

Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

PEOPLE WHO ARE FORGETTING SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN

April 2026



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APRIL: VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION MONTH

According to AI, great volunteers are characterized by **reliability, deep empathy, and a strong commitment to the cause, acting as proactive team players with positive attitudes. They demonstrate flexibility in changing environments, excellent communication skills, and a willingness to learn. Key traits also include patience, integrity, and self-motivation.**

This definition PERFECTLY defines our MCRRV volunteers! MCRRV would simply not exist without our "Dream Team" volunteer friends! Our highly respected team of volunteers who serve on our Board of Directors, our committed greeters, bakers, hosts, card makers, thank you note writers, support group facilitators, furniture movers, program speakers, educators, and faithful year-round cheerleaders are all **deeply important** and **valued** by each of us!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Hi Memory Cafe Friends,

Spring is in the air! And just like the renewed sense of energy that season brings, our team and community at Memory Cafe are feeling incredibly uplifted as renovations on our new building near completion.

As we embrace this new space, we also want to honor the one that brought us here, our Linger, Laugh, and Learn Center in downtown Fargo. This was where our community began to flourish, and where so many beautiful friendships and moments that matter first took root. We move forward with gratitude, carrying those memories with us into this next chapter.

Over the past several months, we've had the privilege of working alongside the team at Wild CRG Architecture + Construction and the generous donors who made this possible. With their support, this space has been transformed into a beautiful and welcoming "home away from home" for our Memory Cafe community to gather, learn, connect and belong.

While the project isn't quite complete, we are very close, with completion planned for mid-April. I am grateful to share that our team has already begun transitioning into the building with approval from the City of Fargo. Our team has enjoyed envisioning the moments of connection, joy, and belonging that will fill this new space. We look forward to hosting our first Support Groups on April 22nd in our new space.

I am eager to share that one of the rooms in our new space will be thoughtfully furnished with pieces from our original space, carrying a piece of "home" with us into this next chapter.

Be sure to see page 4 for details on upcoming Open Houses and program locations. As we settle into the new space and finalize our schedule, we will continue to keep you updated on where programs will be held. We can't wait to welcome you into this space and share in the transformation together.

With gratitude,

Maggie Ness

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

REDEFINING MEMORY LOSS CONFERENCE

Tuesday June 9, 2026 | 8:00-4:30
Delta Hotel | Fargo ND

We are DELIGHTED to offer you another outstanding dementia conference this year! This conference is intended for healthcare professionals, care partners, individuals living with mild cognitive impairment or early-stage dementia, and those interested in improving the quality of life for the memory loss community.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Dr. Vijay Ramanan
Cognitive/Behavioral Neurologist
Mayo Clinic

EMCEE



Becky Gulsvig
Moorhead Native,
Broadway Performer

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Jayne Clairmont
Nationally Recognized
Dementia Expert

Keynote sessions include:

- Updates on Alzheimer’s Disease and other Neurodegenerative Diseases - Dr Ramanan
- Forty-four Years of Dementia Knowledge: Mistakes Made and Lessons Learned - Jayne Clairmont

Breakout Sessions Include:

- Panel Discussion: More than a Diagnosis, Living Well With Dementia
- Every Moment Matters: Lessons, Insights & Honest Conversation That Change Professional Care
- Advancing Dementia Care: A Provider - Focused Discussion
- The Empowered Caregiver: Supporting Independence in Professional Care
- Living Well, One Day at a Time: Practical Tips for Dementia Well-Being

Cost:
Before May 13th:
\$70 Community members
\$100 Professionals seeking credit

After May 13th:
\$90 Community members
\$120 Professionals seeking credit

Group Discounts: Table of 6
Community group rate - \$300
Professional group rate - \$510

Scan and register online today!



Note: If you register online there will be an Eventbrite processing fee. Paper registration forms are available.

Testimonials from 2025:

“Memory Cafe and this Memory Cafe Conference are LIFE changing!!”

“Amazing! 10/10, would recommend it for anyone working at a Skilled Nursing Facility.”

