Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

People Who Are Forgetting Shouldn't Be Forgotten

April 2023

April/May Wednesday Schedule
All meetings held from 1 – 2:30 pm

April 5 - Understanding Medicare/Medicaid, Attorney Susan E. Johnson-Drenth, JD Legal Planning. At Bethel Church

April 12 - "I Didn't Sign Up for This", Rollie Johnson, Lay Pastor and Director, First Lutheran Church . At Hjemkomst Center

April 19 - Lifestyle Impacts on Wellness and Longevity, Maribel Hamm, WHNP-C, Wellness District and CrossFit Fargo. At Bethel Church

April 26 - Caregiver Cafe Support Group, 1-2:30 pm. 1122 1st Ave N. Call 701-404-6712 for details.

May 3 - Cranio-Sacral Therapy, Katie Karn, LMT, CST, CBIS, Apex Physical Therapy and Wellness. At Bethel Church

May 10 - Music & Laughter, Jerry Barnum. Hjemkomst Center

May 17 - Driver Safety for Seniors Panel Discussion with Joy Tanberg, OTR/L,DRS; DJ Colter, DJ Colter Insurance; and Jordan Weir, Attorney, Vogel Law. At Bethel Church

May 24 -Caregiver Cafe Support Group, 1-2:30 pm. 1122 1st Ave N. Call 701-404-6712 for details.

May 31 - No Memory Cafe

In This Issue

Hi Memory Cafe!

April is a popular month for those of us living in the upper midwest! We wait a very long time to gain more hours of daylight and for our frozen earth to melt under the increasingly powerful afternoon sun. It's an invigorating season for all of us!

This year, I am especially looking forward to the month of April for two special reasons - a PBS podcast called the *Practical Kindness Project* and an eagerly anticipated celebration of our dedicated volunteers and board members!

The Practical Kindness project was the brainchild of our kind friend, Brandi Marlarky. Brandi has a heart of gold and will do anything she can, to help anyone she can, whenever she can! Her idea for the project addresses the problem many of us face when we think about helping someone in need - we WANT to help but we don't know what they need, when they need it, or how to do it! As a result we often don't do anything. This is perhaps especially true for those who would like to come alongside the memory loss community.

In support of this initiative, the Memory Café of the Red River Valley teamed up with the Practical Kindness Project to create a list and a free downloadable flyer of very practical but impactful things that people can do to help the community members they know who are living with dementia. Thank you to our MC participants who were willing to be interviewed by Brandi for this important initiative! Brandi received many wonderful suggestions and insights from you and we are very grateful. Prairie Public's Main Street program will air a short segment featuring the Practical Kindness Project and Memory Cafe in April (see p. 7).

And secondly, on April 18th we are celebrating Memory Cafe's dear friends who epitomize kindness - our 'Dream Team' volunteers, which, of course, includes our fabulous board of directors! These compassionate and devoted friends offer countless hours of kindness, service, and care to our Memory Cafe and to each of our beautiful participants. Simply put, Memory Cafe wouldn't exist without the support we receive from our volunteers and board! Mother Teresa once said, "Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier." Our volunteers exemplify this principle perfectly and we can't wait to celebrate them!

~Warmly and gratefully,
Deb

"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult to each other?" ~George Eliot

Mission Statement

The mission of Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley is to recognize the intrinsic beauty and value of those living with mild to moderate memory loss while inspiring in them and their care partners hope, joy, and a sense of empowerment.

Tiny Yet Mighty

Don't let
their tiny size
and humble appearance
fool you.

Seeds are
heroic voyagers,
venturing forth
into the unknown,

journeying
across time
and space
in search of friendly soil,

with hidden treasures
sewn into
their modest robes--

the power
to create life,
feed
the hungry,
and transform
a landscape.

Behold
the tiny
yet mighty
seed!

by Kai Siedenburg, from her book
Space Between the Stones

SpaceBetweentheStones.com

In Loving Memory

Dennis "Jay" LeRoux

Our thoughts and prayers continue for Jay's family and life partner, Jan Kranda upon the passing of Jay on Jan. 25th. Jan has been an active participant in Memory Cafe and an inspirational and gentle member of our Caregiver Cafe.

Kindness is...

