

PVMCI

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative | Winter 2023

QUARTERLY

FUNDED BY THE EISENBERG FAMILY TRUST

To many, winter can mean shorter days, longer nights, gloomy weather and drab surroundings. Growing up in Syracuse, NY, with frequent snow and rare sunny days, we learned from our parents about the importance of finding small moments of joy and beauty to help sustain us. These moments were varied and could include watching and trying to identify a bird at the bird feeder, dancing to favorite music while cleaning up after dinner, looking at ice crystals on the window, and eating a juicy, sweet orange at the peak of ripeness.

My folks always had cameras at the ready (and still do—despite their smart phones!) and would stop to catch whatever caught their eye—from the way the light lit up a nearby stream or a smile that lit up someone's face. One day, after a really bad ice storm, my father was driving in the country and came upon a barn with a backdrop of trees that were coated with ice and looked like they were made from crystals. He went back and brought my mom to share the sight and she captured this photo.

This is our first winter PVMCI Quarterly and our amazing team has again put together a great issue. Speaking of teams, Karen Romanowski writes about

the importance of building your own team, and discusses how to get past barriers by asking yourself questions like, "Can I give a gift to others by letting them help." She has provided resources to make team building easier. Sharon Asher writes about improv and how its techniques fit in so well with dementia caregiving. Anne Bastings has done inspiring work around this and, if interested, I recommend checking out her website. Deb Peavey has included tips on how to get more light during our shorter winter days. Studies have shown how important this is for our physical and mental health. I am a big proponent of getting outside, dressed

appropriately of course, even for a short period of time. If weather prohibits this, a light box with 10,000 lux of light used in the morning for a short period of time can provide some of the same benefits. Christine Grimaldi has compiled a great list of winter activities. I hope these can help you find your own moments of joy.



Photo credit: Helene Starr

Best to all,

Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director,
Geriatrics and PVMCI,
MGH Cooley Dickinson Healthcare



It Takes a Team

~Karen Romanowski, RN, Memory Care Specialist

When I was a young, new nurse, I was surprised to learn something that I was perhaps lucky or oblivious not to have noticed previously: all of us will age, have to work with diminishing capacities, have to learn new skills with fewer resources, have to exercise new muscles and have to be flexible to navigate aging, accidents and illness. While I am aware none of us can predict how we will react with any set of circumstances, I have witnessed one consistent factor that supports resilience and has helped me through my own health issues and when assisting a family member with care. Building a team works! These are the questions I ask myself and ideas to help develop and support your teams.

Who is currently on my team? Is the team too small – if someone on the starting lineup can't play, is there a replacement?

Who has ever asked me, "Is there anything I can do to help?" Invite them on the team!

Can I practice saying "YES!" whenever anyone asks if they can help? Develop a list of specific tasks and support you would benefit from. Example: companionship mid-day, a meal delivery, a joke a day, a phone call, etc.

What tasks are consistently left undone? Who on the team can help with them?

Can I give a gift to others by letting them help?

Who played on a team with me in the past? Reach out to them!

If no one comes to mind, what other resources are available to create a team?

Are there things I can do to encourage teamwork? Create a communication notebook for team members, create an online calendar, create a text thread with team members?

Can I accept someone providing care in a style that is different than mine? Can I embrace that anyone who wants to help has their own special skills and let them shine in their own special way and be the star player for the day?

If I am a caregiver, am I adding my own needs to

"When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully, everyone is blessed."

~Maya Angelou



the list of support I accept?

If you are having trouble answering some of these questions, consider asking a friend or family member to help you answer the questions with what they see through their eyes.

If you find technology helpful, there are many online resources that can aid communication, scheduling and delegation of tasks for caregivers:

www.lotsahelpinghands.com

www.caringbridge.org, www.caringvillage.com

www.ianacare.com

Lastly, PVMCI Memory Care Specialists can help you answer with questions and assist in identifying resources. It is our hope that we will be strong players that help to support you. ❖

Have You Ever been to an Improv Show?

~Sharon Asher, RN, BSN, MBA, PROGRAM MANAGER

I remember going to a large nursing conference years ago where they brought in a comedy improv team for an entertainment event. Just prior to the event, we had a talk about the side effects of marijuana including males producing two-headed sperm.

The entertainment event then began, and the improv comedians took the stage and explained how improv comedy works. Basically, everyone just goes along with what the others say. The comedians yelled out to the group of about 500 nurses and asked for a topic to start things off. A nurse yelled out “You have two headed sperm.” The comedians chuckled as did the audience and then away they went with their skit about two-headed sperm.

Why am I telling you about this? Well, there is something to be learned about the “just going along” improv technique in dementia care. It is a mindset that answers “yes and” to whatever comes about. Someone with dementia states that they dated someone in the Beatles, your reply could be “How wonderful, how was that”? My stepmom would say that she cooked dinner and cleaned the house when she could no longer do that. The best reply was always “You did a great job”.

Some people use the improv technique as a fun way to get some exercise. One person gives a movement instruction, and you continue that until someone gives another one. For example, one person says “Walk,” so you walk in place. The next

person says “Pretend that you are dancing the twist,” then you begin doing that.

Others have used the idea for storytelling. Anne Bastings in creating her work called *Time Slips*, uses the improv idea for creative story telling. The general idea is that you look at a generic picture

together and then take turns making up a fictional story about it. You write down the ideas as you go and then at the end someone tells the whole story. These photos are



from Anne’s website. I have used these two photos many times with people living with dementia and we have told some wonderful stories about them.

Interested in learning more? Check out these websites:

[Creativity Center – TimeSlips Creative Storytelling Anne Basting \(anne-basting.com\)](#)

[How Improvisational Techniques Help Engage Dementia Patients \(brainandlife.org\)](#)

[How Dementia Caregivers Can Benefit from Improvisational Theater - Senior Housing News](#)

Let There be Light

Good lighting and dementia-friendly environments

In this season of shorter days, it can be helpful to surround ourselves with good lighting. The following information is borrowed from the Social Care Institute for Excellence, SCIE, a UK charity organization.

People with dementia need to see their environment to help make sense of it and to make the most of their remaining abilities. Effective lighting can help people with dementia see where they want to go and to identify spaces, rooms, equipment and signs. It helps them to see other people's faces and body language, to enjoy recreational activities, to join in everyday routines, and to enjoy the changing seasons.

Poor lighting will substantially reduce a person's ability to do all these things. It can also contribute to accidents—particularly falls—and cause unnecessary stress (for example, being frightened by misinterpreting shadows).

Ageing and impaired vision

Ageing eyes need twice as much light as young eyes—and people with dementia need even more. For older people, contrast is reduced and some colors are hard to see. Good lighting and design can make the difference between seeing and not seeing for older people with impaired vision, and between comfort and discomfort. A person with dementia has difficulty making sense of or recognizing what they see—if they can't see things physically as well, it is twice as hard for them as anyone else.

What is effective lighting?

Effective lighting involves a combination of

increased light levels, good contrast, minimizing glare, avoiding sudden changes in light levels and good color definition. Quality lighting is a vital component of good dementia-friendly design.

Valuing daylight

Daylight should be used wherever possible because it delivers good color interpretation—and it's free. It is important to make the most of windows and doors that bring in light. Doing simple things such as cleaning windows regularly, opening blinds and moving furniture that is blocking natural light can make a difference.

Being out in daylight is very important for improving mood and body rhythms, increasing vitamin D levels and promoting sleep at night. Balconies and court yards can be valuable spaces for this.

Managing light sources

You can manage sunlight with blinds, curtains and external shading devices. Use a range of artificial lights to reduce glare: main, centrally positioned lights, wall-mounted lights and freestanding lamps. Cover surfaces to reduce glare or high reflection. Having more light fittings is better than fewer brighter ones. Indirect lighting via the ceiling is good and local lighting should be adjustable and movable as needed.

Warning about low-energy lights

Be careful about where you use low-energy lights—they take a long time to get up to the right light level. This makes them dangerous to use in stairwells as the person may switch on the light and start to climb up or down before the light is bright enough to see. You also need to change the bulbs frequently, even if they are still working, because over time they give out less and less light. ❖

In the Spotlight

Staff Member Name: Sharon Asher

Current Role at PVMCI: Program Manager

Your professional background:

I have been a nurse for 38 years. I worked for almost 20 years in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Baystate Medical Center. I then moved into ambulatory care and management. I was the manager when Dr. Starr joined Cooley Dickinson Medical Group. At the same time, my stepmother had progressing Alzheimer's Dementia which our family was struggling with. Dr. Starr helped my family immensely and that planted the seed that I wanted to work to help people living with memory loss and their caregivers. I was fortunate to be able to move into the nurse supporting job and work with Dr. Starr for three years which I enjoyed immensely. Our program manager for PVMCI retired in October of 2020 and I was blessed to be able to move into this role as program manager.

What drew you to work with older adults with memory loss?

Being a caregiver myself and seeing how much it

affected our family. We didn't know where to go for help.

What is your educational background?

I graduated from Baystate Medical Center School of Nursing, long since closed. I have a Bachelor of Nursing Degree from UMass Amherst and a Master of Business Administration Degree with a focus in Healthcare Administration from Elms College. I am also a Certified Geriatric Nurse.



What do you love about your job?

I love being the program manager for PVMCI as it lets me be creative in thinking about what families need and then working to make that happen. I enjoy working with our wonderful and creative staff and it is an honor to be able to work with Dr. Rebecca Starr and now Dr. Jani.

Do you have any hobbies?

I have many hobbies that I enjoy including playing various musical instruments, traveling, reading, writing, spending time in New Hampshire and hanging out with my family and dogs. My most recent hobby is spending time with my new granddaughter.

Other information that you would like to share?

