



Happy New Year Memory Cafe!

"The noblest question in the world," observed Benjamin Franklin in *Poor Richard*, "is what good may I do in it?" While it's a bit ostentatious to suggest Beth Ustanko and I were noble when we started Memory Cafe almost four years ago, our sincere mission was - and continues to be, to enhance the quality of life, and quality of care for individuals living with memory loss and their loved ones. For both of us, our motivation stemmed from the experiences of our parents who lived with dementia - the lonely, grievous, and painful stigma, loss of lifelong friendships, lack of friendly, non-judgmental socialization opportunities, and out-dated educational resources.

Many of you are perhaps unaware that there are hundreds of Memory Cafes around the world. None of them are affiliated with each other or any larger organization; each is independent and free to choose their own goals, meeting schedules, and organizational structure. Some meet for coffee once a month, others meet weekly and are open to anyone in the community, not just individuals living with memory loss and their loved ones.

Our vision was to create a Memory Cafe that provided a safe, non-judgmental place for people living with early to mid-stage memory loss and their care partner to gather. We wanted to free them from the powerful stigma that often keeps them hiding in their homes. We wanted to bring moments of joy, sweet companionship, high quality education, community service and engagement opportunities, and the creative arts into the lives of these beautiful individuals and families.

And despite many hurdles, especially during 2020 we are successfully achieving those goals. Not simply because of our own efforts but because of the strength, beauty, wisdom, and inspiration of our participants, friends, board members, advisory board members, donors, and incredibly dedicated volunteers!

While acknowledging the pain and losses of last year and the continued uncertainty and challenges of the new year we are eagerly look forward to 2021 with faith, gratitude, confidence, and eager anticipation!

~Warmly, Deb Kaul

Jan/Feb Meeting Schedule

* Subject to Change

All Meetings held from 1-2:30 pm via Zoom

Jan. 5th - Welcoming in the New Year with Music, Yoga, and Relaxation. Brenda Weiler, Ecce Studio

Jan. 19th - Unmasking Art Project, Carly Endres, ND Brain Injury Network. **Registration required by Jan. 5th**

Feb. 2nd - Covid 19 Vaccines: Development, Safety, Distribution, Efficacy. CIRE Center, NDSU

Feb. 16th - "Lions and Tigers and Bears, oh my!" A virtual tour and overview of the Red River Zoo with Sally Jacobson, Executive Director



In This Issue



- Eagerly Anticipating 2021- Deb Kaul
- "Winter's Real Deal" by Mark Bratlie
- "Still Here, Still Me" - Various authors
- For Our Health - Strength Training - AARP
- "Just For Laughs" - Steve Froslic
- Building Skills and Community
- Fund Raising Encouragement
- The Impact of Memory Cafe - Testimonials
- Meet the Board and Memory Cafe Volunteers

WELCOME 2021
HAPPY NEW YEAR

One of the great wonders of the natural world we live in is the change of seasons. We all have our favorite. In the following poem written by my husband Mark, you can tell where winter ranks with him. ~Jean Anderson

Winter's Real Deal
by
Mark Bratlie



Most things contract to trap some heat
but does not work for hands or feet
When they contract they start to shake
and feel as though they just might break

When "cold as ice" does not suffice
try "cold as iron"... "cold as steel"
So cold I cannot touch or feel
this must be winter's real deal

Add the wind with edge so sharp
that cuts through clothing like a blade
While layers seem of little help
as body's heat begins to fade

Are we meant to live on frozen land
how much cold torture can we stand
As some go south in search of heat
I dream of their warm hands and feet



**Empowering Resources by People Living with
Dementia For People Living with Dementia:**

[DementiaAllianceInternational.org](https://dementiaallianceinternational.org)

<https://alz.org.sg/hear-from-our-voices-for-hope/>

"Still Here, Still Me"



"About us, without us" is a prominent theme of solidarity among individuals living with dementia around the world. Led by courageous individuals such as Kate Swaffer, Dr. Richard Taylor, and Christine Bryson who lived, or currently live well AFTER their diagnosis of dementia, international grassroots movements such as Dementia Alliance International have sprung up around the world. They are demanding a voice and a place at the dementia decision making table where other "experts" are making decisions about them, without them. They want to be recognized as **the** experts in dementia care...because **they** are the ones living with it.

Since our inception Memory Cafe has remained committed to joining this effort. As part of that on-going effort we will begin dedicating a portion of our newsletter to feature the insights of individuals living with various cognitive disabilities. Because we fully embrace the fact these individuals are, and always will be "STILL HERE and STILL ME."