"Kindness is giving hope to those who think they are all alone in this world."
~Kawuliaa Edwin

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

'What Is It Like to Live with Dementia?'
BuzzFeed (Excerpted)

Tommy Dunne

"I'm a different person to the one my wife married. ... I can't get through to the part of my brain that wants to her ask her how she is, give her a kiss and a cuddle. I love her. She is the best friend and care partner I could ever have. I don't want her to forget that even though I can't tell her easily." Tommy shares how people living with someone who has dementia must "be prepared for when the dementia takes over. There will be days when we are angry, and days when we forget where we are in time. The more that you understand that it's not the person with dementia that is angry with you, the more you will bear what is to come. I don't want to say or do anything to hurt my best friend but this disease will. It is therefore vital that she has a place where she can let off steam. I can sometimes forget that I have dementia, but my wife doesn't have that luxury. No one is caring for her. When she goes down we are in big trouble."

Chris Forse

"One thing my wife and I do everyday at 5:15 is to sit down together to watch a game show. For me, it's like a brain gym but I couldn't manage without the pause button.
They ask these questions and I can't even think about them in the time that it takes them to reply with the answers, so I pause the program. We take the stress out of it straight away. It gives the old brain cells a bit of exercise and it doesn't matter if we don't get the answers right; it's just the act of thinking about it and trying. I love doing this with my wife. I love to see her smile and laugh."

Philip Watmough

"I think I upset my wife yesterday, big-time, for the first time ever. I don't know, I lost my temper and I just don't do that, and I'm so sorry about it, and I don't know what to do about it. Hopefully I'm not going to do that again. I presume this is dementia stuff but I don't know. I am so confused and now I am scared."

John Williams

"Having dabbled in painting since my 50s, I was surprised to notice my natural technique changing. Within months my finely detailed brushstrokes had begun to give way to more abstract portraits; an "altered" style I found I really liked! Alzheimer's has changed my style of painting but it hasn't changed my passion for art; it is a huge part of my life. I find that I seem to spend as much time looking for my brushes and paints as I do on painting. It's very frustrating, but I manage to stay positive. I love when my friends and care partners take me to art galleries. I know my life without art isn't life. They give me a gift. No matter what, I'll carry on with my art as long as I can hold a paintbrush. I always keep a smile on my face because I've had a good life, and it's not over yet."

For Our Health:
Moving for Brain Health and Fall Prevention
Nicky Holzworth, OTR Essentia Health

Movement and the Brain

What is the right amount of activity in the early to middle stages of dementia? Thirty minutes of activity per day, five days a week is recommended. This can be broken up into shorter sessions throughout the day, such as 10 minutes three times a day (potentially after meals!). In a study of 17,000 older women who tracked their daily steps for a week, researchers checked back 4 years later and found: As the number of daily steps increased, the all-cause mortality rate decreased—until 7,500 steps, where mortality rate leveled off. In other words, 7,500 is the lowest number of steps with the highest level of health benefits, making it an ideal daily goal.

Sitting is the new smoking. Excessive sitting can lead to an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity. A 2015 study even compared sitting to smoking. Prolonged sitting can also be linked with tight muscles and bad posture, which can lead to back pain and tight muscles in the hips and back of the thighs. Sitting and watching TV was found to be worse than sitting to work. Watching television tends to be associated with unhealthy behaviors including: snacking, more prolonged sitting – easy to sit for hours at a time in front of the TV, late-night blue light from the television screen harms sleep quality, watching TV before bed encourages you to stay up thus contributing to sleep deprivation and corresponding health problems like weight gain.

A 2016 study of more than 1 million adults published in The Lancet found exercising 1 hour for every 8 hours spent sitting results in a significant reduction — and in some cases, elimination — in the risk of death from heart disease, diabetes and some cancers associated with sitting. That hour per day does not have to happen in one chunk. You can spread it out. Try to move every hour throughout the day. Moving even 7.5 minutes every hour for 8 hours can get the blood moving to keep your body healthy.

Exercising in a Social Group. Look for opportunities to connect with loved ones, friends and others. There is research that links solitary confinement to brain atrophy. Staying socially active may have the opposite effect and help maintain brain health longer. A research study found that people with dementia who took part in 1-2 hours of social activity per day showed improved nighttime sleep. (Think Memory Cafe!)

The Science of Dance (Resource CDC). The U of Illinois at Chicago designed a Latin ballroom dance program for older sedentary adults. Participants reported improvement in memory, attention, and focus. In another ballroom dance program, older people experiencing mild cognitive impairment improved their thinking and memory after a 10-month long dance class. What can you do? Sign up for a class and invite friends. Try dancing at home. Easy to follow, free exercises are available on the National Institute for Aging's You Tube Channel. Start with 5-to-10-minute sessions and slowly build endurance.

