Memory Cafe of the Red River Valley

PEOPLE WHO ARE FORGETTING SHOULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN

March 2026

IN THIS ISSUE

Giving Hearts Day SUCCESS!

Due to the **AMAZING** OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT FROM OVER **SIX HUNDRED DONORS,** we are **THRILLED** to announce that we

met our match of $250,000 on Giving Hearts Day!

Thank you to the family who donated this incredibly generous match and to EVERYONE who contributed to meet the match! We wouldn't have achieved this goal without the support of every one of you! Thank you!

memory cafe

SAVE THE DATE

Redefining Memory Loss Conference

BREAK OUT SESSIONS WILL BE OFFERED

JUNE 9, 2025 — Fargo ND

Hi Memory Cafe Friends,

We are deeply grateful for the people who make Memory Cafe a place of warmth, understanding, and connection. Our volunteers are at the heart of this community; they offer smiles, listening ears, and steady support that turns ordinary moments into meaningful ones. This month, I'd like to begin our newsletter by **shining a light on the volunteers** who help make Memory Cafe feel like home.

It is truly beautiful to witness the close connections our volunteers build with our friends at Memory Cafe and with one another. These relationships don't happen overnight; they grow through consistency, trust, and the simple act of showing up week after week. I see our volunteers grin from ear to ear when someone they've connected with walks through the doors. I hear stories of running into a Memory Cafe friend at Veterans coffee hour or a basketball game. I see them show up to honor our friends by attending funerals. I witness firsthand the deep, meaningful relationships they build, and I am so grateful for them. These moments remind me that Memory Cafe doesn't end at our doors, it lives throughout our community.

Our volunteers walk alongside individuals and families during both joyful and tender moments. They notice when someone is having a hard day, celebrate small victories, and create space for laughter, learning, and belonging. I witness firsthand the deep, meaningful relationships they build, and I am continually humbled by their compassion and care.

Our volunteers show up in many different ways such as setting up rooms, supporting activities, offering companionship, and helping create an environment where everyone feels seen and valued. Quite simply, our mission would not thrive without them. The impact of Memory Cafe is possible because of people who give their time, energy, and hearts so freely.

Thank you to the volunteers who have served in the past and those who serve today. Thank you for the ways you show up, for the relationships you nurture, and for helping make Memory Cafe a place of belonging.

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.

Bursting Forth With Love

Just like love, morning glories do best when we encourage them to grow together.

This month, I offer you a poem that reflects on these beautiful blooms and how they symbolize inner growth, outer love and friendship.

Gratitude to Len Danielson, lennysgarden.com

"I'm Glad You're a Morning Dweller"

Written by Jean Anderson,
Memory Cafe Board Member

Morning glories – two, growing tall,
winding together – new leaves flourishing.
At the base small tendrils
reaching, bouncing, bending in the breeze –
heart shaped,
twining together,
reaching upward,
wrapped snug and close
around each other.
Still separate, but eager to travel together.

My tender trusted companions,
you surprise me with
your willingness to bloom side by side
or climb in synergy.

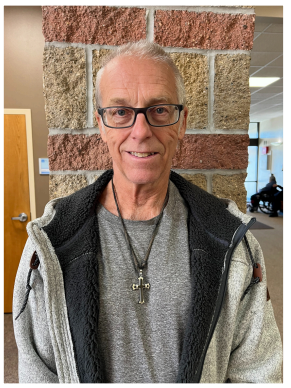
Listening to each other
comes right!
Growing, growing,
spreading out.

Green
bursting forth,
the tiniest of leaves ...
leaves of love
unfurling.

STILL HERE, STILL ME

Voices of Those Living with Memory Loss

Poem by Chuck Roos



Chuck's Poem

I am no longer sharp
as sharp as a tack
so give me a break
and cut me some slack.

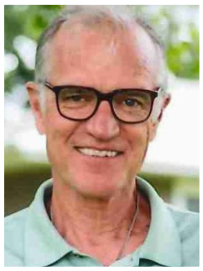
My 'Forgetful Friends'
I'm glad I 'metcha'
I think I might
have dementia.

I met new friends
I like them a lot
do I remember their names?
no, I forgot.

Every day
from January to December
I forget something
I cannot remember

But tomorrow is
a brand new day
so I thank the Lord
it's to Him I pray.

In Loving Memory



It is with heavy hearts we acknowledge the passings of two loving and long-time participants of Memory Cafe, Joyce Stende and Dr. Mike Curley.

Joyce and her dedicated husband, John, attended almost every event we offered for the past eight years and contributed so much companionship and wisdom to each of them. We miss Joyce's sweet, gentle presence.