I am Emily Ong, a dementia advocate, co-facilitator of ADA Singapore, Voices for Hope program, Focus Group member of the Global Dementia Observatory, and a member of Dementia Alliance International. It is a privilege to have been given this opportunity to speak on behalf of my global friends who are living with dementia, an affirmation of 'Nothing about us, without us.' (Continued on page 7)

Member Updates

- Ginny L. asks we pray for her husband Ron who continues to struggle with various health issues and has lost a lot of weight over the past several months.
- Beverly C. spent most of last week in the hospital and is very weak. Lloyd also asks for your prayers.
- Mary S. is finishing her radiation treatments soon and says she is doing well. She asks us to continue praying for her daughter Kelly who has now finished her chemo and is scheduled for her second surgery on Jan. 19th.
- John S. is thankful for the recent snowfall. "It helps to get out of the house and fight with the snow for awhile!" He is also thankful this Covid pandemic doesn't appear to be lasting as long as the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918 did. It took the life of his 22 year old grandmother in 1920.

For Our Health

Strength Training for Seniors (condensed)

Barbara O'Dair, AARP June 1, 2020

<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2019/strength-training.html>

"As we get older we begin to lose muscle," notes fitness expert Bryant Johnson, who has trained Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, 87, twice a week for the past 20 years. "You start losing muscle mass as early as your 30s, so at a certain age you need to be concerned with your balance and mobility." The federal government's guidelines for older adults recommend muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on two or more days a week. So what happens if you understand all this intellectually but still haven't made it to the mat? Let's examine some of the reasons for your resistance and how to get over them.

Hang-up: Getting started. What helps? Define your motivation. "I always ask, 'What's your why?'" Johnson says. "If you don't understand why you're doing it, you're setting yourself up for failure." "You have to be both "committed" and "thoughtful," since coming back to your motivation for getting strong will get you through the actual workouts down the road."

Hang-up: It just seems hard. What helps? Start slowly, very slowly. Give yourself time to get strong, bit by bit — and don't expect results overnight. "It's all about showing up, mentally and physically," says Johnson, who points out that a great place to start is doing as little as 10 minutes of weight lifting or resistance exercises twice a week.

Hang-up: You think you might hurt yourself. What helps? Get the facts and some assistance. Start very slow and give your body several days to rest between sessions. Choose beginner-level online fitness videos from reputable sources, or look into online-coaching with a trainer who is certified by ACE (American Council on Exercise).

Hang-up: You struggle to fit it into your schedule. What helps? Lift some weights during TV commercials. To establish the routine of strength training, sometimes it helps to work in very short stints around some of your daily activities (bonus points if you work them into the time you normally spend doing especially sedentary activities.) For instance, you could lift hand weights or try sit-to-stands or planks during commercial breaks while watching TV, or you could do a few standing push-ups against the kitchen counter while you wait for your coffee to brew.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I Believe...in pink.

I believe that laughter is the best calorie burner.

I believe in staying strong when everything else seems to be going wrong.

I believe that happy girls are the prettiest.

I believe that tomorrow is another day,
& most importantly I believe in miracles."

~Audrey Hepburn

Just For
Laughs!

Content
Provided by
Steve Froslie



This is the best description for 2020 I've seen. It will at least make you laugh at the nightmare, the worst year many of us have ever lived through.

1. The dumbest thing I ever bought was a 2020 planner.
2. I was so bored I called Jake from State Farm just to talk to someone. He asked me what I was wearing.
3. 2019: Stay away from negative people. 2020: Stay away from positive people.
4. The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house & their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!
5. This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her dog. It was obvious she thought her dog understood her. I came into my house & told my cat. We laughed a lot.
6. Every few days try your jeans on just to make sure they fit. Pajamas will have you believe all is well in the kingdom.
7. Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?
8. This virus has done what no woman has been able to do. Cancel sports, shut down all bars & keep men at home!
9. I never thought the comment, "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6-foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!
10. I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.
11. I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to the Backyard. I'm getting tired of the Living Room.
12. Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller wearing a mask & ask for money.



Some of you are receiving our newsletter for the first time! Let us know if you'd like to opt out or receive it electronically. Also let us know if you know anyone who would like to receive it!





Jan. 5th

Ushering in a Peaceful and Calm 2021



What a perfect way to start the New Year... welcoming Brenda Weiler, owner of Ecce Studio to Memory Cafe! Brenda is a wonderful musician, highly respected yoga practitioner, and expert on relaxation techniques which she is eager to share with us. Don't miss it!