Just for Laughs!

Content Provided by Steve Froslie and Friends!

I just posted a selfie and people told me to get well soon.

I just signed up for an exercise class and they told me to wear loose fitting clothing. If I had any loose fitting clothing I wouldn't have signed up for the class in the first place.

Getting old stinks. I used to wake up feeling like a million bucks...Now I feel more like a bounced check.

On the first day of school, a teacher told her kindergarten class, "If you need to go to the bathroom hold up two fingers." A small voice from the back of the room asked, "How will that help?"

When I die I want my last words to be, "I left a million dollars under the ...."

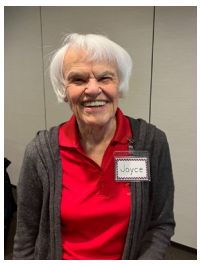
My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God and I didn't.

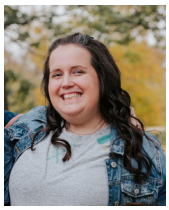
I recently posted a photo of my clean house and it was flagged as "fake news."

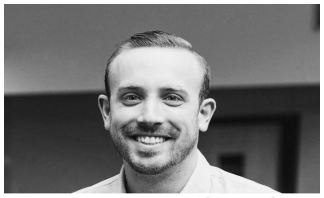
Ole's neighbor Sven had a boy, Sven Jr. who came home from school one day and asked, "Papa, I have the biggest feet in the third grade. Is it because I'm Norwegian?" "No," Sven replied, "it's because you are nineteen."

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"You can never do kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late."
-Ralph Waldo Emerson







Building Skills and Community

"Do things for people not because of who they are or what they do in return, but because of who you are." —Harold S. Kushner

Giveaways

Door Prizes

Celebrating Our Volunteers!
Tuesday, April 18th, 1 - 2:30 pm
First Lutheran Church
619 N. Broadway, Fargo
ALL VOLUNTEERS AND BOARD MEMBERS WELCOME!

Delicious Dessert

Fellowship

Guest speaker: Scott Holdman, DMF
Music by Deb McTaggart
Special Hosts: Memory Cafe participants!
This is OUR opportunity to serve YOU!!

Please text RSVP by April 10th to 651-341-2623 or email leeora@memorycaferrv.org

This photo gallery acknowledges many but not all of our beautiful volunteers!
THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME, TALENTS, AND RESOURCES TO US!

Building Skills and Community

REDEFINING MEMORY LOSS: Learning to Live Well with Dementia

COMMUNITY DEMENTIA EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Keynote Speaker

SHARON JOHNSON
The Hearthstone Institute, Boston, MA

Tuesday, June 6, 8:30 - 3:15 pm, Holiday Inn, Fargo

For over two decades, the Hearthstone Institute has been a catalyst in shifting the prevailing "despair narrative" into one aimed at providing a life worth living for people experiencing the challenges associated with dementia. Very much in line with Memory Café's mission to inspire hope, joy, and a sense of empowerment, Hearthstone's I'm Still Here® Approach to dementia care brings a message of hope to those living with the challenges of memory impairment.

This inspirational conference will provide insight into a major paradigm shift taking place in the field of dementia care: the realization that every community member and care partner has the opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of people living with memory challenges. The presentations will discuss evidence-based strategies that enable those living with all stages of memory loss to continue to learn, achieve, and give back to their community reflecting strong alignments with core values of Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley.

This interactive course will also provide instruction in effective research-based verbal and nonverbal techniques for successfully communicating with those experiencing all stages of memory loss. Strategies for handling common challenging situations are discussed and practiced, including how to prevent or decrease anger, agitation, and fear.

Program Schedule:

8:30 - 9:00 - Registration, Silent Auction & Vendor Exhibits
9:00 - 9:15 - Welcome & Introductions
9:15 - 10:45 - *Session 1: Hope vs. Despair*
10:45 - 11:15 - Break, Silent Auction & Vendor Exhibits
11:15 - 12:15 - *Session 2: That's a Good Question!*
12:15 - 1:00 - Lunch, Silent Auction & Vendor Exhibits
1:00 - 1:15 - Video, Testimony & Debut Performance by the Dementia Friendly Chorus
1:15 - 2:45 - *Session 3: P.O.W.E.R.™ for creating successful non-pharmacologic interventions for common challenging behaviors*
2:45-3:15 - Closing, Giveaways, Silent Auction Winners

REGISTRATION required by May 26

*** 4 hours ND and MN Social Workers CEUs (pending)**

Cost: $40 Community Members; $65 Professionals
***Scholarships available**

After May 26th/Walk-in Registration:
Cost: $50 Community Members; $75 Professionals

Registration includes lunch, refreshments, and a book

Register: www.eventbrite.com (scan QR Code or search - Redefining Memory Loss)
or mail registration to Memory Cafe PO Box 883 Fargo, ND 58107

JOYFUL MONDAYS

Linger Laugh and Learn Center!
1122 1st Ave N. Fargo.
Park and use the WEST entrance on 12th St. N.

