

**April/May Meeting Schedule**  
\*Subject to Change  
All Meetings held from 1-2:30 pm via Zoom

**April 6th - How Does Your Garden Grow?** Don Kinzler, NDSU Extension - Cass County Horticulturist

**April 20th - Your Hobbies and Your Health!** Emily Brooks, Mrs. North Dakota International

**May 4th - Learning to Dance With Our Elephants -** Book review of *Dancing With Elephants*.

**May 18th - Caregiver's Panel discussion**

**In This Issue**

- Seeds of Wonder! - Deb Kaul
- *Behold* by Mark Bratlie
- "Still Here, Still Me" - *Dancing With Elephants* - Jarem Sawatsky
- For Our Health - Decluttering Our Lives - Beverly Benda
- Just For Laughs- Steve Froslic
- Building Skills and Community
- "My Caregiving Love Story" - Carolyn Thue
- Support from Lutheran Social Services - Jan Jones
- Invitation from HeartSprings Healing Center
- Jeopardy for Seniors - Submitted by Steve Froslic
- *Creating Moments of Joy (excerpts)* - Jolene Brackey

**Mission Statement**  
The mission of Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley is to enhance the quality of life for individuals living with memory loss and their loved ones through socialization, education, the creative arts, community service and community engagement.

Happy Spring Memory Cafe!

"Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed... Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders." — Henry David Thoreau

Oh my, Mr. Thoreau, do we have seeds of wonder for you! Winter and this epic pandemic appear to be on their way out of our lives and we are more than ready to plant, nourish and harvest seeds of every color, size and variety imaginable!

Our flower gardens will produce dazzling zinnias, daisies and hollyhocks. And our prized tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, peppers, and corn will undoubtedly produce a bountiful harvest and, yes, great wonders.

There are other seeds that have been forced into dormancy during these past many months. These include life-giving seeds of freedom, safety, relational intimacy, and hope. Gardeners and non-gardeners alike possess a most generous supply of those seeds, Mr. Thoreau.

We're now beginning to understand the little things in life are, indeed the big things. Simple routines such as getting outside to breathe fresh air, visiting our loved ones, traveling freely, shopping, and offering sweet hospitality in our homes are big things - really big things. The readily available vaccines have allowed many of us to weed out our fear of contracting or transmitting the virus while replacing them with seeds of renewed hope for a return to pre-Covid "normalcy" in our lives. We possess a generous supply of those seeds, Mr. Thoreau, and we are MORE than ready to plant, water, and nourish them!

Of course, we aren't completely out of the woods yet. A spring blizzard is likely on the horizon and the virus numbers continue to ebb and flow. But effective vaccines are available, treatment options for Covid have dramatically improved, and we know how to shovel snow!

With spring-filled JOY  
~ Deb Kaul

*Happy Easter!*





Celebrating Mark's recent birthday with his wife Jean, brother Dave and sister in law Sharon at BeeHive Homes in Moorhead!

Party time!!

**Behold**  
by  
Mark Bratlie



An answer to winter:

extended daylight  
caressing sunlight  
disappearing snow  
appearing ice cream cones  
outside urges  
outdoor smiles  
scampering squirrels  
early birds  
robin worms  
feathered notes  
nesting eggs  
hatching hoorays  
geese winging (northward)  
liquescent lakes  
unstored boats  
parka putaway  
exposed skin  
teeshirt outbreak  
gentle rain  
warm winds  
bursting energy  
pregnant buds  
rainbow blossoms  
passionate pansies  
glad golfers  
laughing loons

Ahh...what is "winter"?



**Member Updates**



- Jen S. appreciates our thoughts and prayers as she mourns the recent passing of her husband, Keith, and her mother Roz. Jen has several young children still at home as well as several older children.
- Joyce F. recently passed away. She and her husband, Willis, attended Memory Cafe prior to their move to Harvey a couple years ago.
- Mike F. is gaining strength after completing his radiation treatments for prostate cancer.
- Ginny and Ron L. are very appreciative of your thoughts and prayers. Ron's surgery was successful and he is gaining energy and strength as he receives various in home therapies.

