

In the interim, husband Burton would attend to moving chores and wife Amanda would remain in Alexandria and come to the couple's new Easton home on weekends.

In the course of all of that moving and the beginning of the creation of a flower garden in the backyard of the new Easton home, his body launched a modest rebellion: Pain in the shoulders, trouble with the back.

Boxes of books, are heavy, he remarked. Attics are a long way up.

"And I can't even stand up straight in there," said the lanky 6-foot-plus Carlson of the upper floor in the Easton home.

Off to an orthopedic sur-



The Cianci Chronicles

Dr. Christopher Cianci
Licensed chiropractor,
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(Authored by Bruce Hotchkiss)

geon. "I learned I had stenosis in the fourth lumbar," he said. Medication was prescribed, of course.

Then, while driving (and still moving stuff like boxes), some leg pain. Sciatica.

Carlson chanced to meet a neighbor of Easton chiropractor Dr. Christopher Cianci.

"I had no experience in chiropractic care," he said. However, he did recall that when he was five years old, he "fell out of a car" during a family trip through Ohio, injuring a leg. A chiropractor, as he remembers, fixed it.

Well, Carlson thought, maybe another chiropractor can repair this damage.

He made an appointment with Dr. Cianci in September, 2010.

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Dr. Cianci drew this scenario. "When I first saw Mr. Carlson, he had a lot of neck pain and what he described as an 'electrical feeling' in his fingers. And, he said, he had difficulty holding his arms above his head.

"Overall, he felt he was losing strength and mentioned that these problems affected his ability to sleep. He was noticeably fatigued. Not a good thing considering he was involved in a major moving of a household."

Dr. Cianci added that Carlson

reported he had been given a diagnosis of "lumbar stenosis" which intensified the pain in his hip and limited his mobility. And if that wasn't enough, he told Dr. Cianci, he had been seeing a rheumatologist for polymyalgic rheumatica — an arthritic disorder that can be severely limiting.

Said Dr. Cianci: "I think Mr. Carlson is a perfect example of someone with a long list of problems and disorders and instead of giving in to them and living a life full of pain and limitations, has decided to fix what is fixable, to change what can be changed and get back to the active life he once had.

"What people need to realize, as age and ailments begin to pile up," Dr. Cianci continued, "is that you've got to actively push back and seek ways which provide relief."

Dr. Cianci said he was delighted, professionally, to be able to help Burton Carlson return to his active lifestyle, a lifestyle that was starting to slip away. "As of now," the Easton chiropractor said, "he is strong and getting stronger."

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To know Burton Carlson, you need to know certain things. His grandfather and father were both pastors.

He holds a bachelor of divinity degree from Yale Divinity School and a master's in religious studies and the ancient languages from Wabash College in Indiana.

He was a Fulbright Scholar. His varied career has focused, in various formats, on manpower and employment training — "I loved my jobs. I felt they were worthy, interesting and that I was doing some good."

He is also a poet, with eight self-published volumes. And he is, finally, glad to be retired. Particularly these days. He credits that to Dr. Cianci's attentions. "I feel really good," he said.