I grew up in Northampton and have been a lifelong resident of the area. I am so glad that I can work in the community that I know so well. ❖

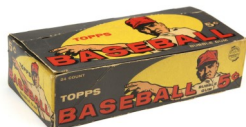
WINTER ACTIVITY IDEAS



Create Favorite Dishes Together

Choose a simple, easy-to-prepare recipe that you know your relative or friend with dementia enjoys and prepare it with them. During the wintertime, holiday dishes, including those passed down through generations, can rekindle sweet memories.

Organize Collections and Household Areas



Some people with dementia gain a sense of peace and calm when they organize items. To make this even more rewarding, consider organizing items that will bring up positive memories. Maybe those baseball cards that are your grandfather's from when he was a child, or those recipe cards that were handwritten by your mother. If the activity is too challenging, break it down into small steps.

Watch Family Videos

Watching family videos can spark memories and stimulate positive thoughts. Try not to ask, "Do you remember" too many times so as not to cause frustration. Even if your relative or friend doesn't remember, you can share videos of people from their life, helping them feel as though they're learning about someone important to them.

Start a Painting (or other hobby)



For many people, doing something in a seated position is more comfortable than being active for long periods of time. Arts and crafts like painting encourage creativity and self-expression without being physically demanding and paint-by-numbers can help simplify the activity. If your family member or friend has a good amount of control over his or her fine motor skills, you could even consider crafts like pottery.

Work on Puzzles Together

Jigsaw puzzles can be especially beneficial for individuals with dementia because they come in various skill levels and can be completed over time, reducing stress. For those in the later stages of dementia, use puzzles with fewer, larger pieces and a simple design. Work on them together during the course of a day, week, or month. Making a personalized picture puzzle may help connect the person with dementia to the activity.

Try Some Trivia

Though memories can fade, many people retain a significant amount of knowledge despite their dementia. If a person enjoyed similar activities and topics prior to the onset of their condition, they might do well with trivia. Playing with a group of people can take the pressure off.

Play Cards or a Favorite Board Game



Board games can be a fun group experience. When playing with someone who has dementia, it is essential to choose the right type of game. Games that require a strong skill set, such as the use of math, may be too challenging. Chess, checkers and other favorites often strike the right balance between ease and strategy. Games will be more enjoyable for people experiencing memory loss when they have played the game previously and remember some of the key tactics used in them. Familiar games like Go Fish can be fun and nostalgic.

Play Bingo

Bingo is a lot of fun! It's familiar, comforting and great for both adults and children. Plan an evening with a group of people and keep it lighthearted. Increase the interest by offering a fun prize. *(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)*

Incorporate Computer Games

Playing computer games can be a great winter pastime. Choose one or two games to learn and play them together. This can also be a good activity for those who like to spend time alone.



Do Chair Exercises or Yoga

Use a chair as a base to do simple exercises, including repetitive movement of the arms or legs to get the blood flowing. Chair exercises should be stimulating and energizing, but not push a person to the point of exhaustion. With yoga, poses can be modified by ability.

Go for a Walk or Head to the Fitness Center

Is there a paved area in a local park or another accessible, attractive outdoor area nearby? The bike path is usually plowed in the winter. Or avoid the cold and walk around an indoor shopping area. Areas with large windows can provide great views of outdoor scenery without the cold. The senior center or YMCA often offer activities like swimming, walking, biking, and fitness classes for adults with different levels of mobility.



Garden Indoors

Winter may limit gardening, but it doesn't have to stop it altogether. Create an indoor garden with a number of smaller, easier-to-manage plants. Place them in a sunny, accessible area to encourage tending. For those in the later stages of dementia, choose plants that don't require much care, such as succulents.

Give Back

Sometimes the best thing you can do is something nice for someone else. For example, if your relative or friend with dementia enjoys knitting, you can knit hats together for cancer patients or newborns.

Video Chat with Family and Friends

Combat feelings of isolation or loneliness by taking

the time to reach out to friends and family who may live far away. Many free apps like Skype, Facetime (on Apple devices), Google Meet, Zoom's free option, Facebook Messenger, or WhatsApp make it easy. Set up regular video chat dates during times of the day when your older adult is most awake and alert.

Sip Hot Drinks



Warm up on a cold day than a cup of hot chocolate or tea! With so many varieties to sample, your loved one can have their sense of smell and taste stimulated.

Spend a Morning or Afternoon Birdwatching

If your loved one is unable to birdwatch outdoors, you can bring the birds to them. Set up a feeder outside and help your loved one identify and keep track of the birds they see. Look at bird books to identify species.



Play Their Favorite Nostalgic Music

Talk to your loved one to learn about their favorite music and bring over a mix CD or stream live from providers such as Pandora, iTunes or Spotify. Use familiar tunes as a starting point for a conversation about memorable events. You could even combine it with another activity like working on a puzzle while the blizzard roars outside. Or get up and dance!

Arrange Flowers

Arranging flowers is creative yet calming and can provide the opportunity to use imagination and practice precise hand movements. The results will fill the home with color and fresh, floral scents, brightening the space and reminding us that spring is right around the corner. ❖

Resources:

<https://thebrielle.com/15-winter-activities-for-seniors-with-dementia/>

<https://dailyaring.com/5-winter-activities-for-seniors-that-warm-the-heart/>

<https://www.alert-1.com/blog/general/7-dementia-friendly-winter-activities-for-seniors/5112>



Northampton Memory Cafe

Presented by Northampton Senior Center, Northampton Neighbors,
Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative & Highland Valley Elder Services

WHERE: Northampton Senior Center, 67 Conz Street, Northampton MA.

WHEN: 4th Tuesday of each month from 1:00-2:30pm. A fun activity, a light snack, coffee, tea or beverage will be offered.

RSVP REQUIRED: Please call the Northampton Senior Center at 413-587-1228 to register. Space is limited so please RSVP early to assure a space!

ABOUT MEMORY CAFES: Memory Cafes are social get-togethers for people living with memory loss or dementia and their care partners. The meetings offer a fun activity as well as time for caregivers to share experiences and connect with other care partners. Care partners are strongly encouraged to stay for the duration of the meeting.

Funded in part by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

PIONEER VALLEY MEMORY CARE INITIATIVE

The PVMCI is a coalition of health care and community providers dedicated to empowering and supporting older adults living with dementia and their family caregivers to improve their quality of life. Partnering organizations include Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Cooley Dickinson Medical Group, Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice, Valley Medical Group, the Alzheimer's Association, Highland Valley Elder Services, and local Village Networks, senior services, and Councils on Aging. The PVMCI is a member of the Massachusetts General Hospital Memory Care Initiative.

Based out of the Cooley Dickinson Geriatrics program and led by Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director, Geriatrician, the PVMCI serves older adults living with memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers who reside in Amherst, Easthampton and Northampton (including Florence & Leeds). We would be happy to discuss this program and answer any questions that you and/or your loved one may have! Call **413-582-2357** and leave a message with your contact information—someone from PVMCI will return your call.

This program is funded by The Eisenberg Family Trust and made possible in part by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act. To meet our federal requirements, we have been requested to advise you that "there is no fee for the service; however, a voluntary confidential donation is requested. You will not be refused service for lack of a donation. Your donation helps support the continuation of needed services for elders." Interested in donating? Please call the Cooley Dickinson development office at **413-582-2256**. *Thank you!*

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FUNDED BY THE EISENBERG FAMILY TRUST

A Note from Dr. Starr

Welcome to our updated Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative (PVMCI) Quarterly newsletter. The timing of this new edition coincides with the start of spring. We welcome spring as it comes with longer days, shorter nights and warmer weather. We know how hard winter can be for so many of us and look forward to the beautiful tree blossoms and spring flowers. It's a wonderful time to get outside – either for a drive, or better yet, a walk around the neighborhood or local park. The bike paths come alive with riders and walkers alike – and provide a level path for everyone. Our family takes daily walks and talk about our favorite colors and flowers. Afterwards, it may be fun to draw or do watercolors of what was seen. You could also pick up tulips or daffodils to draw. Our parents do not live in the area and we use Zoom to connect as a family and catch up as we paint. It's an enjoyable way to spend time together and as we focus on our painting, it reduces pressure to make conversation. We limit the time to an hour or less so that it doesn't feel tiring for anyone.

This newsletter also comes at the perfect time to share our excitement that, through the generosity of The Eisenberg Family Trust, we have been granted another 3 years of funding for the PVMCI program. We are so grateful for these funds as they allow us to support people living with memory loss and dementia who live in Northampton (including Leeds and Florence), Easthampton and Amherst. These funds also help us provide education, support and connections to community resources for caregivers.

Our amazing team of dementia care specialists is transitioning and growing!

Laura Hummel, our founding Project Manager, used her insight and wisdom to help create the program and retired after a well-respected career of nurse education and program development. You may be familiar with Sharon Asher, our Geriatric Clinic Nurse Extraordinaire. She has now taken on the role of PVMCI Project Manager. While I miss Sharon tremendously in the clinic, I know that the PVMCI program is fortunate to have the energy and passion that Sharon brings to everything she does. Sharon recognizes how important this program is to our community and she is focused on expanding and broadening our program, while working hard to find additional grant funding.

We were very fortunate to have Karen Romanowski take on the role of Dementia Care Specialist after Sharon Levenson retired. Karen's wealth of nursing education, calm demeanor and wonderful listening skills will benefit everyone she interacts with. We also are lucky to have Deborah Peavey join us. Her mental health and art therapy experience and enthusiasm are already apparent and she is continually thinking of ways to improve the program. Our program is rounded out by Christine Grimaldi, who uses her amazing occupational therapy skills to improve on peoples' strengths and quality of life.