**"Still Here, Still Me"**  
**Voices of Persons Living With Cognitive Disabilities**

**Dancing With Elephants**  
**(Excerpt continued from last month)**

by Jarem Sawatsky, PhD

Jarem Sawatsky is internationally known for his work as a writer, teacher, and peace builder, working to bring an engaged mindfulness for those interested in wellness, resilience, and transformation. Memory Cafe participants have received a copy of his book, *Dancing With Elephants* for discussion in May.

"Remembering is an hourly activity for me. Sometimes I succeed. Sometimes I don't. Before I was sick with Huntington's, losing my wallet would upset me and throw me for a loop. But now my view has changed. Instead of going into a rage, I get to meet my friendly neighbors {who help me}.

At some stage, my forgetting could endanger my health or the health of those around me. At that point, I still think forgetting will be okay but I will also need to trust my community of caregivers when they say it is time to make different living arrangements.

If I am going to work through anger, frustration, and anxiety every time I forget something, I will have no time to do anything else. I do not want my days to be full of anger.

When I do forget, most of the time I am going to be kind with myself. I can smile and say there is more of that to come. When others forget things, I tell them we are part of the same club.

Now, for some, finding themselves forgetting is a painful thing. I know what it is like to wonder if your forgetfulness is an early symptom of something more serious. For my wife Rhonda's mom, part of having Alzheimer's meant that she forgot all the time. Forgetting was one of the few things she would remember to do. But that was fine. She would usually say, "I should remember." I always wanted to shout out, "Stop 'should-ing' yourself. Your brain is not working." Memory comes and goes. Ironically, the more angry or anxious you get, the worse your memory works.

So, whatever you are facing---be it aging or traumatic disease or some other elephant---please pledge not to fill your days with anger by getting mad at your memory, the people around you do not need your anger. They need your loving presence."

## For Our Health Decluttering Our Lives

By Beverly Benda

### Spring Cleaning Starts with Decluttering!

By Bev Benda

How many of you have wondered "How did I get so much stuff?" You may look around your home and see an accumulation of things from the past, present and even future. It can be daunting to declutter, downsize, purge papers, and clean out closets. This spring, let's start "subtracting" what we have "added" over the years. The reward: more space for YOU.

**Be kind to yourself.** Instead of wondering why you bought or kept this or that, be grateful for those items that have served you and given you precious memories. Avoid calling your stuff "junk" or "crap." Better to ask yourself: could I live without this? Keep in mind we all make "fashion mistakes" (buying clothes or jewelry that do not look good, feel good, or even fit) and it is liberating to part with them. You can donate, sell or toss items you do not need.

**Be patient with yourself.** Rome was not built in a day, and entire homes (and garages) are not decluttered in a day, either. Start with small projects, such as cleaning out a drawer, a cabinet, or even a file. Set a goal with specific guidelines, such as, "I will donate all clothes I don't wear" or "I will keep only half the books I own" or even, "I will shred old love letters that I don't want my children to read." You get the idea.

**Stay focused.** Block out a short period of time (high energy time is best.) Turn off all distractions (TV, phone, radio.) Example: when cleaning out closets, it is helpful to take EVERYTHING out, give the closet a good cleaning, then only put back what you really want to keep. Enlist a helper who will keep you on track.

Recognize that decluttering is a journey, not a destination. Congratulate yourself on small victories. Chipping away at small projects can lead to big successes. I challenge you to get started today and reap the benefits of making decluttering a daily habit!

*Bev Benda, LRD, BCC is a Licensed Registered Dietitian and Board-Certified Coach who assists people in reaching their life and wellness goals. Her website is:*

***www.mycoachbev.com*** and her email is ***bbenda@gra.midco.net***

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If you can't make it better, you can laugh at it."  
~Irma Bombeck

Just For  
Laughs!  
Content  
Provided by  
Steve Froslie



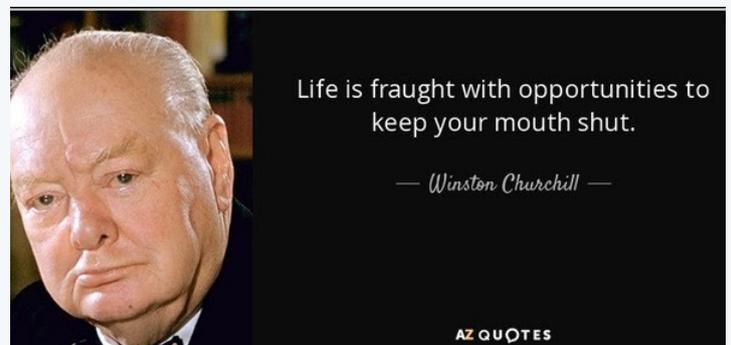
A woman noticed her husband standing on the bathroom scale, sucking in his stomach. "Ha! That's not going to help," she said. "Sure it does," he said. "It's the only way I can see the numbers!"