STILL HERE, STILL ME
Voices of Those Living with Memory Loss
By Nancy (and David) Monson

During COVID we all worked from home. I starting having issues with remembering things and how to do my job. I took a leave of absence but before my time was up my boss said to not come back. That was a surprise, but could see why they did it. Likely my issue started after having ovarian cancer.



Two of my husband’s friends told us about Memory Cafe and invited us to a presentation by Deb Kaul. We decided to check it out and found much support in all of those who are having similar issues. It is good for the care givers to know what we are going through and what they can expect will happen to us. Memory Cafe is great and we look forward to all that they provide: exercise, fellowship, community and learning from others.

We just joined the Sing From Your Heart chorus and are enjoying it. I also tag along with my husband when the Golden Notes Band goes to play for those in nursing homes.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM JAYNE CLAIRMONT!

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the history of our Redefining Memory Loss conference, our dear friend, Jayne Clairmont served as our keynote speaker for our first conference in 2019. Her passion for educating families and raising the professional bar of care for those living with dementia is powerful. We we are deeply honored to welcome her back as one of our keynote speakers this year!

“The joy of spending the entire day with all of you will be my forever gift. Thank you for the opportunity to share a few more nuggets to use in your daily life.”

IN LOVING MEMORY



Roger Larsen, (Colonel, Ret.) was one of most thoughtful gentlemen many of us have had the opportunity to know at Memory Cafe. We share our warmest condolences to his deeply committed wife, Janal and their extended family. **2.**

FOR OUR HEALTH: ORAL HEALTH (Excerpted)

WWW.LICDENTALASSOCIATES.COM

A recent study conducted by researchers at the American Academy of Neurology examined the relationship between oral health and brain function. The study followed over a hundred participants, tracking their oral hygiene habits and memory recall. The results revealed a strong link between poor oral health and an increased risk of cognitive decline.

There are two main ways the study shows a mouth-brain connection. Both affect the hippocampus region of the brain which is responsible for memory and is often affected by Alzheimer's disease.

Gum Disease and Brain Shrinkage: Mild gum disease combined with tooth loss was linked to faster hippocampal shrinkage.

Severe Gum Disease: Keeping teeth with severe gum disease also correlated with increased brain atrophy. Gum disease is a big factor in the study. Dr. Alan Reisinger, a board member of the American Academy for Oral Systemic Health, suggests that bacteria could be to blame for mental decline. Inadequate dental hygiene helps harmful bacteria to thrive in your mouth. Over time, these bacteria build up and can slip through your bloodstream into vital areas like your brain and heart. This triggers an immune response causing inflammation.

Studies from the American Stroke Association suggest that this inflammation can cause stroke and heart disease. They also confirm the American Academy of Neurology's study about the effects of oral bacteria on the brain. The same inflammation can damage otherwise healthy brain tissue, possibly leading to cognitive decline.



The Dementia Map Blog (dementiamap.com) was specifically developed to enrich and empower those diagnosed with dementia, as well as those who care and serve them. We firmly believe information is power and we want to expand societal knowledge in an easy and accessible format.

When you visit the Blog, you can use the easy selection filter to display only those topics of interest to you. If you prefer, you can browse through all the topics.

There is no limit to the ways in which this disease needs to be attacked. Information is one critical strategy. Whether you are searching for valuable dementia resources or would like to share your own experiences to help others, contact us to be a **Guest Author**. Be a part of a treasure trove of in-depth articles, stories, book and product reviews – and much, much more!

JUST FOR LAUGHS

STEVE FROSLIE AND FRIENDS



Steve and his lovely wife, Linda.

I ate a salad for dinner. Mostly croutons and tomatoes. Really just one big, round crouton covered with tomato sauce. And cheese. FINE, it was a pizza. I ate a pizza for dinner.

“The internet is full of false quotes.”
-Abraham Lincoln.

My goal for 2026 is to lose 10 pounds. I only have fifteen to go.

How to cook tofu: throw it in the garbage. Grill some meat.

Sometimes the thoughts in my head get bored and go out for a stroll...out through my mouth. This is never a good thing.