Over the next 3 years, our team will continue to focus on well-being and support of older adults with dementia and their family caregivers in the community. We welcome any suggestions and feedback along the way and thank you for your trust in our program.

Warm wishes for a lovely spring,

*Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director,
Geriatrics, Cooley Dickinson Health Care*

What is Creative Communication?

~Sharon Asher, RN, BSN, MBA, PROGRAM MANAGER



One of the tools that we use is the “fiblet”. A fiblet is a therapeutic technique for communicating with someone with dementia where you may say something that isn’t strictly true. We have all

been brought up not to tell lies. We were probably raised on the story of George Washington bravely admitting that he chopped down his father’s favorite cherry tree. His father was so impressed with his honesty that he hugged and praised him instead of being angry about the tree. For most, it is difficult to go against our ingrained morality to consciously and purposefully tell a lie. And yet, dementia experts encourage using the fiblet as a therapeutic technique. For some family members, this can be quite difficult.

Another way of thinking about this is to consider it creative communication. For example, let’s consider that a husband one day finds his wife Claire is sitting on the couch crying in the early afternoon. Her husband asks her what is wrong. She says that she was supposed to have lunch with her mother and she can’t find her. What are his options for responding to this?

- ◆ He could be factual and tell her that her mother passed away 35 years ago and she already had lunch an hour ago. While true, this will most likely be upsetting to Claire.
- ◆ He could tell her a fiblet. For example, he could say “Claire, your mom called and said she couldn’t make it today.” This may help her feel better. She may be able to move on to something else.
- ◆ He could also consider the underlying feelings that Claire may be feeling. Perhaps she is feeling a little lost, not sure what she is supposed to be doing. Perhaps she is bored or tired. She may be hungry since she is asking about lunch. He could use some creative communication at this point and say “your mom isn’t here right now. I was going to go for a walk and I would love for you to come with me.” If this doesn’t work, he can keep trying other options.

Responding to the underlying feelings and relaying to the

person that they are wanted and loved can help reassure the person with dementia who may be feeling lost. Using creative communication techniques and distraction as well as reassuring the person with dementia that they are loved and safe can be a caring and effective way to respond to these situations.

Easy Asparagus Frittata Recipe



- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 teaspoons butter
- ½ pound asparagus, trimmed, cut into 1” pieces
- 8 eggs
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese, or more to taste
- 7 tablespoons milk
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley (Optional)

Directions:

1. Heat olive oil and butter in a 9-inch nonstick pan over medium heat and cook asparagus, stirring occasionally, until soft but still firm to the bite, 10 to 15 minutes.
2. Beat eggs in a bowl until frothy. Stir in Parmesan cheese and milk; season with salt and pepper. Pour egg mixture over asparagus and cook until eggs are set, 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Invert frittata onto a plate and garnish with parsley.





In the Spotlight

Staff Member Name: Karen Romanowski, RN

Current role at PVMCI: Memory Care Specialist

Your professional background:

For most of my career I worked both as a nurse and a farm manager. While those professions wouldn't necessarily seem similar, they shared many common themes: trying to provide the healthiest environment for growth, making solid plans and being ready to change course due to the unexpected, the cycles of life and death, working with others as a team, and remembering that being present and connected matters the most. I have been a nurse for over 25 years and have worked in many health care settings: in hospital post-orthopedic surgery and stroke care, early intervention care of children 0-3, support for teen mothers and their children, school nursing, homecare, and palliative and hospice care. I hope to obtain my certification in geriatric nursing.

What drew you to work with older adults with memory loss?

The same thing that drew me to nursing drew me to working with adults with memory loss. I have a passion for learning about and supporting people at every age and stage of development and in the context of an ever-changing medical system. We are living longer and there is so much to learn about how to do so supporting one another, with care, respect and compassion. Personally, I have been a caregiver to several family members living with memory loss and this has deepened my understanding of the everyday, in-home, challenges. I hope to provide some support to those living with memory loss and their caregivers.

What is your educational background?

I received a BA from Virginia Commonwealth in English and creative writing and later obtained my nursing degree from UMASS.

What do you love about your job?

I love the following: the inspiration, laughs and creativity that those living with memory loss and their caregivers share with me, my co-workers, working collaboratively with Neighborhood and other local organizations supporting people to live their fullest lives, spreading the word about memory loss and aging, working for an organization that is developing new models of care.

Do you have any hobbies?

Hiking, knitting, biking, gardening, reading, cooking, writing, sewing, singing (off key), volunteering, spending time with family, friends and dogs.



**Karen Romanowski, RN
Memory Care Specialist**

The Journey from Family Member to Caregiver

~Sharon Asher, RN, BSN, MBA, PROGRAM MANAGER

The long and winding road that leads from family member (husband, daughter, etc.) to caregiver can be both an incredibly difficult and incredibly meaningful journey. Long established roles and routines might be painful to change. Watching the person you love go through this struggle can be incredibly painful. There may also be small moments of happiness and feelings of satisfaction as a caregiver which can be treasured when they happen.

It is good to take some time to examine your feelings along this journey—and normal to feel grief and sadness as you lose the person you once knew. This can be a difficult form of grief since the person you knew is gone, but they are also still right there in front of you. You may feel lonely as the person you shared your thoughts and feelings with can no longer communicate as they had in the past. You will most likely have to take on new tasks and you may feel burdened and resentful.

You will watch and feel jealous as other people who do not have a loved one with dementia go on about their lives. The question about what things would have been like if this

hadn't happened may bubble to the surface. You did not choose this journey. But...it is the journey you are on.

At some point you may need to provide hands on help. For some people, they may transition easily into this role. For others, it can be very difficult. It is ok to feel conflicted about this. Some people choose to hire help at this point. For people struggling with bathing or cleaning up after incontinence, having professional may help.

What else can help?

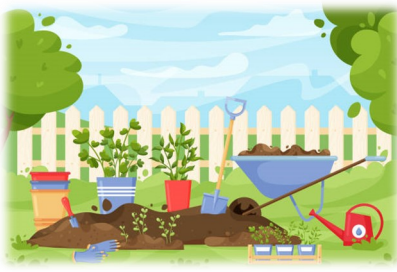
- ◆ Find people that you can talk to, especially people on the same journey.
- ◆ Talk about your feelings to friends, family, loved ones, and, especially, medical providers. Medical providers may be able to help. Depression is very common for dementia caregivers.
- ◆ Make time for yourself! This will make you a better caregiver.
- ◆ Learn as much as you can about dementia and caregiving. Knowledge is power!
- ◆ Try to live in the moment and not borrow tomorrow's trouble. Take things one day—even one moment—at a time.
- ◆ Remember that it is good to laugh. Find moments of joy when they arise.



SPRING ACTIVITY IDEAS

Springtime is an exciting time of year to be active, even when homebound. Here are some ideas about how to engage in meaningful activities with the start of warmer weather, longer days, and nature's return to life.

Garden – gardening is great for light exercise, fine motor skills, and engaging the senses; there are adaptive gardening tools that can assist older adults of all abilities. If you are mostly indoors, plant an herb garden or grow vegetables or flowers. Tending to plants on a regular basis can provide structure and routine, as well as a sense of pride and accomplishment.



Take a Walk – venture around the neighborhood, a nearby park, or an accessible trail. Be sure to use a cane, walker, or wheelchair if needed and take breaks.

Sit in the Sun – just sitting outside for a short period can help improve mood and reduce stress. Maybe read a book or just watch and listen to birds and neighborhood sounds to engage all your senses.

Birdwatch – go out into the woods or put a feeder outside your window. Grab a bird-watching book or even use an app on your phone to identify birds.



Reach out to your local Audubon Society if you would like to learn more about birdwatching in the area.

Have a Picnic – get take-out or bring sandwiches to a nearby park, or even your own backyard.

Take a Scenic Drive – just going somewhere new, or somewhere old, can be a great source of fun. Enjoy the company of the person you are with, the silence, the scenery, a good book tape/podcast, or your favorite music.

Arrange Flowers – create bouquets from flowers purchased or grown, or use silk flowers that can be rearranged and re-used multiple times.

Join Community Events – check out town picnics, farmer's markets, festivals, parades, and concerts.

Plan a Family Gathering / Have a Fire Pit or Potluck – socializing is essential to staying active and engaged.

Make sure to conserve your energy beforehand and rest afterwards.

Go Out for a Treat – sit outdoors at a restaurant or get some ice cream or frozen yogurt.



Go Fishing – this is an activity that involves minimal physical exertion, can be easily adapted, and provides plenty of time to enjoy nature and the person you are with.

Do Some Light Spring Cleaning – perform small tasks that organize and clear your space. Reminisce while you look at your belongings.

Go to a Sporting Event – they are often handicap accessible and tend to provide a fun, stimulating atmosphere. People may be reminded of the sports they loved to watch or play in their younger years.



When planning outdoor activities, be sure to match the activity with your loved one's physical and cognitive abilities and put time aside for rest and hydration. But, most of all, have fun and enjoy the sun!

~Christine Grimaldi, OTR/L, Memory Care Specialist



Northampton Memory Cafe

Presented by Northampton Senior Center, Northampton Neighbors,
Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative & Highland Valley Elder Services



WHERE: Northampton Senior Center, 67 Conz Street, Northampton MA



WHEN: 4th Tuesday of each month from 1:00-2:30pm

A fun activity, a light snack, coffee, tea or beverage will be offered.



RSVP REQUIRED: Please call the Northampton Senior Center at 413-587-1228 to register. Space is limited so please RSVP early to assure a space!



ABOUT MEMORY CAFES: Memory Cafes are social get togethers for people living with memory loss or dementia and their caregivers. The meetings offer a fun activity as well as time for caregivers to share experiences and connect with other caregivers. Caregivers are strongly encouraged to stay for the duration of the meeting.