Dr. Mike and his loving wife, Sue, have also attended our events very faithfully over the years and added incredible joy and so many smiles into our lives. Mike was so artistic, smiley, and joy-filled. Rest in peace, dear Mike.

FOR OUR HEALTH: URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS (UTIs) (excerpted)

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society

Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are a type of infection common among older people. If a person with a memory impairment or dementia has a UTI, this can cause sudden and severe confusion known as 'delirium'.

A urinary tract infection is usually caused by bacteria entering the urinary tract via the urethra – the tube that allows the passage of urine from the bladder to outside the body. The bacteria can then move upwards through the urinary tract, infecting the bladder (a condition known as cystitis) and sometimes the kidneys (a condition known as pyelonephritis).

If the person has a sudden and unexplained change in their behavior, such as increased confusion, agitation, or withdrawal, this may be because of a UTI.

Women are more commonly affected by them than men. Around half of women will need treatment for at least one UTI during their lifetime. If treated with the right antibiotics, UTIs normally cause no further problems and the infection soon passes. Though complications are uncommon, they can be serious and include kidney damage and blood poisoning, which can be fatal.

UTIs can cause sudden confusion (also known as delirium) in older people and people with dementia. If the person has a sudden and unexplained change in their behaviour, such as increased confusion, agitation, or withdrawal, this may be because of a UTI.

The person may not be able to communicate how they feel, therefore it is helpful to be familiar with the symptoms of UTIs and seek medical help to ensure they get the correct treatment.

It is also important to be aware that any infection could speed up the progression of dementia and so all infections should be identified and treated quickly.

My favorite thing is when people remember the little things I told them. Like seriously? You actually listened to me? - Unknown

JUST FOR LAUGHS

STEVE FROSLIE AND FRIENDS

Steve and his lovely wife, Linda.

Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me. I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

The easiest way to find something that was lost in your house is to buy a replacement.

Birds of a feather flock together and then poop on your car.

Lord, keep your arm around me and your hand over my mouth.

The older you get the tougher it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat have gotten to become good friends.

What happens when a leprechaun falls into a river? He gets wet.

What do you get when two leprechauns go on a first date? A lot of small talk.

A penny saved is a government oversight.

Aging: Eventually you will reach the point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

To err is human. To blame it on someone else shows management potential.

Quote of the Day

"Don't wait for the roses. Stop and smell the daisies."

- Jolene Brackey

MARCH MEETING SCHEDULE

MONDAY SCHEDULE

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

Mar. 2nd:

- **Morning Programming:**
  - 9-11am Morning Programs
  - 9:00-9:30 - Exercise with Coach Jake
  - 9:30-11:00 - Coffee and Conversation Support Groups (free respite care for your loved one provided by our well-trained volunteers)
  - 9:30-11 - 'The Gathering' - Support group for individuals experiencing early stages of memory loss for any medical reason.
- **Afternoon Programming:** 1-2:30pm
  - Music, Memories and Musing w/ Deb McTaggart

Mar. 9th:

- **Morning Programs** as noted above
- **Afternoon Programing:** 1-2:30pm
  - Caregiver Education: "Cumulative Grief" with social worker, Kriston Wenzel; Wood Burning with Jerry, and Joyful Moments with friends

Mar. 16th:

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

Mar. 23rd:

- **Morning programs** as noted above
- **11:30 - 'Dine and Dance',** Mhd American Legion

Mar. 30th:

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

March Education

Monday, March 9th: 1:00-2:30 PM (Bethel Church)
Kriston Wenzel, social worker, will provide caregiver education on "Cumulative Grief." Loss can take many forms, and often we are faced with a new loss before we have fully processed the last. Learn about cumulative grief and practical strategies for understanding and managing it.

Wednesday, Mar. 11th: 1:00-2:30 PM (Hjemkomst-MHD)
Janet Grove, speech therapist, will provide education on the four stages of memory, practical tools to support brain health, and strategies to help us become experts on our own brains. She will also explore the four pillars of health—sleep, nutrition, movement, and stress management—and how they support lifelong well-being.

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

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

Mar. 4th - Norwegian Storytelling with Jerry Ness
Hope Lutheran Church, South (3636 25th St. South)

Mar. 11th - Education: "Let's Talk Memory: Healthy Brain, Healthy Life" Janet Grove, speech therapist: (Hjemkomst Center-202 1st Ave N, Mhd)

Mar. 18th- St. Patrick's Day Celebration
Performances by: Jazz Squares and Heather & Thistle
Hope Lutheran Church, South (3636 25th St. South)

Mar. 25th - Support Group Meetings:
9:30 -11 am - Moving Ahead: Life After Loss Support Group
1-2:30 pm - Caregiver Cafe
Memory Cafe office - 1122 1st Ave N. Fargo

'MOVING AHEAD: LIFE AFTER LOSS' SUPPORT GROUP

Wednesday, March 25th: 9:30-11:00 AM

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

No Young Onset Group in March- *plan to resume in April, check next month's newsletter for updates.*

'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, Mar. 19th 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Memory Cafe office located at 1122 1st Ave N., 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.

