



Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

Changing The Way We Think About Memory Loss
September, 2022



Sept/October Wednesday Meeting Schedule All meetings held from 1 - 2:30 pm

Sept. 7th - Tour of the Fargo Air Museum. Meet at the museum. 1609 19th Ave N. Fargo. Free will offering.

Sept. 14th - Michelle Turnberg, *My Experiences Caring for My Mother* - Hjemkomst Center

Sept. 21st - Hyperbaric Treatments and Brain Health, Swanson Hyperbaric Center; TNT Fitness. At Bethel

Sept. 28th - Caregiver Cafe - Call 701-404-6712

Oct. 5th - Legal Planning for Seniors, Susan Johnson-Drenth. At Bethel

Oct. 12th - Bring and Brag - 'This is My Story' Bring your favorite memory, photo, hobby/craft, story. Hjemkomst Center

Oct. 19th - Behavioral Changes with Different Dementias, Dr. Donald Jurivich; TNT Fitness. At Bethel

Oct. 26 - Caregiver Cafe - Call 701-404-6712

In This Issue

- *A Squint and a Peek* - by Mark Bratlie
- Still Here, Still Me - Various authors
- For Our Health - The Magical Power Nap- Ceresti Health
- Just for Laughs - Steve Froslic and friends
- Building Skills and Community
- Fall Fundraising Kickoff!
- The Practical Kindness Project
- Linger Laugh and Learn Programming Changes
- Use it or Lose it - by Christine Bryden
- Personal Hygiene Concerns - Gail Weatherill, RN
- Dementia Friendly Chorus Possibility- Deb McTaggart
- Just let them be...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.

Hi Memory Cafe!

My husband and I recently returned from a two week, 4000 mile road trip through the Canadian Rockies, Glacier Park, British Columbia, Vancouver, Victoria and the states of Washington, Idaho, Montana and, of course, our beautiful home state of North Dakota. I've included some of our photos in this newsletter.

The beauty and majesty of the earth in which we live roared from the majestic mountains, deep valleys, bubbly mountain brooks, vast Pacific Ocean, endless golden wheat fields, gorgeous flowers and invigorating fresh air! It was breathtaking.

As we travelled, I was reminded many times of the power of spending time outdoors. Lyrics from one of my favorite hymns, *For the Beauty of the Earth* came to mind many times:

"For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies."

We also spent time with many extended family members, some of whom we haven't seen for years. This added an additional layer of deep joy and inner satisfaction to our vacation. It was so good for us to reconnect with these beautiful friends and families.

Now that we're back home and fully engaged in our day to day lives, I'm experiencing the appreciated value of our time away. I'm reminded how invigorating it is to get out of the house or office, to breath fresh air and connect with others. I'm looking forward to connecting with each of YOU this fall!

I'm also reminded that even with the uncertainties of life and the daily challenges we all face, life is meant to be savored.

"For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flower,
sun and moon and stars of light"



Warmly, Deb



Jean (Mark's widow) suggested this poem might be an appropriate selection for this month's newsletter. Mark's gratitude for life and his contemplative approach to living are reflected beautifully in this selection.

A Squint and a Peek

by
Mark Bratlie

With a squint and a peek
I popped into this world
With a yell and a breath
I took hold

As to why I was here
I had not a clue
And I still scratch my head
as I wonder

Why me and why now
are questions I ask
While the reason for all
stays well hidden

Why do I think
and incessantly ponder
And what does it mean
to be sentient

Will science explain
why all is as it is
Or is there divine
all-encompassing purpose

And are we alone
in our vast cosmic home
Or do unknown others
ponder with us

What I feel deep inside
is that life is a gift
And it's a proper response
to be thankful

When I do leave this world
if I squint and I peek
I may glimpse answers
to some of my musings



"Still Here, Still Me" Voices of Persons Living With Dementia

What does it feel like to live with Dementia?