LUNCH AT THE SENIOR CENTER: Participants can also sign up for lunch at the Senior Center. Separate registration is required. Pre-registration and payment is due 48 hours in advance. You can sign up online at www.myactivecenter.com, call the front desk at 587-1228 or stop by the front desk.

Yes, You CAN Try This at Home!

~Deb Peavey, LMHC, ATR, CDP, MEMORY CARE SPECIALIST

Making art can be a fun, relaxing way for people of all ages to express their creativity, but can be particularly valuable for adults with memory impairment or dementia. Studies have shown that art activities help boost cognitive function in various areas of the brain, enhance communication and social interaction, and boost confidence in people with dementia.

There's no "one size fits all" approach to art-making; what's most important is considering your older adult's current abilities, preferences, and what's feasible in their living space. The idea is to set them up for success and enjoyment, rather than overwhelm or frustration.

Spring can be a great time to try some painting at home. You can find basic supplies at Walmart, Amazon, Job Lots and even the grocery store or pharmacy. Complete kits can be found on specialty sites like S & S Worldwide at <https://www.ssw.com> where reprinted images on good quality watercolor paper, including paints and brushes, sell for about \$25 or less. To avoid making the experience feel



childish, quality paper and real (vs plastic) brushes are best. Keep the theme seasonal, set up a vase full of fresh flowers for inspiration, or choose pre-printed seasonally themed imagery. Play some light classical music in the background. Pre-set the table—clearing away visual distractions and clutter—with all necessary supplies, being sure to include a cup for water (avoid serving anything to drink during this exercise as it can create confusion) and a paper towel for blotting. Using a spray bottle or a wet paintbrush, pre-moisten the paints.

Set up a workspace for yourself and your loved one and invite them to join you in the activity. If you sense any resistance, encourage the person to sit and keep you company while you give the process a try. Model a willingness to be playful and try something new, explaining what you're doing as you go and fostering engagement. Ask if you can help your loved one get started on their piece to see if that will bring down their barriers a bit. When the session is over—it isn't necessary to finish all at once—hold up the work and admire it, each of you expressing (if possible) how the piece makes you feel to look at or how it felt to create. Give the pieces titles. Ask if you can display the work somewhere that it can be appreciated. Most of all, have fun!

PIONEER VALLEY MEMORY CARE INITIATIVE

The PVMCI is a coalition of health care and community providers dedicated to empowering and supporting older adults living with dementia and their family caregivers to improve their quality of life. Partnering organizations include Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Cooley Dickinson Medical Group, Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice, Valley Medical Group, the Alzheimer's Association, Highland Valley Elder Services, and local Village Networks, senior services, and Councils on Aging. The PVMCI is a member of the Massachusetts General Hospital Memory Care Initiative.

Based out of the Cooley Dickinson Geriatrics program and led by Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director, Geriatrician, the PVMCI serves older adults living with memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers who reside in Amherst, Easthampton and Northampton (including Florence and Leeds). We would be happy to discuss this program and answer any questions that you and/or your loved one may have! You can call **413-582-2357** and leave a message with your contact information. A member of the PVMCI team will return your call.

This program is funded by The Eisenberg Family Trust and made possible in part by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act. To meet our federal requirements, we have been requested to advise you that "there is no fee for the service; however, a voluntary confidential donation is requested. You will not be refused service for lack of a donation. Your donation helps support the continuation of needed services for elders." Interested in donating? Please call the Cooley Dickinson development office at **413-582-2256**. Thank you!

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

See your local senior center newsletter for more listings

Northampton Senior Center Newsletter: <https://www.northamptonma.gov/2057/Conz-Street-Chronicle>

Northampton Memory Café: The Northampton Senior Center, PVMCI, Highland Valley Elder Services and Northampton Neighbors are working together to host a monthly Memory Café at the Northampton Senior Center. The group will meet monthly on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 1:00pm-2:30. A light snack will be provided as well as a fun activity. See page 7 for more details. The Memory Café is free of charge to participants, donations are typically gratefully accepted.

Cooley Dickinson Geriatrics Dementia Caregivers

Support Group: Takes place on the second Thursday of each month at 1:00pm on Zoom. Email CaregiverSupport-Group@CooleyDickinsonGeriatrics.org to register.

Cooley Dickinson Geriatrics Dementia Educational

Session: Takes place on the fourth Thursday of each month at 1:00pm on zoom. Email CaregiverSupport-Group@CooleyDickinsonGeriatrics.org to register.

Amherst Senior Center Newsletter: <https://www.amherstma.gov/269/Senior-Services>

The Can't Remember Cafe - Amherst Senior Center - 413-259-3060. Wednesdays from 10:00am-12:00pm Join us for strong coffee and good conversation! The Can't Remember (CR) Café offers socialization for all but especially designed for individuals with mild memory loss and their care partners. We start each Café with an open hour of conversation followed by a rotating group activity in the second hour. Come for the coffee, stay for the conversations.

For a list of upcoming activities see below: April 5: Bingo
April 12: Paper Art with Pari April 19: Ed the Wizard
Performance starts at 10am April 26: Acoustic Memories w/ Sean Fullerton All are welcome!

Mobile Food Pantry, Amherst: First Wednesday of month, 1:00-2:00pm April 5th, May 1st, Boulders Apartment Homes, 156 Brittany Drive, Amherst. Mobile food pantry

includes a variety of fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and meat (when available). All are welcome, no documentation or registration process required. There are no residency or income requirements. Save money and enjoy fresh produce.

Easthampton Senior Center Newsletter: <https://easthamptonma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5434/March-2023-Newsletter>

Easthampton COA & Highland Valley Take and Go

Meals: The Highland Valley Take & Go Meals are available every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to Seniors 60+ who do not receive Meals on Wheels. Suggested donation: \$3. Sign Up: Call Ashley (527.6151 ext. 130) with your chosen dates, or if new, let us know you'd like to enroll. All registrations must be received by 12:00p.m one week before the meal. You will get a call back to confirm. Pick-up: Meals available for pick-up from 11:30am -12:00pm at the Main St. branch of Easthampton Savings Bank in the back parking lot. Enter the parking lot from Campus Ln. or Summer St.

Veteran Services Hours: Michelle Murdock, Veteran's Services Officer, is now at the ECOA two days a week for appointments. Call to schedule a time to meet with her: 413-270-2254

Healing Harmonies: An informal singing group designed for individuals with diagnosed neurological conditions, particularly those experiencing communication problems due to voice, language, or speech disorders. Caregivers are also welcome to attend and participate. Some possible conditions may include Parkinson's Disease, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, Stroke, ALS, Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury, Multiple Sclerosis and Dementia.

WHEN: Wednesdays, 5:30-7:00 February 15, 22, March 1, 15, 22, 29, April 5, 19. Join anytime! No Charge.

WHERE: New Location at Sunderland Public Library, 20 School St, Sunderland, MA 01375.

Thursday is for the Birds: A Birding Program Led By Bill Randolph, Refuge Volunteer Naturalist. Join Bill for a weekly naturalist walk noting the seasonal changes within the park's diverse habitats. Where: Fort River Birding and Nature Trail (handicap accessible), 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley, MA 01035 When: Thursdays April 6, 13, 20 & 27, 9:00-11:30am. Sign up for one class or the whole series. To register, email: Tasha.Daniels@FWS.gov or Call: 413-658-5403.

PVMMCI

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative | Summer 2023

QUARTERLY

FUNDED BY THE EISENBERG FAMILY TRUST

In New England, we welcome the summer and, with it, better weather and longer days.

People with dementia often have reversed sleep-wake cycles and are prone to sun-downing. Studies have shown that being outside in the sunlight, especially in the morning when the sun is at its brightest, can help improve functioning, increase alertness, decrease risk of falls and reset the body's internal clock. (www.alzinfo.org/pym/feature/improving-sleep-and-sundowning-with-sunlight/). Further, more exposure to brighter light has been shown to improve depression and increase levels of vitamin D, which is important for good bone health. We recommend making the time and effort to get out of the house in the morning and soak in the sunlight! Plus, it is usually the cooler part of the day. So, make time to get outside and go to a local park or bike path or walk around the neighborhood. We would love to see everyone out and about. If you like, take photos and share them with us!

In New England, summer often means travelling to the sea or lakeside and getting together with friends and family. For many, these are important traditions that have been going on for years. We travel a good distance to see our parents in the Finger Lakes. Our kids love being together and are fine with keeping things low key. We play cards, paint and sit in awe watching the amazing variety of colors of each sunset. Sharon Asher shares her experiences of travelling with her step mom, who had dementia, to their house on Lake Winnepesaukee. We know that cognitive impairment can make things more challenging. Hopefully, the tips that Sharon has pulled together will make for an easier trip for all involved

and give everyone a chance to do things that bring them joy.

With the heat from summer, we know that it is easier to get dehydrated. As we get older, we lose our thirst drive. Hydration doesn't have to be just water—it can come in the form of sweet, juicy fruit, as in our recipe for watermelon soup.

We have also included a great list of summer activity ideas as well as information on our local summer concert series, most of which are free.

Finally, I am excited to announce that we had our first Memory Café at the Northampton Senior Center (NSC)! Our team and the NSC staff worked diligently to bring this to fruition and we are excited to be able to offer this on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Memory Cafes were started in Holland in the late 1990's, spread to England in 2000 and are now expanding in the US. Jewish Family & Children's Services has a directory of memory cafes in Massachusetts and their website (Jfcsboston.org) notes that "each memory café is different. Some cafés invite guest artists, some offer education about memory changes, and some are just for relaxing and chatting. But all cafés share one goal: to help guests feel comfortable and to know that they are not alone. Cafés are a place to talk with others who understand what you are going through, to forget about limitations and instead focus on strengths, to enjoy other's company, and to explore something new." We hope you will be able to attend and welcome any suggestions and feedback if you do.