Why don't they train all the Amazon delivery people to give the vaccine.

The entire population would then be vaccinated by Saturday. Wednesday if you have Prime.

Okay, if we're going to have one-way grocery aisles then I'm going to need a passing lane.

If you ever get an email about pork, ham, salt and preservatives don't open it. It's SPAM.



### Can you Believe it? Our Face to Face meetings are resuming!

#### MARK YOUR CALENDARS for JUNE 1st!!!

If the CDC and ND Health Department give their blessing we will meet in person starting June 1st at the Fargo Urban Plains Picnic shelter! Our plans are to meet at Urban Plains in June and at the Red River Zoo in July. More details to follow!

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!



**March 2nd**

## **Adapt Music with Bridgette Bitzagaiao**

We are most thankful for all the information, joy, and music Bridgette shared with us in March. She is such a gift to us and our entire community. Thank you Bridgette!



## **My Reflections on *The Gift of Years, Growing Older Gracefully* by Joan Chittister.**

Rev. Paul Idstrom, Memory Cafe participant and care partner of Ruth, his lovely wife.

"I felt refreshed in reality, renewed in self worth and challenged to be a gracious caregiver in reading this book.

The meaning of *gift* has many dimensions of thought for the author. She never minimizes aging and its continuous contributions of wise counsel and meaningful activity in community.

I liked what Chittister says in her chapter on Outreach - "that old age is the only age that we can possibly be so important to the world at large because it is the first time in life when we ourselves are free enough to give much thought to a world broader than our own" and also--"The fact is that we don't have to be isolated if we don't isolate ourselves. Outreach is at the kernel of getting older. We need to go out to meet the rest of the world, rather than wait for the world to come to us."

The chapters of the book are insightful from the beginning to end--they are the likes of spicy ingredients mixed together to make a tasty and delightful hot dish. A great recipe for life!

I cannot help to reflect on the word *gift* from a Christian perspective. Scripture states that it is by grace we are saved through faith and it comes out of God's amazing *gift* in Christ. Because of this eternal *gift* for us to receive we are called to be graceful caregivers of compassion, mercy, consolation and peace (Ephesians 2:8-10).

I envision this book to be a lively and enjoyable discussion in a small group setting.

Gratefully,  
Paul R. Idstrom

## **Senior Perspective Newspaper Opportunity**

This fun and informative regional monthly newspaper is looking for human interest stories - non-political in nature, from interesting people just like YOU! If you have a story you'd like to share please contact **Lisa Ridder at 701-526-6191** or email her at **lisaridder2020@gmail.com**.

Their website is: **www.srperspective.com**

**April 6th**



## **How Does Your Garden Grow?**

"I'm a Plantaholic on the road to recovery. Just kidding, I'm on my way to get more plants." I don't know about you but I can certainly relate to this funny quote! And I bet Don Kinzler, NDSU Extension Horticulturist can too!

Be sure to join us for this upbeat and inspirational discussion as Don shares his tips and gardening stories with us!



**April 20th**

## **Your Hobbies and Your Health Connection**

**Emily Brooks, Mrs. ND International**

I'm looking forward to hearing Emily Brooks share recent research from the Mayo Clinic regarding the health benefits of pursuing our hobbies. We all know how energizing it feels to spend time crafting, fishing, gardening, drawing, writing, painting etc but this will be an opportunity to hear data that supports our hobby habits!! Don't miss it!

**May 4th**

## **Learning to Dance With Our Elephants**

Is it really possible to openly acknowledge and deal with our fears and problems, our "elephants" in a light-hearted and joyful manner? Facing our elephants is something we typically avoid, right? Jarem Sawatsky's book, *Dancing With Elephants* argues it is possible to even learn to "love and dance with our elephants! Don't miss our upcoming lively discussion on this fascinating topic!