I'm not saying that the customer service at my bank is bad, but when I went in the other day and asked the clerk to check my balance, she leaned over and pushed me.

“I think it's wrong,” says comedian Steven Wright, “that only one company makes the game Monopoly.”

A man who was late paying his bills received the following note: “Your account has been on our books for over a year. We just want to remind you that we have now carried you longer than your mother did.”

Overheard: “Yesterday I got my tie stuck in the fax machine. Next thing I knew I was in Los Angeles.”

Quote of the Day

“There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction.”

- John F. Kennedy



APRIL MEETING SCHEDULE

MONDAY SCHEDULE

Meet at Bethel Church (2702 30th Ave S. Fargo)

April 6th:

- **NO MEMORY CAFE PROGRAMMING- Bethel Church is closed.**

April 13th:

Morning Programming: 9-11:00am

- 9:00-9:30 - Exercise with Coach Jake
- 9:30-11:00
 - Men's Caregiver Support Group
 - Women's Caregiver Support Group
 - 'Social Club' (free respite group for your loved one)
 - 'The Gathering' - Support group for individuals experiencing early stages of memory loss for any medical reason.

• **Afternoon Programming: 1-2:30pm**

- Caregiver Education: "Caregiver Well-Being": w/ Abby Husar; Wood Burning with Jerry, and Joyful Moments with Val

April 20th:

- **Morning programs** as noted above (9-11:00am)
- **No afternoon programming**

April 27th:

- **Morning programs** as noted above (9-11:00am)
- **11:30 - 'Dine and Dance'**, at Mhd American Legion
- **5:00-6:30 PM**: Young Onset Support Group at new location

April Education

Wednesday, April. 1st: 1:00-2:30 PM (Hope Lutheran South)

Registered dietician, Nikki Johnson, will provide education on everyday foods and key nutrients that support brain health and overall well-being. Learn simple, practical nutrition tips to encourage hydration, balanced meals, and consistent routines. Learn easy, safe-to-prepare recipes and snack ideas that promote independence while supporting both individuals living with memory loss and their care partners.

Monday, April 13th: 1:00-2:30 PM (Bethel Church)

Abby Husar, occupational therapist, will provide education for caregivers focusing on preventing burnout, managing stress, navigating complex emotions, and building resilience throughout the dementia journey. Caregivers will leave with simple strategies and practical tools to support their own health while caring for someone they love. (Respite available during this session)

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

All meetings are held from 1-2:30 pm at various locations as noted below:

April 1st - Nourishing your Mind: Simple Tips for Brain Health w/ Nikki Johnson, NDSU Extension Dietician Hope Lutheran Church, South (3636 25th St. South)

April 8th- Music and Memories w/Jerry Barnum (Hjemkomst Center-202 1st Ave N, Mhd)

April 15th- "Spring Planting"- Plant your own Mini Herb Garden w/ Ed and Brenda Deckard Hope Lutheran Church, South (3636 25th St. South)

April 22nd - Support Group Meetings:
9:30 -11 am - Moving Ahead: Life After Loss Support Group
1-2:30 pm - Caregiver Cafe

*****NEW Memory Cafe (3910 25th St. South, Fargo)*****

'MOVING AHEAD: LIFE AFTER LOSS' SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, April 22nd: 9:30-11:00 AM

NEW Memory Cafe (3910 25th St. South, Fargo)

This group is specifically for spouses who have lost a partner to a diagnosis of dementia or another type of memory loss.

YOUNG ONSET DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

Monday, April 27th - 5:00- 6:30 PM

****NEW Memory Cafe (3910 25th St. South, Fargo)****

'THE GATHERING' SUPPORT GROUP

Mondays, 9:30 - 11 AM, Bethel Church Support and education for individuals experiencing early stage memory loss or cognitive changes due to aging or any disease process.

'CLUB SANDWICH' SUPPORT GROUP

Thursday, April. 23rd 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

****NEW Memory Cafe (3910 25th St. South, Fargo)****

Support for adult children who are caring for a parent or in-law with memory loss while managing their own families, careers and responsibilities.