Wishing you all a lovely summer,

*Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director, Geriatrics,
MGB Cooley Dickinson Healthcare*



Top left: Ray and his wife, Mary Beth, work together while PVMCI volunteer, Kathy Service, looks on; top middle: Gail and John show off their finished succulent; top Right: a finished product in loving hands; below: Aubin and Francine show off their succulent.



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Upper left: Lisa and Kay with their finished succulent; middle: Sara and her lovely smile; right, Lynn and Sura; bottom left: Leon, Kathy and Sara get acquainted; right: Ruth and Frank, showing their succulent.
Photo credit: Christine Grimaldi



Traveling with Dolores

~Sharon Asher, RN, BSN, MBA, PROGRAM MANAGER

My stepmom Dolores passed away last July after a 10 year journey through Alzheimer's. I was thinking about summertime and how Dolores would love to be outside enjoying her gardens. This longing for being outside did not fade with her advancing illness. Dolores was happiest if she could spend time outside and feel the breeze and sun on her skin.

Our family was blessed to have a house on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. As Dolores's disease progressed into the middle to late-middle stages, traveling became more difficult. Dolores was usually happy to go along with the flow but would get disoriented once she arrived at the lake. She would often wander through the house at night, and at times she couldn't find the bathroom. She wasn't sure what she should be doing and would sometimes get agitated or sad. She needed more guidance, direction and loving support at these times.

Once back at home in Hatfield, it would then take a few days to get settled back in. She would wander more outside in Hatfield and we needed to be careful that she didn't wander down the street. I did find her one day walking down the street with her stuffed animal that she believed was her dog, Jack. With the warm weather upon us, traveling and increased wandering are things to consider as a care partner with someone with dementia.

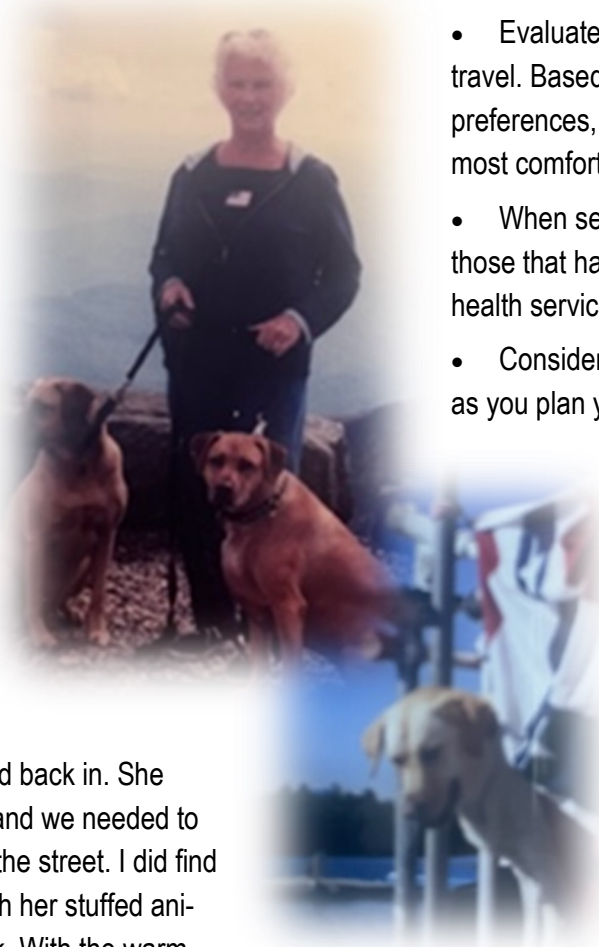
Tips for care partners traveling with someone with dementia from the Alzheimer's Association

Suggestions for a calm traveling experience:

- Plan ahead.
- Learn to recognize the warning signs of anxiety and agitation and identify strategies to reduce them. Discuss

this plan with the person living with dementia.

- Try not to overload the person with a lot of directions or too much information. General travel considerations:
- Environmental changes can trigger wandering or confusion. Consider enrolling in a wandering response service. Contact the Alzheimer's Association 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900) for more information.
- It may be helpful to stick with the familiar. Travel to known destinations that involve as few changes in daily routine as possible.
 - Evaluate options for the best mode of travel. Based on needs, abilities, safety and preferences, decide what would provide the most comfort and the least anxiety.
 - When selecting destinations, consider those that have easy access to emergency health services and pharmacies.
 - Consider everyone's needs and desires as you plan your trip; elaborate sightseeing trips or complicated tours may cause anxiety and confusion.
 - If you will be staying in a hotel, consider informing the staff ahead of time of your specific needs so they can be prepared to assist you.
 - Have a backup plan in case your trip needs to change unexpectedly. This may mean purchasing travel insurance if you have booked flights or hotels.
- Carry with you an itinerary that includes details about each destination. Give copies to family members or friends you will be visiting or to emergency contacts at home.
- Travel during the time of day that is best for the person. For example, if he or she becomes tired or more agitated in the late afternoon, avoid traveling at this time.



(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

- Have a bag of essentials with you at all times that includes medications, your travel itinerary, a comfortable change of clothes, water, snacks and activities.
- Remember to pack necessary medications, up-to-date medical information, a list of emergency contacts and photocopies of important legal documents.
- Allow plenty of time for rest. Don't over-schedule.
- Contact the Alzheimer's Association® to learn if services are available at your destination.
- Make your reservation through a travel agency or by working with the airline directly. Doing so allows you to add notes or instructions to the reservation for special needs such as wheelchair assistance or in-flight meals.
- Avoid scheduling flights that require tight connections.
- If traveling through an unfamiliar airport, review a map of the facility to plan for distance between connecting flights, locations where security re-entry may be required and locate convenient locations such as restrooms.

What to keep in mind for visits to family and friends:

- Prepare friends or family members for the visit by explaining dementia and any changes it has caused.
- Go over any special needs and explain that the visit could be short or that you may need to change activities on short notice.
- If walking is difficult, consider requesting a wheelchair or motorized cart so that an airport employee is assigned to help you get from place to place. Most airlines ask for at least 48 hours of notice.

Some additional considerations:

- It may be helpful to stay as close to your normal routine as possible. For example, keep meal and bed times on a similar schedule to that followed at home. Eating in may be a better choice than at a crowded restaurant.
- Be realistic about abilities and limitations. Allow extra time when scheduling activities.

Consider the following for air travel:

Moving through an airport requires focus and attention, as the level of activity can be distracting, overwhelming and difficult to understand.

- Even if the passenger does not require support for mobility, consider requesting wheelchair assistance to help with navigation through security checkpoints. This support may help expedite the process and reduce stress.
- If you think the TSA screening process may be confusing for the person living with dementia, inform the TSA agents about the person's diagnosis. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance from airport employees and in-flight crew.
- If the person needs help using the restroom, look for companion care bathrooms so you can more easily assist.
- Stay with your travel companion at all times as it can be easy to get confused or lost in a busy airport. ❖



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Funded in part by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

Tips for Staying Hydrated During the Summer

Staying hydrated is important for mind and body and can be more challenging for people living with dementia. Below are some suggestions to increase fluid intake:

- ◆ Keep a lidded cup with a straw nearby filled with water. Encourage frequent small sips.
- ◆ Offer fruits and vegetables that have a high water content.
- ◆ Make hydration fun.
- ◆ Combine a mix of fresh or frozen chopped fruit for a fruit salad.
- ◆ Add a twist to your fruit salad with lime juice, balsamic vinegar or some fresh herbs, such as mint or basil.



- ◆ Make fruit kebabs with fresh cut, mixed fruit.
- ◆ Grill your veggies and fruits, such as peaches and pineapple.

- ◆ Make a tropical green smoothie with mango, pineapple, banana and spinach.
- ◆ Use sliced cucumber, carrots or bell peppers instead of chips for dips and salsas.
- ◆ Make a refreshing salad topped with fresh berries or peaches.
- ◆ Substitute rice with grated or finely chopped cauliflower.
- ◆ Puree frozen peaches to make a very simple “nice cream.”
- ◆ Enjoy soups! See our recipe below for a wonderful summer watermelon soup.

Cold Watermelon Soup - Serves 4-6

Watermelon in all forms is a great summertime food - delicious, nutritious, and hydrating. Try this easy recipe adapted from The New York Times for a refreshing meal on a hot day.

Puree 5 cups of diced watermelon in a food processor or blender and blitz to a purée.

- **7 cups cubed watermelon**
- **1 tablespoon red wine vinegar**
- **4 tablespoons fresh lime juice**
- **2 cups cubed cantaloupe**
- **2 cups diced cucumber**
- **2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- **½ cup blueberries (optional)**
- **Handful of small basil leaves chopped fine**
- **Handful of small mint leaves chopped fine**
- **Dash of crushed cayenne (optional)**
- **Pinch of salt (optional)**

Season with salt, pepper and cayenne (optional), 1 tablespoon vinegar and 2 tablespoons lime juice. Taste and adjust seasoning. Refrigerate.

To serve, place remaining watermelon, cantaloupe, cucumber and blueberries (optional) in a small mixing bowl. Toss with a little salt and pepper, 2 tablespoons lime juice and 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add to chilled puree. Sprinkle with basil and mint. Enjoy!