By: Social Care Institute for Excellence 9/24/14

Segment from Barry (Living with dementia for 15 years)

I wake up and I am feeling afraid to get up. What am I going to face today? What is going to go wrong? I always have this thing in my mind that says I've done something. I've broke something. I've lost something. You aren't any good to anybody. Why are you here. I get these thoughts a lot.

I feel defeated. What good am I in this world by doing nothing? I sit here and be fed, sleep, washed like an animal. I am aware of the changes in my life. When I came home last night and I went to my wife and she said she wanted to have tea. I can do that. I can make her tea but I couldn't remember which cupboard was which. I couldn't remember where the jam goes, the sugar goes or the milk was at. I don't like dementia. I was upset. This was my kitchen. I used to own butcher shops. I used to run a care home. I used to drive all over the country giving lectures on meat. Now here I am, and I can't make a cup of tea!

Dementia stole. My life was stolen. I had no understanding of what was coming. This thing that was going to attack my mind. I had no idea that anything could attack my mind. If you know what I mean - it happens to other people yes, but not to me. It wouldn't happen to me. Dementia was like a persistent spy almost. Someone who is not recognizable, but his facts are what he leaves behind. What he has implanted is noticeable.

Dementia can take away my identity; but I am a man. It is me, I am me, I am my wife's husband, my son's dad. It seems to me that most people describe dementia as sort of like a full stop, end of sentence, end of discussion. 'She's got dementia or he's senile' is the statement heard. Supportive relationships, my family, caregivers play a key role in helping me live my life well. They help me. Empathy and support can help retain my sense of identity as well as enhance my quality of life.

Segment from Olive

(Living in a care facility for past 2 years):

Dementia is awful for the person too. You get to the stage where you don't want to talk to people in case you repeat yourself. When you don't feel like you are in the world or part of the world it can feel awful. I feel silent.

Dementia is terrible because you are hurting the people you love most. It makes you feel very guilty. My caregivers are very caring. They love me. They help me. I get big hugs from my husband, my children. They understand. They say, 'It is alright mom, you forgot something that is all. It doesn't matter. Here we are.' They get it all sorted out and they keep helping me. They still see me as wife and mom. They know I need them; they know my feelings and know I can understand them.

**For Our Health:
The Magical Power-Nap
Ceresti Health**



One effective way to get a burst of energy when you need it most - usually in the middle of the day -- is to take a *power nap*. It's just what the doctor ordered to give you more energy, patience and even more compassion for yourself and others. A good power nap can even reduce stress and improve health overall.

What makes a power nap?

A power nap is a short sleep that you take mid-day, usually lasting 15-20 minutes, but no more than that. Sleeping longer than 20 minutes will allow you to slip into the next phase of sleep which can last up to 90 minutes. If you wake up before finishing that last phase, you may feel groggy and irritable.

The trick is to plan your power nap sometime between 1:00 and 3:00 pm and set an alarm to ring in 15-20 minutes from the time you lie down to rest. Use an eye mask to block out light. You may even use a white noise machine to block out ambient noise so you're less likely to be disturbed.

Research has shown that if you can fit a power nap into your day, you may not only begin to notice higher levels of energy and productivity, but that it can enhance your memory as well, because of improved focus and attention.

Power naps have even been shown to reduce the risks for heart disease and stroke and to enhance your immune system.

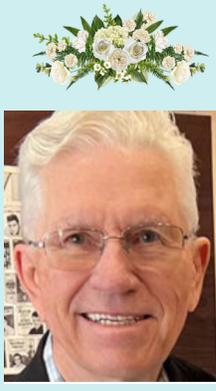
So, if you can fit it into your day, a power nap is a great way to spend 15 to 20 minutes in the afternoon. It will improve your alertness, your mood and even your memory. It will give you more patience and compassion for yourself and others and benefit your overall health.