BREAKING NEWS

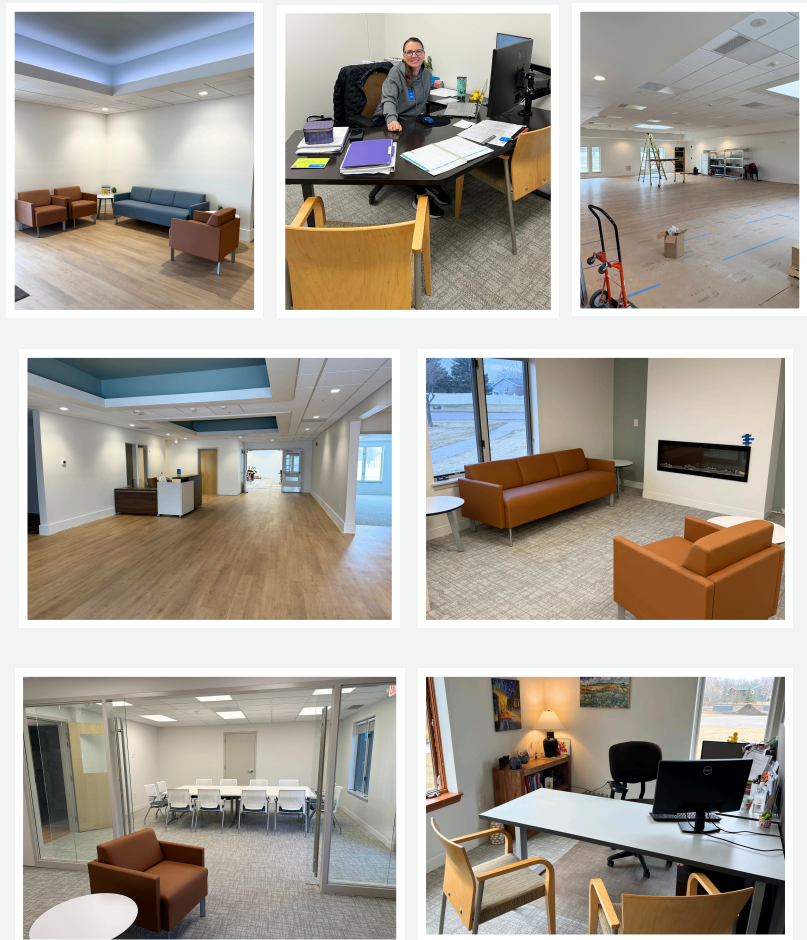
Following Programs at NEW Location in April:

- April 22nd Moving Ahead Support Group
- April 22nd Caregiver Cafe
- April 23rd Club Sandwich
- April 27th Young Onset Support Group

Location: 3910 25th Street South, Fargo

BUILDING UPDATE: SUCCESS! WE'RE SLOWLY MOVING IN!

Wow, it feels unbelievably **fabulous** to be actually moving into our lovely new building! The “Fab Four” (Maggie, Leeora, Abby and Deb) have moved into our new offices and the rest of the building is really taking shape! As you can see from the photos below, we still have some work to do but we are definitely getting there! Thank you for your support and patience! Be sure to attend one of our Open Houses coming up in April and May! (see below)



UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE DATES

We are **eagerly looking forward** to welcoming you - our volunteers, participants and community friends to several open houses catered to **YOU** in our new Memory Cafe home this spring! Please mark your calendars and plan to join us!



- Volunteers** - Monday, April 20th, 2 - 4pm
- Memory Cafe Participants** - Tuesday, April 21st, 2 - 4pm
- Young-Onset Open House** - April 27th, 5 - 6:30pm
- General Public - Open House/Art Show** - May 13th, 1-2:30pm

FEBRUARY 12 Giving Hearts Day 3RD PLACE!

We are **THRILLED** to announce that we took 3rd place in the medium size budget category during GHD this year! Previously, we have been in the small budget category but this year we were promoted to the next higher budget level. To take 3rd place in this higher category is a **HUGE** accomplishment for us! We were only able to accomplish this because of **YOUR** support...all 633 of you who contributed to our campaign!