Coffee & Conversation
MONDAYS
9:00 - 11:00 AM

Join us on Monday mornings from 9:00 - 11:00 for coffee, hot chocolate and refreshments. Come and go as you wish!

Questions? Call 701-404-6712

MONDAY AFTERNOON PROGRAMMING 1:30-2:30 PM

April 3rd - **Music, Memories & Musings** with Music Therapist Deb McTaggert
April 10th - ***Creating Moments of Joy Book Discussion*** Pages 222-269; **Woodburning** with Jerry & Janine
April 17th - **Educational Video w/Popcorn & Soda; Games & Special Guest**
April 24th - **Creating Art** with local artist Tia Permenter and Joan & Marian

Baking Cookies and Muffins for the FIRST TIME at our LLL Center! Thank you Val for the terrific idea and making it happen! Yummy!

Woodburning Artistry by Sheri! Jerry, our woodburner EXTRAORDINAIRE is in the background.

Cookies, coffee, art, jewelry sorting, music and JOY!

"Sing! Sing a song! Sing out loud! Sing out strong!" A Message from Deb McTaggart, Certified Music Therapist

"Sing! Sing a song! Sing out loud! Sing out strong!"

These are the opening lyrics to Sing! by Joe Raposo who wrote the song for the children's television show Sesame Street in 1971. In 1973, it was a hit song for The Carpenters - the singing duo of brother and sister Karen and Richard Carpenter. Most people love to sing - even if you claim not to be able to "carry a tune in a bucket", you can have fun and benefit from singing. Here are just a few reasons to include singing throughout your day.

1. Singing lifts your spirits and makes you feel better due to the release of "feel good" chemicals in the brain called endorphins. The positive feelings generated by singing can continue even after the singing stops.

2. Singing can help reduce stress and promote relaxation. A recent study measured the level of the stress hormone cortisol, before and after singing. There was a decrease in cortisol levels after engaging in singing.

3. The breathing required for singing helps to strengthen lung functioning and increase oxygenation of the blood which can improve circulation, boosting alertness and energy levels.

4. Singing helps recall memories which can create opportunities for extended conversations and connections with loved ones with memory loss and dementia. "Singing has been shown to increase learning and retention of new verbal material in persons with cognitive loss, and to engage brain regions responsible for motor action, emotions and creativity." (givingvoicechorus.org)

So, go ahead and belt out a few tunes throughout the day - your body and brain will thank you!

Hoarding and Dementia: Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) https://alzfdn.org

Hoarding is most apt to begin in the early stages of Alzheimer's and related diseases. A symptom of anxiety, hoarding involves accumulating items most people consider worthless. When they pile up around the home, they present multiple tripping hazards. Stocking up on food, another common practice, can lead to infestation of pests and food that's unsafe to eat.

"As people lose the ability to recognize family and friends and can't remember where they placed things, hoarding gives them a sense of control," explains Jennifer Reeder, LCSW, SIFI, director of educational and social services at AFA. Be sensitive. If possible, try to involve the person in the removal of items and don't rush them—reduce a little at a time. Suggest they donate to family or a charity. Take photos of items that your person can keep.

• Remove items near radiators, stoves or electrical appliances; sharp objects like knives, forks or glass; and spoiling food or garbage.

• Try to stay on top of hoarding by removing excess items immediately.

• Check wastebaskets before emptying. There is always a chance something is hidden there.

• Consider securing unused closets and cabinets to reduce potential areas to store and frequently check under beds, couches and empty spaces.

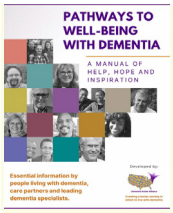
• If your person becomes upset and the hoarding is not a safety issue, you can always accept it for the time being. Sometimes, as they say, we want to "pick our battles."