Thank you Michael Olson and Dan Cushing for the time and effort you put forth to bring us some really lovely Christmas organ music in December. Even though the sound was less than ideal it was lovely to be together and singing along from home. And the conversation after the concert was so pleasant. Thank you!

Coming Up: Feb. 2nd Covid - 19 Vaccines

CIRE (Center for Immunization Research and Education, NDSU)

Kylie Hall, MPH and Lauren Dybsand, MPH (Master's of Public Health)

During this important session we will learn from the experts regarding vaccine development, safety, vaccine products, current immunization recommendations, distribution of COVID-19 vaccine. They will also answer any questions you may have about the vaccines.

Fleece Blanket Christmas Giveaway

Many of you who tied blankets - often more than one, were unable to attend our Zoom meeting on Dec. 1st. During this meeting we were joined by representatives of Down Home (photo), Jeremiah Project, Churches United, YWCA and the Ronald McDonald House. They were VERY appreciative of the blankets and our efforts!



Memory Cafe Expansion!

We are DELIGHTED to hear that Dr. Gunjan Manocha from UND Medical School is seeking our assistance in developing TWO additional Memory Cafes - one in Minot and one in Bismarck! He even has a bit of funding available for the project. If you know of anyone in these communities who may be interested in helping Dr Gunjan please email him at gunjan.manocha@und.edu . This is exciting! https://med.und.edu/geriatrics/index.html

Jan. 19th

Unmasking Brain Injury Art Project ND Brain Injury Network



Tuesday, January 19, 2021 1:00-2:30 PM Central

Virtual Event once registered, Zoom information will sent to you. Registration is required and due by January 5th: https://und.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_83a1H3smSk4PjaI

Living with a neurological system that doesn't work as well as it should is stressful, no matter what the cause.

This Unmasking Brain Injury workshop is a powerful tool used to identify and communicate the feelings and frustrations of those impacted, including family members, through art. It has been offered in many locations throughout the country and we are thrilled Carly Enders, from the ND Brain Injury Network, is willing to lead us through the workshop virtually!

Registrations are required by Jan. 5th so let us know asap if you are interested in joining us for this event!

Feb. 16th

Virtual Tour of the Red River Zoo

Sally Jacopson, the energetic Executive Director of the Red River Zoo, will take us inside the winter walls of the zoo during this entertaining and educational tour!

Musical Favorites for All Ages*

So you purchased or received a new musical device for Christmas but are unsure what music to download on it? Here are a few favorite options!

Top hits for 90+ year olds

- Hits of 30's & 40's
The Andrews Sisters
Benny Goodman
Bing Crosby
Glenn Miller
Judy Garland

Top hits for 70+ year olds

- 50's Ultimate Rock & Roll Collection
No. 1 Hits of the 50's
Connie Francis
Elvis Presley
Essential Everly Brothers
The Rat Pack: Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr.

Top hits for 80+ year olds

- Great Records Of The Decade: 40's Hits
Dinah Shore
Doris Day
Nat King Cole
Patti Page
Tony Bennett

Top hits for 60+ year olds

- Pure 60's: The #1 Hits
Aretha Franklin
The Beatles
Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons
The Rolling Stones
Roy Orbison
Simon & Garfunkel

*www.dailycaring.com



WOW!

**HUGE
Thank you!!**

WOW!

It's humbling to experience the incredible support Memory Cafe receives, often unsolicited. Due to the incredible generosity of our donors we exceeded our \$10,000 goal for the FM Area Foundation Caring Catalog by \$200! Wow!! Thank you so much to each of you who gave so generously. We appreciate EVERY gift, no matter how large or small! We also deeply appreciate the gift of time and wise counsel we consistently receive from our participants, families, friends, board members, and selfless volunteers. We are so grateful for your interest and participation in Memory Cafe!

Special Shout Out to **FM Area Foundation, Vanneisa Hartmann, large donors who prefer to remain anonymous, and our New Corporate Donors:**

Heartland Trust - \$1000

Sandy's Donuts - \$1000

Dawson Insurance & Marsh & McLennan Agency - \$2000

Bell Bank Employee Fund Drive sponsored by Dave Idso and

Rock Messerschmidt - \$2500

Thank you!!

HOW Do I Give on Giving Hearts Day?

1. Write a check to Memory Cafe. **The check must be dated Feb 11th with GHD written in the memo line.**
2. Schedule a donation at **GivingHeartsDay.org** anytime from Jan. 5 - Feb. 9, 2021. Make sure that the "Pay on Giving Hearts Day, February 11th, 2021" box is checked before completing your transaction. Scheduled gifts will then be processed on Giving Hearts Day, Feb. 11.
3. Visit **GivingHeartsDay.org** on Feb. 11th, select "Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley" and make your donation!