In the Spotlight

Staff Member Name:

Deb Peavey, LMHC, ATR, CDP

Current role at PVMCI:

Memory Care Specialist

Your professional background:

After studying art as an undergraduate and earning a BFA from UMASS in 1986, I spent 10 years in the graphic design field, ending that career chapter as the publishing director for Mirage Studios, creators of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Then after staying home for a few years to raise two daughters—in a rural neighborhood where we had chickens, dogs, cats and gardens—I decided to take my career in a new direction and went back to school for a Master's Degree in Art Therapy and Counseling at Springfield College. The internships and early work after earning this degree exposed me to several settings, including hospitals, retirement facilities, and residential mental health facilities.

What drew you to work with older adults with memory loss?

While finishing my Master's research on the benefits of art therapy for memory impaired older adults, I had the pleasure of working at Hebrew Healthcare in West Hartford. In that role, I gained valuable experience in supporting the wellbeing of older adults with memory impairment. While there, I also developed a show of work produced by residents, designed to educate board members and the larger community about memory impairment and the benefits of art therapy. This show later traveled to the capital in Hartford. I found this work to be really meaningful and fulfilling, and I enjoyed the feeling of making a difference in the lives of others.

What is your educational background?

In 2009 I earned my MS in clinical art therapy and in 2011 I earned my license as a mental health counselor (LMHC) while working at River Valley Counseling Center, an outpatient mental health agency based in Chicopee and Holyoke. Working mostly in schools and on an outreach basis, I provided cognitive behavioral therapy and art therapy as well as other traditional mental health interventions. I went on from River Valley to work in the nonprofit senior living realm, in resident services and life enrichment.

What do you love about your job?

I love our wonderful team and being part of an organization that is developing new models of care for people with memory impairment. Supporting families and helping them thrive and live as fully and independently as possible for as long as possible makes me feel like I'm making a little difference in the world.

Do you have any hobbies?

I love gardening, birdwatching (especially hummingbirds), being outdoors, walking with my dog, hiking, making things by hand, sewing, growing orchids, learning birdcalls, painting, reading, traveling, spending time with friends and being with my adult children and grandchildren.



**Deb Peavey, LMHC, ATR, CDP
Memory Care Specialist
(and Gigi, best dog ever)**

SUMMER ACTIVITY IDEAS

Summer is here, and with it, all the enjoyable activities we know and love. Regular activities for people with dementia are incredibly beneficial and engaging in summertime activities can help boost everyone's mental health. Below is a list of activities to consider.



Plant a Garden - Planting a small garden lets those with dementia enjoy the summer sun, increases their vitamin D, regulates circadian rhythms, and strengthens muscles as they pour soil, dig holes, and insert seeds. If that sounds like too much physical work, buy a few pots of flowers, small plants, or herbs to tend to. Gardening is an excellent activity

because it is ongoing and offers tangible results.

Watch the Birds - Bird-watching is an excellent option for people with dementia. It is not physically or mentally demanding and people can do it from inside or outside their home. You can buy a birdhouse or add to the experience by building a birdhouse. You can even get a variety of feeders to attract different types of birds or even get a feeder for squirrels. Watching squirrels eat shelled peanuts is quite fun! Hang the feeders near where you or your loved one likes to sit and enjoy.



Make Frozen Treats - The summer sun puts older adults at risk for dehydration and other heat-related illnesses. Making frozen treats, such as fruit pops or flavored ice cubes, requires little effort and keeps your loved one cool. Experiment with different flavors of juice, tea, and soda to find the perfect frozen treat.

Enjoy a Picnic - When the weather is nice, pack a light lunch and head outside for a picnic. Bring a blanket and some lawn chairs, and head to your favorite park – or stay in your own backyard, if that works better for you. Simple sandwiches, fruit, cold beverages, and crackers are all excellent choices for summertime snacking.



Visit a Park - During the summer, local parks come alive with the sounds of laughing children, people exercising, and chirping birds. Your loved one may have fun chatting with other park visitors or simply enjoy staring peacefully at a pond or fountain.

Go to a Farmer's Market - Summer is the prime time for farmers' markets. Many of these markets have outdoor stands during the summer months, so you can spend time outdoors while hunting for nutritious, memory-preserving foods such as carrots and leafy greens.



Go Swimming – Nothing says summer like outdoor swimming. Head to an outdoor pool or, if your loved one is steady on their feet, a local watering hole or beach. There is adaptive equipment available at some beaches.

Watch Old Movies - If the day is too hot or it is raining cats and dogs, make the most of it and hold a TV or movie marathon with your loved one. Pop some popcorn, grab a few delicious snacks and sit down to watch a favorite funny movie or classic TV show from their childhood. Bonus points if it was a “top summer flick” from when your loved one was young.

Take a Trip Down Memory Lane - Summer memories from



years past are some of our most beloved. Using reminiscence therapy may help your loved one recall those

cherished moments from their childhood. Gather old scrapbooks from summer vacations, find souvenirs from previous trips, or make a memory box with materials that evoke a scene (like a beach). As you share your observations and memories, your loved one may be prompted to do the same. Be sure to keep a notepad handy to write down any surprising stories or memories that come up.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Go to a Game - If your friend or loved one enjoys summer sports like baseball, take them to a game. Revisiting the sports and activities they loved in their younger years can help bring back positive memories. Encourage them to tell you how it was when they played and what they enjoyed the most about it.




Take in a Concert - Music is a magical tool for helping people with dementia. Few things have the power to soothe and generate memories like tunes from their past. Many cities and towns have free concerts all summer long, featuring an array of musical genres. So, whether your loved one is into jazz, classical, country, or gospel, there'll be a concert for them.



Go for a Country Drive - A drive in the country is fun and relaxing for everyone, but it might be extra special to someone raised on a farm or in a rural environment. As you go, try to point out the things they might recall from their own lives, like corn growing in the fields or cows and horses out to pasture; even something as mundane as a barn or silo could make their day. If appropriate, you can try to engage them in a conversation about what life was like when they were growing up. You might even find out something you never knew about them.

Paint with Watercolors - An inexpensive set of watercolors, brushes, and paper can make for a fun, creative, and quiet visit. If you can, go outdoors and choose a tree or flower for you both to paint so your loved one doesn't have to struggle with that decision. Guide them and help them as needed to rinse their brush and try new colors. When you're finished, don't forget to sign and date the pictures and find a place to display them in your loved one's room. Having the pictures visible will be a nice reminder of the day you spent together.



 **Go for Ice Cream** - Who doesn't love an ice cream cone on a hot summer day? Make an adventure of it by searching for the best ice cream in the area.

Arrange Flowers - This is a simple task your loved one might enjoy if they ever had a passion for flowers, gardening, or other related pastimes. All you need are cut flowers (try your local grocery store), a vase (preferably plastic), and a little patience. As you cut the stems to size, hand them to your loved one and instruct them gently how to arrange each.

Sit by the Water - Whether you have access to a lake cottage, a pool, a flowing creek, or a rambling river, find a comfortable place to sit back and relax. Water can be a very calming and soothing element for someone with dementia. You will want to be extra careful not to leave your loved one unattended by water, but the sound of moving water and the reflections cast by the surface of a water body can be comforting and beautiful. If possible, you might even take a little stroll in the sand and let the waves lap at your bare feet.

Stargaze on a Clear Night - Summer is one of the most temperate times to sit outside late into the evening. Stargazing can include the use of a telescope, or just the naked eye. Check your library or the Internet for guides on the stars, planets, and constellations visible in your hemisphere at any given time. By following the local news, you can also find out when a meteor shower is likely.



Visit a Local Museum - Museums are great options on hot summer days when spending too much time outside could be dangerous or uncomfortable for your loved one. Before heading out, check to see if your local museum offers a senior discount or senior-friendly visiting hours. Plan your parking and mealtimes ahead of time to ensure the day goes smoothly.

With a little bit of planning, you can create a summer filled with fun and meaningful activities for both you and your loved one.

~Christine Grimaldi, OTR/L, Memory Care Specialist



Florence Summer Concert Series, Florence

[Concert Series - Florence Civic & Business Association \(florencemass.com\)](#)

Concerts are free and will take place every Thursday from 6:30-8:00pm at the Florence Civic Center from June 1 through August 31. Food trucks will be on-site each and every week as well! Bring your lawn chair, relax, and enjoy the music! See above website for performance lineup.

Millpond Live Concert Series, Easthampton

[Millpond Live | FREE Outdoor Concerts](#)

The Easthampton Parks and Recreation Department will hold free concerts in the park beginning on June 23. July 7; Sarah the Fiddler, August 4; Jimmy Mazz, August 11; Heritage Pops, August 18. Showtimes are 6:30 p.m. Bring chairs and a picnic or enjoy treats from local food trucks. For more information visit [easthamptonma](#).

Stanley Park Summer Concert Series, Westfield

[Stanley Park 2023 Summer Concert Series & Programming - Stanley Park Westfield MA](#)

The fresh air and scenic tapestry of Stanley Park in Westfield serves as the backdrop for its Westfield Bank Sunday Night Concert Series in the Beveridge Pavilion, weather permitting. The Eagles Experience, July 9; Jesse Liam Band, July 16; Eddie Forman Orchestra, July 23; Valley Kats, July 30; Hard Knox Band, Aug. 6; Bad News

Jazz and Blues Orchestra, Aug. 13. Showtime is 6 p.m. and the concerts are free. Chairs and food service will be available until 8:00 p.m. in the Beveridge Pavilion. Concerts are free to the public. If inclement weather, check Stanley Park Facebook page, [stanleypark.org](#) or call for event confirmation, 413-568-9312.

Wednesday Folk Traditions at the Porter Phelps, Hadley [South Hadley Summer Concert Series - South Hadley, MA - The Q 99.7 WLCQ \(theq997.com\)](#)

The 42nd season of Wednesday Folk Traditions at the Porter-Phelps-Huntington House Museum in Hadley kicks off on June 14 and continues every other week with Rebelle, The Pangeans, Klezmir, Tony Vacca with World Rhythms, and Afro-Semetic Experience. Concerts are held in the museum's sunken garden at 6:30 p.m. For prices, dates and more information call 413-584-4699 or visit website at [www.pphmuseum.org](#).