Strength Training Benefits: Nicky Holzworth, OTR Essentia Health

Strengthen your muscles. We lose muscle as we age beginning in our thirties or forty's and this picks up between the ages of 65 to 80. There is research showing that skeletal muscle mass helps with blood glucose levels. Alzheimer's Disease is being looked at as type 3 diabetes.

Older adults with strong muscles are at a lower risk of developing Alzheimer's Disease. Strength training can help your muscle system and your hormones. It can also improve your ability to convert protein to energy in as little as 2 weeks. Strong muscles can prevent falls and help you to stay independent with everyday activities including climbing stairs, getting in/out of a car, getting in/out of a chair, and carrying in groceries. You are less likely to fall if your leg and hip muscles are strong. There also is a correlation between leg muscle weakness and cognitive decline. A physical therapist or trainer can help develop an exercise plan.

Local resources: Fargo CrossFit, SAIL fitness, Silver Sneakers offers lives online classes and programs at the YMCA, Courts Plus, Family Wellness, Crunch Fitness, Total Balance Physical Therapy and Fitness, Planet Fitness in Fargo and Moorhead, a community class at First Presbyterian Church of Moorhead, Total Balance South in Moorhead. Heart Springs is another local resource.



Pathways to Well-Being With Dementia: Manual of Help, Hope and Inspiration ~Dementia Action Alliance

This extraordinary how-to manual provides essential information about living with dementia from 48 people living with dementia, care partners, and leading dementia specialists. The practical, helpful information, grounded in science, is presented in a user-friendly format.

The manual is divided into eight sections including:
Section 1: Living Well with Dementia
Section 2: Well-Being - Your North Star
Section 3: Emotional, Psychological and Functional Health
Section 4: Life Affairs
Section 5: Medical Affairs
Section 6: Technology Supports
Section 7: Care Partnering
Section 8: Learning About MCI and Dementia

"Dementia doesn't strip a person of their essential humanity. There's so much more to who we are as human beings than our cognitive function. And if people can embrace all those other aspects of what makes us human, they can more readily live well with dementia." Jennifer Carson, PhD, Contributor

You can download your FREE copy at:
https://daanow.org/pathways-to-well-being-with-dementia/
Hard copies are available for $26.65 plus shipping.
Contact DAA at https://daanow.org
Email: info@daanow.org
Phone: 732-212-9036

Memory Cafe has one copy to lend to our participants on a rotating basis. Check it out!

Introducing Practical Kindness: A New Community Story Sharing Project.

There are so many different ways we can help each other, but it can be hard to know what kinds of things to offer. By sharing the stories of how people have helped us, we gather examples of how to support the people in our lives. Let's learn together and make the world a kinder place—one small action at a time.

Practical Kindness features brief stories shared on social media and told by the community about actions that have been helpful or meaningful to them personally, in a wide variety of situations.

In support of this initiative, the Memory Café of the Red River Valley has teamed up with Practical Kindness to create a list and a free downloadable flyer of things that people can do to help the community members they know who are living with dementia. The project will host a week dedicated to posting videos of some of our community members sharing things that helped them during this time in their lives.

To provide additional context, Prairie Public's Main Street program will be airing a short podcast where Memory Café of the Red River Valley's Executive Director, Deb Kaul, provides information about the disease and dementia care partners in our community share their lived experiences (Specific dates to be announced). Main Street airs at 3pm and 7pm on 91.9 FM.

We hope you will join us.

Videos can be viewed on social media platforms:

- Tiktok/PracticalKindness
- Facebook/@PracticalKindnessProject
- Instagram/@PracticalKindnessProject

"We Need More RRV Memory Cafes in This Country!" ~Dr. Susan Wood, PhD Neuropsychology, Sanford

"Memory Cafe of the RRV is such a wonderful program. It provides so much support for patients and families. We could use a lot more Memory Cafe of the RRV in this country! This journey is difficult for these people and to know there are other people to talk and visit with, and share ideas with is very, very helpful. Thank you for what you do Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley!"

Sing From Your Heart Dementia Chorus ~Deb McTaggart

I'm thrilled to share with you that we finally have a name - Sing From Your Heart Chorus. We think it's a wonderful invitation to every singer and to the whole community! We are excited about this name, about what it really means and about all the ways we can use it.

Here is the name inserted into our Mission statement:
The mission of Sing from Your Heart Chorus is to encourage and inspire persons with memory loss and dementia to live well through the power and joy of singing together.

Thank you Memory Cafe to help make this happen!
Deb McTaggart, Director
Questions? Call Deb at: **651-263-3131**

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