Ron Leon

Warm Condolences

It is with sadness we mourn the passing of Ron Leon, a long term member of Memory Cafe and Charlie Bekkerus, a more recent participant in our Cafe. We grieve with their families and loved ones while giving thanks for their kindness, friendship and participation in Memory Cafe.



Charlie Bekkerus

Just for Laughs!
Content Provided by Steve Frosie and Friends!



Phrases heard in 1955 (67 years ago!)

- "I'll tell you one thing, if things keep going the way they are, it's going to be impossible to buy a week's groceries for \$20.00"
- Did you see where some baseball player just signed a contract for \$75,000 a year just to play a ballgame? It wouldn't surprise me if someday they'll be making more than the President!"

Big Ole and Sven were on a camping trip. The mosquitoes were so fierce they had to hide under their blankets to keep from being bitten. Then Ole saw some lightning bugs and said to Sven, We might as well give up. They are coming after us with flashlights!

"What position does your brother play on the football team?" Tom was asked. "I'm not real sure," the boy replied, "but I think he's one of the drawbacks."

One way to maintain a healthy level of insanity during retirement is to order a diet water when you go out to eat. Or, with a serious face ask for decaffeinated water.

If you think your computer and cellphone spying on you is bad, know that your vacuum cleaner has been gathering dirt on you for years.

Concerned that his son was spending too much time on video games, his dad told him, "When Abraham Lincoln was your age, he was studying books by the light of a fireplace." "Oh yeah?" his son replied. "Well, when Abraham Lincoln was your age, he was President of the United States."

WIFE SAVED ALL HER AMAZON PRIME BOXES FOR HER APRIL FOOLS PRANK ON HER HUSBAND.



QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."
~Winston Churchill



Building Skills and Community



Thank you RedHawks and High Point Network for sponsoring our wonderful evening of RedHawks baseball last month! And thanks to all of you who volunteered and attended! Special thanks to Barb Schiltz and her daughter Jackie who nominated us for this honor!



MORE SUMMER JOY



The Dementia Action Alliance is delighted to announce the launch today of its new online DISCOVERY CENTER that has been two years in development. The DISCOVERY CENTER is specially designed for ease in finding and navigating resources that support living well with dementia.

You will find a variety of resources, including apps, books, publications, websites, virtual programs and more categorized into general 12 topic areas:

- Arts
- Care Partnering
- Diversity
- Engagement & Socialization
- Health & Well-Being
- Legal & Financial
- Living Well with Dementia
- Music
- Spirituality
- Technology



Fall Fundraising Kickoff WE NEED \$400,000!!! Let's Play Ball!!



Okay, Memory Cafe team! We have **\$192,000** to raise by the end of 2022 and **another \$200,000** to raise in 2023! WOW, that is A LOT of money! Can we do it?? With your generous gift or pledge of course we can!

We already have one generous \$50,000 match challenge for this year and we are seeking **one more \$50,000** match challenge gift for 2022. We also need **two \$50,000** match challenge gifts in 2023. Could you or someone you know help us in this way?

Please let Deb or any board member know if you'd like to get together or bring a friend to tour our Linger Laugh and Learn Center this fall. We're eager to make this happen!

Our board members include:

- Katie Ambuehl**
- Jean Anderson**
- Karen Beutler**
- Amy Bro**
- Paul Finstad**
- Dr. Taylor Mertz**
- Rock Messerschmidt**
- Sam Olson**
- Mike Slette**
- Lonna Whiting**



2022 \$50,000 Matching Challenge update:
\$7900 raised so far!



Reminder! "Optimal Aging and Wellness"

Oct. 12-13, 2022
Avalon Events Center | 2525 9th Ave. S., Fargo, N.D.

Featuring topics of:
Professional boundaries, self-care and safety
Healthcare directives
AARP HomeFit Guide

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) available

To register or for more information, visit
NorthernPlainsConference.com or contact Concordia
College Conferences & Events at 218.299.3566 or
conferences@cord.edu.

Early bird discount ends Sept. 9.