Village Commons Summer Concerts, South Hadley

[South Hadley Summer Concert Series - South Hadley, MA - The Q 99.7 WLCQ \(theq997.com\)](#)

Presented by South Hadley Recreation Department in conjunction with The Village Commons, South Hadley holds its free Summer Concert Series on Thursday evenings at 6:30 p.m. at Village Commons. Midlife Crisis on July 6, Whitaker Hill on July 13, Night Moves on July 20, The Dave Colucci Show on July 27, Moose & the High Tops on August 3, Off the Record on August 10, Peter J. Newland and RadioX on August 17, Cottonwood on August 24, and the Capabilities & Sound Squad of Berkshire Hills Music Academy on August 31. Rain dates are the following Sunday. For more information, call 413-538-5030.

For more local events, visit the following websites:

- <https://explorewesternmass.com>
- <https://visithampshire-county.com>



BRAIN HEALTH CAN START IN THE KITCHEN

COOKING DEMONSTRATION AND BRAIN-HEALTHY SNACKS PROVIDED

Friday, August 4, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Presented In-Person

HCC MGM Culinary Arts Institute, 164 Race Street, Holyoke

To register, email Meghan at mlemay@alz.org
or call our 24/7 Helpline at 800.272.3900

Join us for a presentation on the importance of healthy eating on brain health, and potentially lowering your risk for cognitive decline or dementia. Learn about the research on nutrition, exercise, social engagement and brain health. The program also includes a cooking demonstration and the chance to sample healthy snacks. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association in partnership with the Holyoke Community College MGM Culinary Arts Institute. All are welcome!

alzheimer's  association®

PIONEER VALLEY MEMORY CARE INITIATIVE

The PVMCI is a coalition of health care and community providers dedicated to empowering and supporting older adults living with dementia and their family caregivers to improve their quality of life. Partnering organizations include Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Cooley Dickinson Medical Group, Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice, Valley Medical Group, the Alzheimer's Association, Highland Valley Elder Services, and local Village Networks, senior services, and Councils on Aging. The PVMCI is a member of the Massachusetts General Hospital Memory Care Initiative.

Based out of the Cooley Dickinson Geriatrics program and led by Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director, Geriatrician, the PVMCI serves older adults living with memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer's disease and their family caregivers who reside in Amherst, Easthampton and Northampton (including Florence and Leeds). We would be happy to discuss this program and answer any questions that you and/or your loved one may have! You can call **413-582-2357** and leave a message with your contact information. A member of the PVMCI team will return your call.

This program is funded by The Eisenberg Family Trust and made possible in part by a grant from Highland Valley Elder Services through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act. To meet our federal requirements, we have been requested to advise you that "there is no fee for the service; however, a voluntary confidential donation is requested. You will not be refused service for lack of a donation. Your donation helps support the continuation of needed services for elders." Interested in donating? Please call the Cooley Dickinson development office at **413-582-2256**. *Thank you!*

PVMCI

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative | Autumn 2023

QUARTERLY

FUNDED BY THE EISENBERG FAMILY TRUST

Welcome to our Fall Newsletter

One of the best things about living in New England is fall. I love this time of year—the air gets a little crisper, the leaves start to change. In our family, we love an annual trip to an orchard to pick apples and we never miss the Ashfield Fall Festival—this year it’s the weekend of 10/7-10/8.

On sunny days, I look around in awe at the beauty of the fall colors contrasted with the bright blue sky. This is a great time of year to take a walk, collect leaves, and enjoy all of the sensory input that we love about fall—the colors, sounds, smells and textures around us.

I am reminded of the quote by Mary Oliver, “Instructions for living a life. Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.”

To that point, Karen Romanowski writes about the movement to “Reimagine Dementia,” by transforming the narrative and changing the view of how we see and interact with those

who have dementia, with the hope to bring joy and growth to all. Sharon Asher writes about taking moments to appreciate our own inner beauty as we reflect on the changes around us. Deb Peavey speaks to the importance of sensory input for all of us, but especially those of us living with dementia. She includes a

recipe for butternut squash soup, which is one of my favorite uses for fall vegetables. Christine Grimaldi brings a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and care to all that she

does; you can learn more about her and her adorable toddler in “In the Spotlight.” Deb compiled a wonderful and varied list of fall activities and celebrations. I hope you are able to take advantage of this season and, if you do and you have better photographic skills than I do, please share!

Best to all,

Rebecca Starr, MD, Medical Director,
Geriatrics, MGB Cooley Dickinson Healthcare.

*“Instructions for living a life.
Pay attention. Be astonished.
Tell about it.”*

~ Mary Oliver



Taking It to the Streets – Reimagining Dementia

~Karen Romanowski, RN

In September, the organization “Reimagining Dementia: A Creative Coalition for Justice” announced a new grassroots campaign called Taking It to the Streets. Taking It to the Streets is an effort to transform the narrative and shatter the silence around dementia. The goal of their campaign inspired me share my thoughts on this important topic to lift the taboo of memory loss and cognitive change.

While I have had moments and days as a care partner when I have been too tired to be creative, positive, or re-imagine ANYTHING, I love the idea of working to create a new lens through which to view dementia. I am reminded that I have choices about how I will interact with and react to people living with memory loss.

I want people living with memory loss and their care partners to feel and share the same freedoms that I want for everyone; to be seen, understood and accepted and to be able to engage with their community in whatever way feels right to them.

Reimagining Dementia’s Call to Action

Statement: “Reimagining Dementia: A Creative Coalition for Justice is an international group of dementia activists and allies—health professionals, people living with dementia (young and old), carers/care partners, family and community members,

advocates, artists, academics, policy makers and others—who share a diverse and humanizing vision of care and support that promotes inclusion, relationality, creativity, joy and the possibility of growth for everyone living with, and impacted by, dementia.

We focus on developing projects, programs, policies and approaches that successfully use play, performance, improvisation and the arts to creatively challenge the biomedical and institutional approaches to care, and the fear, stigma and hopelessness they perpetuate. In the midst of a global pandemic, we are mobilizing tens of thousands of people with dementia and their families—together with the communities and care settings in which they live—to create environments in which everyone is supported to thrive and to grow.”

To learn more about Reimagining Dementia, please visit their website:



<https://www.reimaginingdementia.com/> ❖

RECOMMENDED READING

Counter Clockwise by Ellen J. Langer.

“Counterclockwise makes a strong case for the influence of expectation and belief on how our bodies function, on how we heal, and even how we age. Ellen Langer presents fascinating scientific data to support this view and argues convincingly that we should learn to take greater control of our health through the practice of *mindfulness*. Her research is *innovative and empowering*.” —Andrew Weil, M.D.



Enjoying the Seasons

~Sharon Asher, RN, BSN, MBA, PROGRAM MANAGER

During the long winter months, we often long for warm weather. We look forward to going outside and feeling the sun and fresh air on our skin. We often can't wait for the longer daylight hours. Spring arrives and we finally get some warmer days, and we get outside. Then, before you know it, summer is upon us! As lovely as summer weather is, it is hot! As the hot days go on, we start to long for the cooler weather again!

According to people.com, 33% of people claim fall is their favorite season. I would count myself as one of those folks! I feel so relieved when the intense heat relents. I

love sitting by a fire in the back yard and going for long walks. The trees in our area put on their show, which is so beautiful.



Before you know it, the holiday season starts to creep in.

Reflecting on the changing seasons leads to thinking about enjoying the changing seasons of our lives. Each phase of our life offers its own special joys and challenges. As a former “sandwich generation” caregiver

myself, finding moments of joy in the caregiving season of our life can sometimes be challenging but is so important to our own wellbeing. As you see the leaves turning color



this fall, notice that they are revealing their hidden beauty. Those beautiful colors were there all summer but are only revealed when photosynthesis slows and the green color fades. As we all grow older, our own inner beauty can more easily shine through as we gain wisdom and grace. I hope you can appreciate your inner beauty and that of those around you as you look at the fall foliage this year. ❖

Seasonal Foods for Sensory Stimulation

Sensory activities can help improve mood, emotional well-being, cognitive functioning, and overall quality of life, especially for people living with dementia. Cooking and baking with strong smells and textures can provide an important form of sensory stimulation. Making things from seasonally available ingredients is an added way to create powerful connections.

Loss of appetite is a common symptom of dementia, and it can be caused by a variety of factors. For example, an individual may experience a decreased sense of taste or smell, which can make



food less appealing. Preparing foods together when possible, sharing memories while doing so, and choosing seasonally available vegetables and fruits can enhance the experience.

Autumn is rich with local produce in the Pioneer Valley. A drive in the country provides ample opportunities to stop and purchase a variety of farm fresh vegetables including butternut squash, sweet potatoes, fingerling potatoes, broccoli, kale, cabbage, brussels sprouts, celeriac, fennel, pumpkins, radicchio, and shelling beans.