Giving Hearts Day

Giving Hearts Day is critically important to Memory Cafe. The awareness it creates for our mission and the funding it provides carries us through each calendar year. This year funds raised on Feb. 11th will help ensure our **MCI - Minimizing Covid Isolation program** efforts will continue to reach seniors whose lives of fear, uncertainty, isolation, loneliness, and hopelessness continue due to the dramatic impact of the pandemic. Last year five of our participants passed away while many others experienced significant cognitive, physical, and spiritual decline. The care partners and family members of these individuals also experienced tremendous anxiety, depression, fear, and grief as they watched their loved ones decline. While we are optimistic the impact of the pandemic will ease in 2021, we don't know when or how that may happen. We won't resume meeting face to face until we know for certain it is safe to do so, likely next fall. At that time we anticipate significant growth, possible venue changes, and increasing costs. But until then we will continue our diligent efforts to deliver 1:1 companionship, high quality education, intriguing programming via zoom, inspiring reading materials, our monthly newsletter, community service projects; and creative art materials to our participants. Most often, these materials are personally delivered to doorsteps of our participants! Your support also allows us to purchase Amazon Fire tablets and training on their use to members who need them. THANK YOU for your support! It means a great deal to all of us.

The IMPACT of Memory Cafe

- "The first recommendation that I make to patients and their families after a new diagnosis of dementia is to attend Memory Cafe! It is such a special group that offers companionship and support, while providing education and activities to continue LIVING with disease."- Dr. Lindsey Dahl, Geriatrician, Sanford Health
- "Joining Memory Cafe was the BEST thing I've ever done! I can't tell you what a difference it has made in my life. I'll do anything to help support this wonderful group."- Larry N., individual living with memory loss.
- "My husband Gene and I have been looking for a LONG time for a group in the FM area that gives support to persons living with memory issues and their families. We were so happy to find Memory Cafe and are very happy to be part of it. The education, activities, and fun of Memory Cafe are free and available to anyone struggling with these difficult situations. Needless to say, we are very happy to be part of it!" - Jan and Gene J.



Meet the Board!



Beth Ustanko

Co-founder and Out-going Vice - President Educator Fargo Public Schools



Deb Kaul

Co-founder and President RN



Pat Stanley

Out-going Community Outreach Realtor Dakota Plains Realty



Sam Olson, Treasurer Manager, Healthcare Consulting|Business Intelligence, Eide Bailly LLP

"I was inspired by my aunt's example to use my experience as a care partner to help others. When Deb introduced the Memory Cafe concept to me I could envision the positive difference it could make for those living with dementia. The relationships and community are what makes Memory Cafe unique, and I have been blessed to be part of this community."

"Helping care for my parents who both lived with dementia was the best education I've ever received. The fear, sadness, lack of education, and loneliness my parents experienced would have been lessened in such a powerful way had there been a Memory Cafe for them to become involved with. It is a powerful motivator for my efforts today."

"I am inspired by the visible impact Memory Cafe has on its' members. The sense of community and family the program provides, as well as the culture of acceptance and joy in the journey are encouraging."

"I'm involved with Memory Café because I believe in their mission to change the way people think about memory loss. My grandmother has suffered from dementia for a number of years and there is a stark contrast in how people treat her depending on their understanding of the disease. Education around memory loss is so important for everybody because chances are you have a friend or loved one suffering from it."



Amy Bro, Secretary Geriatric NP, Sanford Health

"As a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner, I so appreciate the encouragement from Memory Cafe to view each individual as a uniquely created person with a story to tell. I strive for individualized patient centered care, and Memory Cafe inspires me to look beyond medical diagnoses to learn the values, goals and life experience of my patients and their caregivers."



Vince T. Lee Attorney, JP Legal Planning

"In my work as an attorney I have frequent opportunities to meet and work with seniors regarding their legal matters. Memory Cafe provides me with the opportunity to engage with them on a more personal level which I really enjoy."



Dan Cushing Incoming Vice President Memory Cafe Volunteer

"The impact of Memory Cafe is huge! And, it is a becoming more recognized around the area now. The loneliness of our participants and the relationships that are formed between them is really powerful. They share common needs and can really relate to one another."



Craig Johnson Incoming Board Member Adult Disciple-making Pastor, Bethel Church

Craig's comments will be highlighted in our February newsletter along with several others.