Thank you 

Memory Cafe

Thank you 

has been a God send for Charlie and me. The caring support we receive from you is something we can not find anywhere else. You taught us so much and helped prepare us - step by step - for the dementia journey ahead. Now our journey is over but I will be forever grateful. With love, Carol S.

"You go without me. I just want to stay home."

"My husband often resisted leaving the house for social events. I knew we would both feel better if we got out of the house and spent time with other people so I'd just say, "No, we're going to go together. We don't have to stay long but it will be good for us to get out of the house. Let's get ready."

KINDNESS

THE PRACTICAL KINDNESS PROJECT

When someone we know is struggling, we say, "Let me know if you need anything," and we mean it. However, it is difficult for many needing help to ask for it, and we often don't know what kinds of things to offer or assume what we do offer isn't "enough". Practical Kindness is a project based on the belief that most people honestly want to help each other, but often don't know how. The goal of the project is to provide simple and concrete examples of things people can do for each other that cover a range of situations and demonstrate that the smallest gestures can have the greatest impact.

At its core, Practical Kindness will be a platform designed to help spread kindness and connection within the community by providing a website to access free materials and share individual stories. Examples of assistance, giving, and kindness will be collected with the input of community partners and transformed into a series of posters, fliers, and social media images that will be available for the community to download, print, and distribute free of charge. The website will also provide additional information not included in the printable materials exploring some of those examples more in depth, as well as a blog where community members can share their stories and examples of acts of kindness that have made an impact on them.

For Stage One we will concentrate on three different areas with the help of our initial community partners:

1. How to provide support for caregivers of those with memory issues with the **Memory Café of the Red River Valley**
2. How to assist an individual running for public office with the North Dakota Women's Network
3. How to help someone struggling with parenting on their own with the Jeremiah Program Fargo-Moorhead

We are honored and very grateful to partner with Brandi Malarky as she spearheads this wonderful community effort! Let us know if you have dementia caregiving advice or ideas!

NEW MONDAY PROGRAMMING Premiering

September 12th



1122 1st Ave N, Fargo

We are VERY excited to announce a new fall schedule at the Linger Laugh and Learn Center this fall! Starting Sept. 12th we will open the Center on Monday mornings for 'Coffee and Conversation' from 9am - 11am. We will also be open on Monday afternoons from 1 - 3pm with specific programming from 1:30-2:30pm. As always, these Monday programs are FREE and no reservations are required. **Address:** 1122 1st Ave N, Fargo. Park and use the **WEST** entrance on 12th St. N.

Our large group programs at Bethel church and the Hjemkomst Center will continue to meet on Wednesday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm. See the cover page for that program schedule.

Questions? Call 701-404-6712.

Calling ALL Men!!



There is something special about men and women gathering together separately once in a while to 'talk shop'. As part of our 'Coffee and Conversation' on Monday mornings we will have a separate mens group for those who are interested in joining! Several male hosts, including my dear husband Kim, 'Car Talk' host Bob Carlson, Bill Coghlan, Bob Schmidt and Gene Jones will lead the conversation and fun! Men, please join us, even if you prefer to just listen, learn and laugh!

Calling ALL Women!!

Of course, this means the women will have time alone too! We trust we'll be able to find enough to talk about without securing leaders to lead our discussion!



Programming on **Monday afternoons** is for BOTH the person living with memory loss and their care partners. Bring your 'Circle of Six'!

- Sept. 12th - **Developing Your Life Story - Deb**
- Sept. 19th - **Creating Moments of Joy - book review (p. 1-59) - Leeora. (We will have copies of this book available if you need it.)**
- Sept. 26th - **Music, Memories and Musings - Deb McTaggart, Music Therapist (see p. 7)**



Announcing our Newest Board Member:

Paul Finstad



Paul Finstad has been a source of rich encouragement and wise counsel since we started Memory Cafe five years ago. We are absolutely delighted to welcome him to our Executive Board of Directors this month! Thank you Paul for your willingness to use your expertise and kindness to benefit members of the memory loss community!