**May 18th**

## **Care Partner Panel Discussion**

Because all of you are filled with so much experience and wisdom we wanted to create an opportunity to learn from each other! As our discussion guide we will use *The Caregiver's Guide to Dementia* by Gail Weatherill which each of you should have received. Let us know if you haven't received your copy and would like one.

## **Introducing Coffee Talk!**

If you or someone you know is feeling a little up and down these days, a good chat offers the perfect "perk-me-up!" Just pick up the phone and share a chuckle, concern, story, memory, or whatever's on your mind. It's FREE and confidential!

**Open Monday-Friday 8am-noon**

**Toll-free - 877-238-2282**

**612-746-0728**



### "Looking Back...My Love Story of being a Caregiver"

by Carolyn Thue, charter member of Memory Cafe

This is my love story of being a caregiver to my wonderful husband Don who lived courageously with Alzheimer's disease.

The early stages of Don's dementia was challenging, especially trying to redirect him when he became agitated. One thing that seemed to settle him down was driving around town or in rural areas he was familiar with. He enjoyed seeing signs on the highway referring to Bismarck or Minneapolis. Upon seeing them he would wonder aloud when we might go back there and we would also talk about our memories of being in these places together in the past. I would always agree with whatever he said and frequently said, "Well, let's talk more about that!"

Later, when he was living in a Memory Care home I needed to always be sure to present myself to him in a good mood, no matter how I was feeling. I discovered how beneficial it was to shift my focus away from my world (our reality) to Don's world (his reality) which was constantly changing. I tried to encourage conversation and be a good listener to him. I showed an interest in whatever he was saying even if it didn't make sense to me. It made sense to him in his reality and that was what was important. I learned that people living with dementia love to share their thoughts and that it is very important to continually affirm them and offer them praise.

When you visit or interact with your loved one always be prepared for the visit or conversation. Approach them with a plan in your mind. What brings them joy? What do they enjoy talking about? What can you bring to the visit? What can you do to remind them of their accomplishments and strengths? Encourage them to participate in many activities and to engage in the world around them. Often this requires that you participate, too! Don enjoyed puzzles so I collected several puzzles with large pieces that were in frames so they wouldn't slip off the table to the floor. I would start the corners and he worked hard on the rest and would become so excited when he finished one. He proudly announced to me that he had finished the puzzle and we'd start doing another one! We had nine puzzles in a bag - he called it "our puzzle bag".

When we went out to eat it was very important to go to a familiar place. He couldn't figure out the menu but always pointed to the picture of a chocolate milk shake! Another thing was that he always wanted me close to his side when we were together.

Don and I attended the very first Memory Cafe meeting at Fargo Public Cass Public Health and we attended meetings faithfully until close to the time Don passed away. He always got so excited when it was a Memory Cafe day! He always wanted to look his best so he dressed up and wore his best hats. He was almost running to get into the building to see his Memory Cafe friends! He loved the programs - music was his favorite - singing and dancing.

I learned so much in those years of caring for Don and we were so thankful for Memory Cafe's support and friendship to both of us during those years.

### Our Support from Lutheran Social Services of MN

By Jan Jones

- **Emergency Planning Program** - LSS offers an emergency planning program to prepare for unexpected needs. They assign you to a social worker who talks to you about your situation and sets up a meeting with you and any family members you want involved to discuss what you'd do in unexpected situations, such as a health emergency. It is such a good idea to think about what WOULD you do in an emergency situation? Who would take care of your loved one if something happened to you? It also motivated me to do some things that helped us to prepare in case that should ever happen. Importantly,
- **LSS MN (Moorhead) is now also servicing clients in Fargo.**
- **"Powerful Tools for Caregivers Course"** - Very helpful course! It's about 4 weeks long for a couple hours each week. You are given a book and some handouts - but it was offered online - which was so good.
- They also have **Caregiver support groups - I love the one I am in!**
- **Volunteer Companionship** - They have Gene (my husband) set up with a volunteer who talks to him once a week for up to an hour - just to chat - since he really has no friends locally who he gets together with.
- To learn more or to get connected contact: **Julie Praske-Moser at 218- 220-7517** or **email her at Julie.Praske-Moser@lss.org** For additional information:
  - <https://www.lssmn.org/services/older-adults/caregiver-support>
  - <https://www.powerfultoolsforcaregivers.org/powerful-tools-for-caregivers-class-promotional-video/>

**Special Invitation from HeartSprings  
Community Healing Center**

HeartSprings would like to offer resources for Memory Café participants. In reading Jolene Brackey's article on "Sundowning" in the January newsletter, I was struck by the wonderful structure she had set up for her and her loved one. She suggested a schedule that included exercise from 9:30-10; nap or quiet time from 1-2pm; Relaxing activity from 2-2:30pm or 3-3:30pm. We thought well, HeartSprings could fit into that structure!