Thank you!

MESSAGE OF THANKS FOR GIVING HEARTS DAY

BY BRIAN ARETT, MEMORY CAFE BOARD MEMBER

I join Maggie, Deb and the Memory Cafe Boards of Directors in thanking the many donors who made Giving Hearts Day a huge success for us this year. I was amazed to hear we received donations from six hundred and thirty three people - what a tremendous accomplishment! That number is a reflection of the incredible number of people we serve. It is also a message to others of how strong we are as an organization and helps to attract additional gifts of support. Thank you all so much for helping us touch the lives of so many people in the Fargo/Moorhead/West Fargo area!



CHANGES...COMING SOON TO A MEMORY CAFE NEAR YOU!

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often." - Winston Churchill

With the many rich blessings that have already been dropped on our lap with having our own building, we recognize there will also be opportunities for us to adjust to various changes and challenges that will inevitably come our way. We will now have opportunities to expand our programming, modify our meeting schedules, welcome new participants/volunteers and even volunteer with our new neighbors at the community garden! Change is good!

  **Registry & Wish List**

Would you enjoy helping us stock our new kitchen? If so, we set up a community registry at Target with much needed items with a variety of price points for your shopping convenience! Scan the QR code, visit **Target.com** or shop in person at your favorite Target location. **THANK YOU!**



SING FROM YOUR HEART CHORUS

By Deb McTaggart, Chorus Director

Save the Date: An American Music Sampler

Season 6 of **Sing From Your Heart** is well underway! Over 30 singers have been gathering weekly in preparation for our spring concert, "**An American Music Sampler**," in honor of our country's **250th Anniversary**.

Join us for a musical journey through the various genres that shaped our nation:

The Sing From Your Heart Spring Concert

- **When:** Saturday, May 2nd @ 1:00 PM
- **Where:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Come celebrate 250 years of history and harmony with us. We can't wait to see you there! Everyone is welcome!

Please note: As we approach our spring concert, we have just a few rehearsals remaining. To ensure we are ready for our May concert, we are not adding new choir members for this season.

We would love for you to join us at the concert on May 2nd and experience the joy of this group — and we warmly welcome you to consider joining us for our next season this fall!

SFYH TESTIMONIALS



"I love the chorus! It's so much fun and we sound so good! This is especially true when you sit by a good singer!"

"The Director, Deb is SO good! She knows so much about music and music history. It's fun to do the movements along with the music as we sing."

"If there is any music in me Deb will get it out of me!"

ANOSOGNOSIA

For some individuals living with dementia, it is literally impossible for them to accept the news that they are living with this condition, no matter who delivers that message or however many times they receive the message. Due to changes in how their brain is working they are unable to recognize their own cognitive decline or memory loss. This is a neurological condition caused by their brain damage; it is **not** simply denial or stubbornness. The person **genuinely cannot perceive their limitations**.



CARE PARTNER CORNER

By Teryl Clausen, LSW (retired)

Care Partner Support Group Facilitator



This month I thought I'd provide a recap on resources available to caregivers, some of which have been discussed at educational opportunities provided by Memory Café.

Places to start when looking for services available:

Alzheimer's Association - free care consultation services, which assesses needs, develops a plan, and helps with finding resources and services. 701-707-0922

MN Senior Linkage Line - 1-800-333-2433

ND Aging and Disability Resources 1-855-462-5465

In-home service providers: Home Health Care Agencies establish their own list of services and rates. Services can include housekeeping, personal care, shopping, transportation, and companionship.

Lutheran Social Services - Contact Ashley 218-221-4298 for availability of in-home respite or day program two days a week.