Why attend Memory Cafe programming?

Socialization is especially important for those living with dementia because staying connected with others helps support brain health and overall well-being. According to the Alzheimer's Association, maintaining strong social relationships can reduce isolation, provide comfort with others facing similar experiences, and help improve quality of life. Being engaged with others may also help preserve cognitive function and provide emotional support through shared activities and conversation.

BUILDING UPDATE: WE'RE GETTING THERE!

Progress continues on the first phase of updating our new "Home Away From Home" on the corner of 40th Ave S. and 25th Street in Fargo. Our updated goal is have our staff move into the building by the end of March with some of our programs and activities transitioning to this space sometime in late April. Please watch for our communications on updates to program locations.

Take a look at the progress being made on our two fireplaces in the building! Nothing speaks 'cozy' more than a fireplace, especially in the middle of winter!

Fireplace #1

Fireplace #2

NEW FRIENDS (THE FARGO FORCE HOCKEY TEAM), NEW GAMES ("Tic STACK Toe") AND MOMENTS OF JOY AT MEMORY CAFE!

SLEEP ROUTINE CHECKLIST

Nicole Holzworth, OTR/L

MORNING ROUTINE (sets the body clock)

- Wake up at the **same time every day** (even after a poor night)
- Open blinds or get **natural light within one hour**
- Spend **20-30 min in bright light** (10 minutes outside if possible)
- Eat breakfast within 1 hour of awakening
- Move your body (walk, stretch, light exercise)
- Limit caffeine after 12 pm
- Keep naps short (20 - 30 min max, before 3 pm)

Why this matters:

- Morning light and movement tell the brain, "It's daytime"
- That signals the brain to produce melatonin 12-14 hrs later

MIDDAY CHECK

- Physical activity during the day
- Social interaction or mental stimulation
- Hydrate steadily
- Address pain before evening

EVENING ROUTINE (Prepares brain for sleep)

- Finish dinner **2-3 hours before bed**
- Small protein snack, only if needed
- Dim lights after dinner, 1-2 hrs before bed. Lamps with warm-toned amber bulbs
- Turn off news and stimulating TV
- Avoid heavy conversations before bed
- Reduce screen exposure 60-90 min before bed, use blue blocking glasses
- Bathroom routine before bed

Optional calming cues:

- warm shower, soft music, gentle stretching, lavender scent, reading something familiar

BEDTIME ROUTINE

- Go to bed at the **same time** each night
- Room should be dark, cool, and quiet
- Nightlight for safety, if needed
- No clock-watching

If awake more than 20-30 min:

- Don't lay awake in bed
- Sit in dim light
- Do something quiet and boring
- Return to bed when sleepy

If you didn't sleep well:

- Eat a protein-rich breakfast to stabilize blood sugars
- Move after you eat - 10-15 min after meals
- Hydrate like it is your job! Match each cup of coffee with water

SING FROM YOUR HEART CHORUS

By Deb McTaggart, Chorus Director

A Season of Song and Celebration!

Sing From Your Heart is officially back for its 6th season! We kicked things off on February 5th, and the joy and energy of that day was amazing!

This season, we are honoring the **United States' 250th anniversary** with our "American Music Sampler." It's a journey through the decades of various music genres featuring everything from the classic "Yankee Doodle" to feel-good pop hits you know and love.

A Special Spotlight

Our second rehearsal on February 12th was particularly special, as it coincided with **Giving Hearts Day.** Dressed in vibrant red, the chorus welcomed Kevin Wallevand from WDAY. He produced a beautiful feature story highlighting the profound impact the chorus has on our singers and the broader community. The outpouring of support following the broadcast has been truly heart-warming and affirms why we do what we do!

Mark Your Calendars! All our hard work leads up to our spring concert on **May 2.** We can't wait to share this musical patchwork of American music history with you.

Curious about the choir? It is not too late to join! We invite you to come and experience a rehearsal as our guest. No pressure, no fees and no background in singing is necessary — just a desire to share your heart and voice in the "sound of hope."