Meet the Volunteers!



Puffi and Dan Cushing



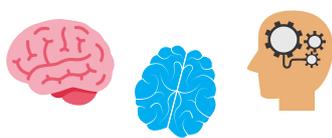
Gerry and Karen Beutler



Shirley Laske



Brad and Sharon Marston



(Continued from page 2)

My journey with dementia started with the French Toast incident. French Toast is one yummy, yet simple breakfast to prepare. However, that was not the case for me on one fine, usual morning. I suddenly found myself struggling to remember what ingredients I needed, and how to make French Toast. All I knew was that... I needed bread. I had no recollection or impression that I had made it before. It was like my brain had a blackout.... there was nothing to retrieve at all. That was when my elder daughter, a first year medical student back then, saw an urgent need to make an appointment with a neurologist specialized in cognitive neurology. I was diagnosed with cognitive impairment and young onset dementia at 51 years old.

It was the worst nightmare I could have ever imagined. How I wished it was just a horrible dream. There were so many unanswered questions. How was it possible that I had dementia despite being young and healthy? Was I going to be useless and needing to depend on others for everything? Were there other young people like me who have this condition? Would I be able to live life as I always had?

There was no post-diagnostic support system in place, to help me process the rawness and brutality of this diagnosis. There was no one to hold our hands and help us to grieve for the loss of the future we had planned. I felt so alone and terrified, and yet, I had to put up a brave front for my family, that things will be okay. I cried day and night, until I couldn't cry anymore. All I knew was that...there is only one way in dementia, and that is a downward spiral, with no hope of cure and no way to maintain my independence. I was told of daycare services, where activities like coloring and playing mahjong were provided to stimulate cognition. Memory cafes where people sang familiar songs to relive memories of yesteryear. None of this made me feel empowered, engaged or enabled.

I was at the lowest point in my life when I found Dementia Alliance International and the 'Voices for Hope' program. For the first time since my diagnosis, I saw hope and the possibility of living a life with meaning and purpose again. At DAI and Voices for Hope, we laugh, we discuss, we talk about how to care for ourselves, we inspire and support each other. In short, we are doing all the normal things in life! This is what I want to share and encourage others to do: live a normalized life. Yes, it will never be the same again. There will be changes, and you might need to adjust your expectations and make adaptations with whatever capacity you still have but... never, never, never doubt your capacity to live your life to the fullest potential.

However, people living with dementia and their care partners need the support from the wider community to have hope again. Do allow me to share my acronym of **HOPE** with you:

- **H for Hear us out** - and then tell us what you think of our suggestions. Encourage and support us to have our voice heard. Even though people with dementia may change in the way they think, feel, behave, interact and communicate, this does not mean they don't have feelings, preferences, opinions or thoughts.
- **O for Offer support** - Why offer not provide? Because assistance is meant to enable us to help ourselves and maintain our functioning. The daily capacity to do things has a direct influence on the independence of people with dementia and their quality of life. So, let the person living with dementia decide the kinds and level of support needed.
- **P for Partner with us** - let us guide you with our lived expertise in our conditions. Involve people living with dementia in the planning of programs and activities. This not only empowers these individuals, but also leads to more effective use of resources and better outcomes.
- **E for Enable us** - Focus on our remaining capacity. Minimize and compensate for any functional changes resulting from the disability caused by dementia. People living with dementia need rehabilitation programs; it can be neurological or physical rehabilitation, to help them regain the highest level of function and independence possible, while improving their overall quality of life - physically, emotionally, and socially.

So, please embrace the H.O.P.E. acronym so that you can shine Hope into the lives of those living and affected by dementia.

Thank you.



memory
cafe

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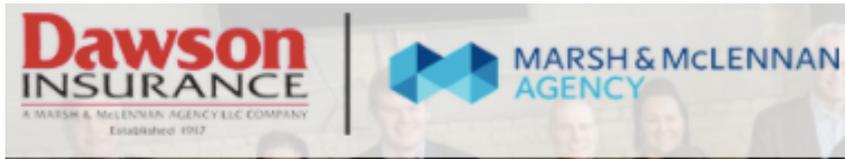
www.MemoryCafeRRV.org

hello@memorycaferrv.org



Wow, I sure didn't think I ate THAT
much fudge over the holidays!

Feb. 11 **Giving Hearts Day**



Member FDIC



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Blake Ristvedt Dental



ALEX STERN FAMILY FOUNDATION

Remember to follow us on Facebook and Instagram. And be sure we have a current email address for you or your loved one. Thank you!