Try this delicious and savory butternut squash soup made from scratch, or purchase ready made from grocery stores carrying Panera, Pacific Foods, Kettle & Fire, and Nature's Promise. ❖

Roasted Butternut Squash Soup

INGREDIENTS

1 Large Butternut Squash (about 3 lbs) halved vertically and seeds removed

1 T Olive Oil (plus more for drizzling)

1/2 C Shallots, chopped

1t Salt

4 Garlic cloves, pressed or minced

1 t Maple syrup

1/8 t of Ground Nutmeg

4 C Vegetable Broth

2 T Butter (to taste)

Freshly Ground Black Pepper (to taste)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425 and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment. Place squash on pan and drizzle each half with enough olive oil to lightly coat squash on the inside (about ½ t each). Rub the oil over the inside of the squash and sprinkle it with salt and pepper.
2. Roast the squash face down until tender and cooked through, about 40 to 50 minutes. Set the squash aside until it's cool enough to handle, about 10 minutes, then scoop the cooked squash out of skin and put in blender (set aside).
3. Meanwhile, in a skillet, warm 1 T olive oil over medium heat until shimmering. Add the chopped shallot and 1 t salt. Cook, stirring often, until the shallot has softened and is starting to turn golden on the edges, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute, stirring frequently. Transfer the contents to blender.
4. Add the maple syrup, nutmeg and a few twists of freshly ground black pepper to the blender. Pour in 3 cups vegetable broth, being careful not to fill the container past the maximum fill line (you can work in batches if necessary, and stir in any remaining broth later).
5. Securely fasten the lid. Blend on high (or select the soup preset, if available), being careful to avoid hot steam escaping from the lid, until your soup is ultra creamy and warmed through.
6. For thinner soup, stir in the remaining cup of broth. Add 1 to 2 T butter or olive oil, and more salt and pepper to taste, and blend well. When serving, drizzle each bowl with olive oil.

In the Spotlight

Staff Member Name: Christine Grimaldi, OTR/L

Current Role at PVMCI: Memory Care Specialist

Your Professional Background: I worked in elementary education for 7 years in various roles. I love teaching children but wanted the opportunity to work with other populations and in different practice settings. Seeing students respond well to school occupational therapy (OT) and talking with several people in the field made me pursue a career in OT. While studying, I worked as a Personal Care Assistant with a woman with complex medical and mental health issues. I enjoyed the relationship developed through providing one on one care. As an OT, I have worked in a Skilled Nursing Facility and on inpatient psychiatric units, roles which have allowed me to work with people in many ways. I enjoyed conducting evaluations and doing individual interventions. Leading groups on the inpatient unit was always interesting! All my professional experience informs the work I am doing now as a Memory Care Specialist. I love my team and especially enjoy the work I am doing with clients.

What drew you to work with older adults with memory loss? My grandmother had dementia for 15 years and I recently lost my mother-in-law to ALS with frontotemporal dementia. I have a lot of personal and professional experience working with people experiencing brain changes. I have seen how having access to education and resources makes navigating the challenges that come with



memory impairment more manageable. The mission of Occupational Therapy is to help people maintain their functioning and live as fully and independently as possible. I appreciate what my lens as an OT allows me to bring to my work. Watching people adapt to living with progressive memory loss inspires me and I know that the support our program offers is necessary and important. I am grateful to be a part of it.

What is your educational background? I graduated from Wesleyan University with a Bachelor of Arts. I have a teaching certificate from Antioch University and a Masters of Occupational Therapy degree from Bay Path University.

What do you love about your job? I love the relationships I build with clients and their families. I appreciate being able to help people during difficult moments and recognize small victories or moments of change in their lives. Occupational Therapy is all about fostering growth and independence and I appreciate The Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative's model for addressing

memory impairment. My colleagues are incredibly committed, hardworking, and lovely to be on a team with. I also appreciate being part of a program that is community-based; this allows me to spend more time with my clients and visit people at home where I can get to know them in their own environment.

Do you have any hobbies? Raising a toddler is my hobby! Caring for my first born and exploring the world through his eyes is how I spend most of my time these days and has been my greatest joy. I also enjoy hiking, running, watching movies, and spending time with friends and family. I am an animal lover and have had many dogs and cats. ❖

FALL ACTIVITY IDEAS

Early and Middle Stage Dementia



Bake a seasonal brain-healthy dish together, using whole foods such as apples, pumpkin or squash. Apple pie is always a treat. See page 8 for a soup recipe to try.

Go on an autumn walk to enjoy the fall leaves and talk about any birds or nature you see, the colors of the leaves changing and the species of trees.



Make some autumn-themed crafts. Many ideas can be found on sites like Pinterest (www.pinterest.com), and materials can be found on S & S Arts and Crafts Supplies (www.ssw.com). Search under “fall crafts” and “senior activities” or take a drive to your local Michaels craft store.

Rake leaves or do some simple fall clean up in the yard or garden. Save or sprinkle seeds for next year’s garden.

Visit an apple orchard or a pumpkin patch and buy some seasonal fruits, gourds, vegetables or fresh cider.



Late Stage Dementia



Cook a fall-themed dish for your loved one and allow them to smell the scent of fall cooking and eat a tasty, brain healthy meal or treat. Apple sauce is fun, easy and delicious.

Collect fall leaves and other nature items and bring them



indoors for your loved one to feel, smell and see. Create a sensory stimulating collection in a basket with leaves, milkweed pods and acorns and other natural objects.

Make a homemade potpourri out of fall seasonings such as cinnamon and cloves, add to a pan of water and cook on low heat with citrus fruit peelings and apples to fill the room with the scent of fall baking.

Go Leaf Peeping on a beautiful crisp day.



Listen to music on the radio and enjoy the sights, engaging in conversation about what you’re seeing and experiencing as you go. Stop at a farm stand for some pumpkins or gourds to bring home. See if your local senior center has any bus trips planned for this purpose and sign up.



Sit on a Park Bench and enjoy the scenery. Pack a thermos of hot tea or cider to enjoy while you’re there.

Limited Mobility Activities

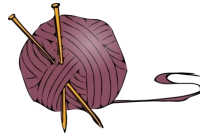
Bird watching. Try putting out some bird feeders in the yard to see a nature show from the comfort of your kitchen window or living room. Notice how the previously bright yellow goldfinches have turned dusky. Cover a pinecone with peanut butter and roll it in birdseed to create a tasty treat for backyard birds (be sure to tie a piece of string to the stem first).



(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

Crocheting, knitting or sewing.

Many older adults are comforted by—and are excellent at—these activities. Mending is another option to try.



Organize a fall themed book club. Organizing a book club with a few close friends or relatives is a great way to ensure caregivers and those with



dementia, maintain social contact with others. Socializing is considered a vital brain healthy activity and what better way to get together with others than to be involved in a group

discussion about an interesting read. Make sure that the get-togethers are kept short and that the person with dementia is kept in the loop of the group dialogue.

Listen to music together. Music has been found to help improve cognition and memory and it's one of the top brain-healthy activities you can do with your loved one with dementia.

Here are some suggestions you can ask your smart phone or speaker to play: *Early Autumn*, Ella Fitzgerald; *Autumn in New York*, Louis



Armstrong & Ella Fitzgerald; *Autumn Leaves*, Roger Williams; *See You In September*, The Happening; *Autumn of My Life*, Bobby Goldsboro; *September Morn*, Neil Diamond; *Wonderful World*, Sam Cooke.

Area Happenings



Beavers at Sundown

Saturday, October 21, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

North Farms Road entrance

Discover the natural history of beavers, how they alter the landscape and provide habitat for other wildlife on this walk at Fitzgerald Lake. Meet at the North Farms Road entrance and walk about 3/4

mile searching for signs of beavers. All ages welcome. Binoculars and shoes for wet, muddy conditions are recommended. For more information on this program call Dave Pritchard (413-268-3668) or Dick Wynne (413-584-7930). To sign up, please email Dave Pritchard at: Regitrar.BroadBrookCoalition@gmail.com.

Healing Harmonies Choir

Do you like to sing? Healing Harmonies is an informal singing group designed for individuals with diagnosed neurological conditions, particularly those experiencing communication problems due to voice, language, or speech disorders. Caregivers are also welcome to attend and participate.

Possible conditions may include Parkinson's Disease, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, Stroke, ALS, Traumatic/Acquired Brain Injury, Multiple Sclerosis, and Dementia. **WHEN:** Wednesdays, 5:30-7:00. October 4, 18, 25; November 1, 15, 22, 29; December 6, 20. **WHERE:** Sunderland Public Library, 20 School St, Sunderland, MA 01375

Fall Festivals and Celebrations

Eastern States Exposition (The Big E): September 15-October 1, West Springfield, MA.

Old Deerfield Fall Festival: September 23-24, Deerfield, MA.

Celebrate the Harvest at Old Sturbridge Village: September 30-October 22, Sturbridge, MA.

Kris Kringle Candle Fall Festival: October 5-6, Bernardston, MA.

Ashfield Fall Festival: October 7-8, Ashfield, MA.

Paradise City Arts Festival: October 12-14, Northampton, MA.

For more local events, visit the following websites:

- <https://explorewesternmass.com>
- <https://visithampshirecounty.com>



Presented by Northampton Senior Center, Northampton Neighbors, Pioneer Valley Memory Care Initiative & Highland Valley Elder Services

WHERE: Northampton Senior Center, 67 Conz Street, Northampton MA.

WHEN: 4th Tuesday of each month from 1:00-2:30pm. A fun activity, a light snack, coffee, tea or beverage will be offered.

RSVP REQUIRED: Please call the Northampton Senior Center at 413-587-1228 to register. Space is limited so please RSVP early to assure a space!

ABOUT MEMORY CAFES: Memory Cafes are social get togethers for people living with memory loss or dementia and their care partners. The meetings offer a fun activity as well as time for

caregivers to share experiences and connect with other care partners. Care partners are strongly encouraged to stay for the duration of the meeting.



Above: PVMCI Program Manager, Sharon Asher, led a sing-along during our July Northampton Memory Café. The third session in August was a full house! Participants brought and shared a treasured item from their life. We heard some wonderful stories, got to know each other better and shared a snack together. If you haven't yet joined the Memory Café, you are always welcome!

Funded in part by a grant from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation.

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