Valley Senior Services - transportation 701-356-7433

Ombudsman - help in resolving issues between a caregiver and the facility where care is given. North Dakota: 701-328-4617 Minnesota: 651-431-2555

Medical Assistance for Long Term Care support:

Cass County 701-328-1000; **Clay County** 218-299-5200

North Dakota Assistive Technology provides tools and technology to increase safety and maintain independence. 800-895-4728

Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Help Line - receive help with challenging behaviors, problem solving, resources, etc

Call 911 - assistance with difficult behaviors or help with lifting person after a fall. **Call 988** - to talk to a professional if experiencing emotional stress or suicidal thoughts.

In addition, MCRRV has a resource form to request other information available to caregivers. I encourage caregivers to take advantage of educational opportunities that Memory Café provides at no cost.

BRAIN HEALTH STRATEGIES: HEALTHY LIVING WITH MCI (Excerpted)

Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center 2/24/26

What began as an educational resource for Wisconsinites is now reaching participants across the country and around the world. The UW icon with two speech bubbles Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center's (ADRC) Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) educational program is drawing strong participation and positive feedback, connecting people across Wisconsin and beyond with science-backed education on brain health, Alzheimer's disease prevention strategies and practical tools.

The series is hosted by Nathaniel Chin, MD, a memory clinic physician with UW Health and medical director of the Wisconsin ADRC. Jennifer McAlister, BA, outreach and partnerships manager for the Wisconsin ADRC, serves as co-host. **Sessions are free** and open to everyone.

Held live online via Zoom, this quarterly program is accessible from anywhere. In 2025, it reached participants in 34 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Sweden, Luxembourg, India, Ireland and the United Kingdom. The program also partnered with nine Aging and Disability Resource Centers across Wisconsin to livestream sessions for local audiences and connect participants with resources, including dementia care specialists. In 2026, the program expanded to 10 host sites statewide, with more locations expected.

Participant feedback shows increased understanding of MCI and greater confidence in making healthy lifestyle choices that support brain health. **Connecting with others facing similar challenges can help reduce the stigma and isolation often associated with memory and thinking changes, while building a sense of community.** Sessions address topics such as building healthy habits and routines and the benefits of physical activity, nutrition and stress management, helping participants feel informed, empowered and supported.

TESTIMONIAL

"After meeting with Memory Cafe staff I am so impressed with the mission and passion behind the organization! I am looking forward to spending more time with the inspiring people at Memory Cafe."

Note: Ben is hoping to start a line dancing class for Memory Cafe next fall!



Benjamin S.
Concordia student

MAGGIE'S VISIT WITH DEMENTIA TOGETHER - Serving Northern Colorado

While on a trip to visit family in Colorado, I had the opportunity to spend time with the team from Dementia Together, an organization we discovered while researching groups that serve individuals and families impacted by dementia in ways similar to the work we do at Memory Cafe.

It is always a joy and an honor to connect with teams who share a deep passion for supporting those navigating memory loss. Moments like these remind us just how important this work is not only in our own community, but in communities across the country.

While we share many similarities with the Dementia Together team, we also each bring unique perspectives and approaches to our work. We look forward to continuing this relationship so that we can learn from one another and strengthen the ways we serve the memory loss community.

One of my favorite moments from our time together was learning that their co-founder's story closely mirrors that of our own co-founder, Deb's. Her inspiration also came from a deeply personal experience with her father, and from recognizing that even as a nurse, she did not feel fully equipped to navigate the journey of dementia. That shared experience was a powerful reminder of how personal experiences often spark meaningful change and lead to organizations like ours that are dedicated to helping others.



THE GATHERING - AN INVITATION



Are you noticing changes in how your brain is working? Maybe you are losing things more often or forgetting appointments? Are you struggling with decision-making, problem-solving or word-finding? Is it more difficult for you to pay attention or focus? If so, please join us at 'The Gathering' on Monday mornings! You will be warmly greeted by others who are experiencing similar symptoms and who will quickly become your dear friends.

CONTACT US:

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hello@memorycaferrv.org

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FOR MORE INFORMATION



REDEFINING MEMORY LOSS CONFERENCE

Tuesday June 9, 2026 | 8:00-4:30

Delta Hotel | Fargo ND



Scan and register online today!

SPONSORS



The Marv Bossart Parkinson's Foundation

ALEX STERN FAMILY FOUNDATION