We can offer online classes including the upbeat exercise class called **Drums Alive!** from 9:30-10am and/or 2-2:30pm. This fun upbeat program can:

- Improve physical, psychological, emotional and social health, boost the immune system, reduce the stress response, help people with Alzheimer's disease learn new skills, and increase heart rate similar to aerobics.

Another offering and relaxing activity is called **T'ai Chi Chih**. This is led by physical therapist, Barbara Edin from 3:00-3:30pm. These gentle movements can:

- Increase energy and creativity, improve breathing and relaxation, improve focus, create a better sense of joy and well being, improve balance and flexibility.

Another class, specific for caregivers, called **Movement for Finding Ease** is led by Cammie Lamey, movement specialist, from 1:15-1:45pm. These movements can be done lying on the floor, sitting in a firm chair, and standing - you are asked to do them where you feel most comfortable and safe! You can listen to the videos and read about the activity here at our website link:

<https://www.heartspringscenter.org/movement>

**We would like to offer Memory Café participants reduced pricing as a group**, so the more people participating the better. For example if we have 8 people or more taking one 30 minute class a week it would cost \$20 per month! [It usually costs \$39/class a month] If the group decides to take 3 classes a week, i.e., one drumming class, one T'ai Chi Chih and one Movement for Finding Ease class and we have over 20 people participating you would only pay \$24!! Incredible savings and opportunities for fun and relaxation!

But to get this pricing you will need to agree on the same activities and times so we will send out an email survey through Memory Café to find out the best times and activities that sound interesting to you. Please click here for the survey:

<https://us17.list-manage.com/survey?u=2efd629e253940751c3edbad9&id=e84a18f07e>

Thank you Memory Cafe!  
Jan Nelson, Executive Director, HeartSprings

**Jeopardy For Seniors  
Submitted by Steve Froslic**

**"A little trivia for some old and not so old  
trivia fans!"**

1. After the Lone Ranger saved the day and rode off into the sunset, the grateful citizens would ask, "Who was that masked man?" Invariably, someone would answer, "I don't know, but he left this behind." What did he leave behind?
2. When the Beatles first came to the U.S. in early 1964, we all watched them on The \_\_\_\_\_ Show.
3. "Get your kicks, \_\_\_\_\_!"
4. The story you are about to see is true. The names have been changed to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. 'In the jungle, the mighty jungle, \_\_\_\_\_'.
6. After the Twist, The Mashed Potato, and the Watusi, we 'danced' under a stick that was lowered as low as we could go in a dance called the '\_\_\_\_\_.'
7. Nestle's makes the very best... \_\_\_\_\_.'
8. Satchmo was America's 'Ambassador of Goodwill.' Our parents shared this great jazz trumpet player with us. His name was \_\_\_\_\_.
9. What takes a licking and keeps on ticking? \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Red Skeleton's hobo character was named \_\_\_\_\_ and Red always ended his television show by saying, 'Good Night, and '\_\_\_\_\_.'
11. Some Americans who protested the Vietnam War did so by burning their \_\_\_\_\_.
12. The cute little car with the engine in the back and the trunk in the front was called the VW. What other names did it go by? \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
13. In 1971, singer Don MacLean sang a song about, 'the day the music died.' This was a tribute to \_\_\_\_\_.
14. We can remember the first satellite placed into orbit. The Russians did it. It was called \_\_\_\_\_.



**Excerpts from *Creating Moments of Joy*  
by Jolene Brackey**

**Blame it on Something Else**

Blame anything "bad" that happens on something or someone else: the boss, the nurse, the doctor, the government, the disliked neighbor, the kid that lives far, far away, etc. Or blame it on the insurance: "Insurance says that you have to....take this med, go to this appointment, have this person come help us in the morning." "You can't drive the car right now because we don't have insurance."