"I worked for the YMCA for 40 years, the last 25 years as President of the YMCA of Cass and Clay Counties. I retired in 2017 and am currently working part-time at Unseen. I have been married to my wife, Debbie, for 45 years. We have two grown daughters and four grandchildren. I grew up in Starbuck, Minnesota and attended college at MSUM, graduating in 1978. I have been involved in a number of non-profit organizations, including: The Village Family Service Center, United Way, Crosspointe Lutheran Church, Fargo Air Sho, Dakota Medical Foundation, and Firstlink. Debbie and I have been impressed with the work of Memory Café and I look forward to joining the Board of Directors."



Use it or Lose it

Dancing With Dementia,

My Story of Living Positively With Dementia

by Christine Bryden



We need to focus on enhancing our remaining abilities and compensating for any losses, and maybe even working towards a new perspective of daring to try to recover skills, develop new talents, and create a new future invested with meaning and hope.

The catch phrase 'use it or lose it' is painfully true in the case of dementia. If we stop doing things, we will rapidly forget these tasks. But the brain is a resourceful organ.

Never underestimate its capacity to try to find other ways of doing things.

As care partners and friends, make sure we don't give up, but don't overtax us. We will get easily exhausted, and need simple tasks that make us feel good about ourselves. Give us time and space to try to keep doing as much as we can. Don't take over unless you really have to. Let us make mistakes or fail, but don't let us feel like a failure. Encourage us and make us feel worthwhile, still useful and valued.

Personal Hygiene

The Caregiver's Guide to Dementia, Gail Weatherill, RN, CAEd

Personal hygiene is a major challenge for someone with dementia. People who always cared about their appearance eventually lose all interest. Their awareness of body odor or soiled clothing disappears over time. It can be shocking to see what our loved ones will accept or are unaware of.

We were all taught at an early age that the bathroom is a place to discreetly take care of our hygiene needs. Needing help in this area is a blow to anyone's sense of independence. Embarrassment and frustration can run high for both our loved ones and us. Fortunately, there are ways to get the job done without all the rancor.

Most people with dementia resist bathing with unparalleled determination. Physical and emotional discomfort are at the root of their resistance. Success means guessing what the causes of discomfort might be and acting to minimize them.

Pain in arthritic joints can flare with standing or lifting legs in and out of a tub. When the brain is on the blink, normal room and water temperatures may feel uncomfortable. Fear of falling is common. Shower water hitting the skin can sting. Washing hair means water near the face and can feel like drowning.

Toileting, brushing their teeth, washing their face, or getting dressed are all hurdles. Each of these tasks includes many individual steps. Remembering the steps and the order to take them can easily be beyond our loved one's abilities.

What to say:

- "Here is your washcloth. Let's wipe your face." Encourage them to do as much as they can. Use short sentences and allow time for them to process each step before giving them the next instruction.
- "You have a doctor's appointment this afternoon. I know you will want to get cleaned up before that." It's okay to stretch the truth (therapeutic fibbing) on any occasion that helps get them in the shower.
- "It's time for your spa treatment!" Putting a positive spin on bathing can help. Set up the bathroom to fit the occasion. Soft music, candles, or fragrant soaps may help.
- "You did it for me, Mom. Now it's my turn to do it for you." Reassuring them that you're willing to take on embarrassing tasks matters.
- "Let's have some ice cream when we're finished here." Anticipating a reward can disrupt their focus on a difficult job in the bathroom.

Use a colored tub mat or toilet sanitizers that turn the water in the stool blue. It is much safer easier for them to see and use.6.



Dementia Friendly Chorus Possibility



Greetings Everyone!

My name is Deb McTaggart and Deb Kaul invited me to share with you a special project I want to develop in the FM area, especially if you enjoy SOCIALIZING and SINGING! I'm seeking interest and input into starting a dementia-friendly chorus designed to primarily meet the needs of individuals still living in their home or private residence.