Rehearsals are held:

- Thursdays from 1:00 – 2:30 PM (Rehearsal)
  2:30-3:00 PM ("Cookies and Conversation")
- Where: Bethlehem Lutheran Church (613 16th Street South, Fargo)

Call 701-369-0629 for more information or visit our website: singfromyourheartchorus.org

CARE PARTNER CORNER

By Teryl Clausen, LSW (retired)
Care Partner Support Group Facilitator

My husband Mark worked in the area of agricultural finance which involved large loans to businesses related to farming. He had a college degree in business. So of course, this made him the obvious person in our marriage to handle anything related to large purchases, money management, paying taxes, and things like insurance policies and home maintenance.

Mark was persistent in telling me I should know about all this stuff in the event he died before me or became unable to continue. I kindly would tell him, "I think you're doing just fine, and I'll trust that somehow, I'll learn to handle it when I have to."

But thankfully, I eventually agreed to sit down with him with my spiral notebook and take notes as he shared with me what I needed to know. I would never assume that all women are like me, as certainly there are many women who competently and gladly handle these duties just fine, or they are shared by a husband and wife.

It wasn't long after having my tutoring sessions that Mark was diagnosed with dementia and I needed to slowly take on these responsibilities. I was then so thankful for his determination to educate me out of his concern for my well-being. It was especially appreciated when there were so many things to attend to after his death.

Maybe my experience will motivate others to put information down in writing about such things as where important documents are kept, any passwords needed, bank accounts and insurance policies, providers of services such as car repair, plumbing, electrical, etc. (Maybe what the plan is for any animals left behind?)

To assist with this, Memory Cafe has a form available to anyone interested. Once completed, it can be shared with other family members by whom it may be seen as a gift, like it was for me!

Worldwide it is estimated that more than half of the people living with dementia do not have a formal diagnosis. Source: Living With Cognitive Impairment, Second Edition by Nicole D. Anderson, Kelly J. Murphy, and Angela K. Troyer

WINTER WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

Please watch your emails for weather cancellations. If you would like to be added to our call list - please contact us at 701-404-6712. Thank you!

BRINGING MEMORY CONCERNS TO YOUR DOCTOR: A SURVEY TO HELP YOU PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Source: Living With Cognitive Impairment, Second Edition by Nicole D. Anderson, Kelly J. Murphy, and Angela K. Troyer

It is a good idea to write down everything you want to discuss with your doctor regarding any cognitive changes you are experiencing. Here is a survey to help you prepare.

1. Specific changes of my memory or other thinking problems are:
2. These problems first started about_____ago.
3. These problems started (circle one) GRADUALLY, SUDDENLY, NOT SURE
4. Since they started, these problems are (circle one) IMPROVING, WORSENING, STAYING THE SAME
5. I have asked those close to me if they have noticed any changes in my memory or cognition, and they have said YES, NO. If YES, ask this person for specific examples of these changes and list them here:
6. There (circle one response) ARE or ARE NOT any significant changes in my health that started happening around the same time as the cognitive changes started. If there were health changes, describe them here:
7. I have experienced notable changes in my (circle responses that apply): LEVEL OF STRESS, MOOD, NOT APPLICABLE. If you circled "level of stress" or "mood" or both, please note when these changes started:
8. I have blood relatives who have experienced cognitive changes (circle one response) YES or NO. If yes, please specify their relationship to you.
9. My medical history includes (list all past, including childhood, and current medical conditions):
10. This is a list of my current medications (including over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and other supplements), with dosages:

Your doctor will likely want you to describe the history of your memory concerns. Examples of some questions you may be asked are: When did it start? How did it start? Did it start all of a sudden, or did the changes start slowly and worsen over time? What kind of changes exactly? So be prepared to provide examples of your memory slips.

BRAIN HEALTH STRATEGIES: THE ARTS

Alzheimers Today, Alzheimer's Foundation of America *alzfdn.org*

As a woman walked out of the Scottsdale, AZ Arts Memory Lounge after participating in a 90-minute improv workshop, she summed up the feelings of many who attend the twice-a-month programs: "I haven't laughed so much in so long. It was wonderful to have fun and forget about the forgetting."

"We really wanted to get a space where people could come together, have a memory that isn't in a doctor's office and get together not only with their care partners but also with others who are going through a similar situations," says Natalie Marsh, Learning and Innovation Director. "Brain health is crucial. When you work in the arts - listen to music, create a painting, go to a museum - you keep your brain active in all phases of life. We know the arts won't cure the disease, but, at the very least, we can make the quality of life for caregivers and their loved ones the best it can be."

Editors Note: Does this sound like a message you have heard from a Memory Cafe near you?? Check out these photos from recent programs offered at MCRRV!

CONTACT US:
MEMORY CAFE RRV
PO Box 883, Fargo, ND 58107
701-404-6712
www.MemoryCafeRRV.org
hello@memorycaferrv.org

SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

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