**Forgetting appointments**

You can call ten times in the morning to remind them of a doctor's appointment and leave a written note on the refrigerator. When you arrive to pick them up, you begin by asking, "Are you ready to go to the doctor?" The person's answer: "You didn't tell me. I'm not ready to go anywhere!" Then, only being human, you lose your patience altogether and say, "I told you ten times!!!" When this happens you are only making them upset and reluctant to go with you. A much better response is to blame yourself for this misunderstanding: "Oh no I forgot to tell you! I'm sorry. We can stop for ice cream." Focus on the "thing" they would like to do.

**You are Wrong...They are Right...**

From this point on, you are wrong and the person with dementia is right. This is going to take some therapy for you. Think about it. If you think you are right and the person you are caring for thinks they're right what's donig to happen? Conflict. Where does the stress level go? *Up*. Where does the kindness level go? *Down*. What is more important: people's happiness or being right? Is the story they are telling hurting anyone? No. Simply listen to them. Take the words, *no, don't* and *remember* out of your vocabulary and everyone will have a better day!

- "No, Mom, you live here now and dad has passed away."  
*Replace with: "Dad's at the hardware store again."*
- "Helen, I'm your husband. Don't you remember me?"  
*Replace with: "Yeah, your husband can be pretty stubborn, but he sure loves you."*
- "You already told me that story."  
*Replace with: "I love your stories!"*

**Jeopardy For Seniors (con't from p. 6)**

15. One of the big fads of the late 50's and 60's was a large plastic ring that we twirled around our waist. It was called the \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Remember LS/MFT \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_
17. Hey Kids! What time is it? It's \_\_\_\_\_!
18. Who knows what secrets lie in the hearts of men? Only The \_\_\_\_\_ Knows!
19. There was a song that came out in the 60's that was "a grave yard smash". It's name was the \_\_\_\_\_!
20. Alka Seltzer used a "boy with a tablet on his head" as it's Logo/Representative What was the boy's name was \_\_\_\_\_

**ANSWERS:**

01. The Lone Ranger left behind... A silver bullet
02. The Ed Sullivan Show
03. On Route 66
04. To protect the innocent
05. The Lion Sleeps Tonight
06. The limbo
07. Chocolate
08. Louis Armstrong
09. The Timex Watch
10. Freddy, The Freeloader and 'Good Night and God Bless.' I always pick willy lump lump
11. Draft Cards (Bras were also burned. Not flags, as some have guessed)
12. Beetle or Bug
13. Buddy Holly
14. Sputnik
15. Hoola-hoop
16. Lucky Strike/Mean's Fine Tobacco
17. Howdy Doody Time
18. Shadow
19. Monster Mash
20. Speedy

A Hug is  
Always the  
Right Size



Thank you Cole Papers for your  
encouragement and very  
generous \$1000 donation!



memory  
**cafe**

PO BOX 883

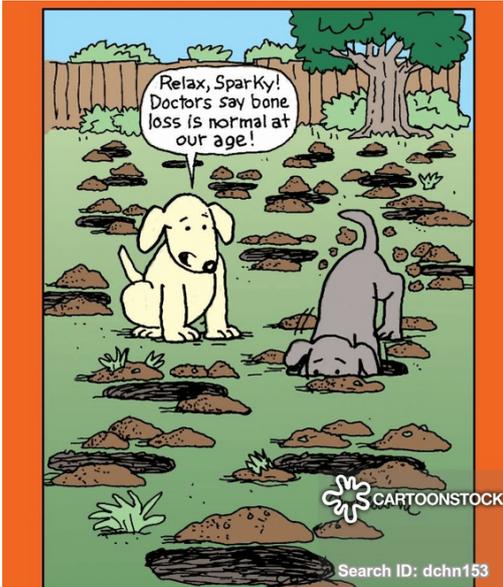
FARGO, ND

58107

701-404-6712

[www.MemoryCafeRRV.org](http://www.MemoryCafeRRV.org)

[hello@memorycaferrv.org](mailto:hello@memorycaferrv.org)



Member FDIC



**SANFORD**  
HEALTH



**HEARTLAND**  
TRUST COMPANY



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!