My desire to explore this possibility comes from two areas of my career. First, from 2014 until moving to Fargo in 2021, I was part of the founding team and was the accompanist for three ground-breaking dementia-friendly choruses called Giving Voice (two in Minneapolis and one in St. Paul). Over 50 similar choruses have been launched based on the Giving Voice Model since its beginnings in the fall of 2014, including The Unforgettables in Grand Forks! Second, I am also a Board Certified Music Therapist with my primary focus of practice being in the field of elder/dementia care. I served as a Music Therapist for nearly 10 years at Johanna Shores Presbyterian Homes in Arden Hills, MN. From 2014 to 2021, in addition to accompanying the Giving Voice choruses, I was a Teaching Artist at the MacPhail Center for Music in the MacPhail Music for Life program. I created and presented hour-long, participative music programs for partnership sites such as adult day centers, memory care, assisted living and long term nursing care communities. I've seen, first hand and repeatedly, the power music makes in the lives of persons with dementia.

SO...Why a dementia-friendly chorus in Fargo/Moorhead? Like the former late night talk show host, David Letterman, I'm going to share my "Top 10 List"! (Though the actual list is longer!)

1. Research studies show that choral singing benefits physical and psychological health and enhances an overall sense of well being and quality of life.
2. It's an opportunity to experience the joy and power of singing together.
3. Participating in a chorus recognizes and supports the potential of persons with dementia.
4. The experience replaces isolation with a sense of belonging and community.
5. Being together provides acceptance and support for persons with dementia and their care partners.
6. It helps change the public's perception and understanding of dementia and minimizes the stigma.
7. Music experiences, including singing, improves mood and memory.
8. This involvement can positively impact the relationship between the person living with dementia and their care partner.

9. According to research, choral singing increases learning and retention of newly learned material despite deficits and may decrease the rate of cognitive decline.
10. Singing together is fun!

Here are a few quotes from Giving Voice Singers themselves: "It's a tremendous source of joy for everyone who participates." "Singing in the chorus restored purpose and meaning to my life; it renewed my spirit." "I felt unconditionally accepted, heard and supported." "Coming to rehearsal is the highlight of my week!" "Performing concerts for family and friends gives us a sense of pride and accomplishment. I've never had so much fun singing in a chorus!"

This project is in the very beginnings of exploration and networking. Stay tuned for more information as we seek community interest, input and support in hopes of this project moving forward. If you're interested and want to learn more, please contact me! For more information about the Giving Voice Chorus, checkout this website givingvoicechorus.org

Always with a song in my heart!

Deb McTaggart, MA, MT-BC
(debbie.mctaggart+sing@gmail.com) 651-263-3131

Whatever/Whoever They are Worried about is OK. Enhanced Moments by Jolene Brackey

- "Your mom will be right back."
- "Susan is playing at Robin's house."
- "I just milked Betsy."
- "Judy is taking care of your cat."
- "Charles is having a beer with Bud."
- "I'll come get you when your husband gets here." (husband is no longer living but in that moment she can rest because you are taking care of it)
- "Your home is being checked on by your neighbor Bill."
- "You have lots of money!" (give them a bank statement with \$\$ amount that makes them feel secure)
- "Your son needed to borrow the car."

If it works, write it down and share your success with others involved in your loved one's care.

Consider that they often aren't confused or upset until we show up and try to correct them. Just let them be! Join them in THEIR reality at that particular moment.

In every moment they are doing the best they can with the abilities they have remaining.

PO BOX 883

FARGO, ND

58107

701-404-6712

www.MemoryCafeRRV.org

hello@memorycaferrv.org



Sponsors

The Marv Bossart Parkinsons Foundation



Blake Ristvedt Dental



ALEX STERN FAMILY FOUNDATION



Vision bank

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!

