



The Caregiver's Voice

For People Caring for Family, Friends, &

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Fall 2021

The Caregiver's Voice is a quarterly publication of the AA County Department of Aging & Disabilities' National Family Caregiver Support Program. Contact us at: 410-222-4339/4375 or caregiver_support@aaacounty.org

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Fall 2021 Caregiver Workshops

Fall 2021 caregiver workshops are a mix of in-person and virtual sessions. Check each class for its location!

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR CAREGIVERS

October 13, 2021

6:30 pm

North County/Hein Office; 7320 Ritchie Highway, Glen Burnie

Having an emergency preparedness kit, being informed of local hazards, and practicing emergency preparations could make you more ready as a caregiver in an emergency. *Presented by James Kremple, AA County Office of Emergency Management.*

STORIES LOVE MUSIC

November 17, 2021

6:30 pm

Virtual Session via Zoom

Individuals with dementia feel disconnected from the world around them and may wonder “am I being seen and heard?” This can be true for Caregivers, also. When we are isolated, we wonder if anyone wants to hear our stories. Music speaks right to our hearts and our human experiences. We all have stories to tell and music brings it to light. *Presented by Ilyana Kadushin, Executive Director of Stories Love Music, Inc.*

Continued on page 2



We are pleased to share with you an opportunity to participate in the Dementia Live® experience—*both in-person and virtually!*

Dementia Live® offers a unique inside-out understanding of dementia and aging. Family caregivers will gain a heightened awareness of the challenges faced by their loved ones who live with dementia. Caregivers will also learn new communication skills to help improve care and minimize disruptive behaviors—thus reducing caregiver stress!

Please join us at one of the **in-person** sessions via the Zoom platform. Space is limited for each session. Pre-registration is required. To register, call 410-222-4375/4399.

October 13, 2021—2:00 pm

November 15, 2021—6:30 pm

Please join us at one of the upcoming **virtual** sessions via the Zoom platform. Space is limited for each session. Pre-registration is required. To register, call 410-222-4375/4399.

October 14, 2021—6:30 pm

November 3, 2021—2:00 pm

Fall 2021 Caregiver Workshops (continued from page 1)

REDUCING STRESS, SADNESS & OTHER DIFFICULT FEELINGS DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON AS A CAREGIVER

December 9, 2021

6:30 pm

Annapolis Senior Activity Center, 119 S. Villa Avenue,
Annapolis

Juggling caregiving with the rest of life is tough enough. But when the holiday season rolls around it's downright exhausting. Join us for this interactive presentation on how to reduce your caregiving stress during the holidays. This interactive program will cover:

- Identifying signs of caregiver burnout in yourself and what to do about it
- Why seeking help with caregiving before the New Year is a good idea
- What to look out for as you spend time with older loved ones during the holiday season

Presented by Jennifer FitzPatrick, MSW, LCSW-C, CSP.



On-Line Caregiver Videos

(www.aacounty.org/aging)

What we learned during the past 18 months? How to Zoom! And one of the many benefits of having zoom caregiver workshops has been the ability to record those sessions so that caregivers can watch them whenever their schedule allows!

If you have not taken the opportunity yet, we invite you to check out the varied caregiving topics that can be found at www.aacounty.org/aging; click on the link "Caregiver Videos."



Here Come the Holidays!

Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and all the other holidays you may celebrate during the final months of 2021 are upon us. Whether you are new to caregiving in 2021 or are an "old pro" at it, you may want to take a moment to visit—or revisit — some tips that might help you actually enjoy the holiday season.

If you care for someone living with dementia, the routines you have established during non-holiday times help keep your loved one comfortable. When those routines are disrupted during the holiday, you may see changes in their behavior and demeanor. For many individuals living with dementia, even three people can seem like a crowd. When you add in lights and music, excited children and noisy conversations, the person with dementia might experience sensory overload and become even more agitated and confused.



Halloween can be quite frightening for someone living with dementia. Make sure you choose fun Halloween decorations, not scary ones. Flickering flames and the glow from jack-o-lanterns can cast frightening shadows. Avoid motion- or sound-activated decorations that make spooky sounds or sudden movements. Doorbell ringing and children in costumes can be disturbing and scary. Television channels are filled with horror movies this time of year. A single scene in a scary movie can leave a lasting impression on a senior with Alzheimer's so monitor what's on the tv closely.

During the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Hannukah holidays, when your home takes on a different look and feel, keep these tips in mind:



- While you may enjoy the socialization of family and friend visits, your loved one may find unfamiliar faces, loud conversations, and active children upsetting and their behaviors might reflect their agitation. You may need to limit the number of visitors in your home at one time. When visitors or visits do happen, make sure a quiet space is available for your loved one to take a break.
- If you take your loved one who has dementia to another family member's home, be sure there is a quiet room they can go to if the festivities become overwhelming.
- More people coming and going may mean more names he or she forgets and faces they don't recognize. Conversation becomes difficult to follow.
- You may want to steer clear of blinking lights as they can be confusing for someone with dementia.
- Maintain a sense of familiarity within the home; moving furniture around to accommodate a tree or other decorations can cause confusion.
- While changing familiar settings can create confusion, extra cords, decorations, and piles of gifts can be a mobility hazard.
- Keep in mind your own needs during this holiday season. Explore simpler ways to celebrate.

You're Invited! Caregiver Support Groups

(Jennifer Sapp, MSW, MSG)



Please join us for one or both of our monthly Caregiver Support Groups, offered on the *Second Wednesday* and *Third Tuesday* each month, from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. Now more than ever, we could use a hand as we continue to cope with the struggles of the pandemic and the ongoing issues of caregiving. This is a challenging time and a support group can provide guidance and comfort in so many ways.

Support groups bring together individuals who share similar experiences. As a caregiver, we understand that you may feel alone, misunderstood or stressed. In the groups, we share ideas, resources, wisdom and sometimes a good laugh. Through a support group you can help to reduce the stress and anxiety that often comes with caregiving. You will find other benefits as well, including less loneliness or isolation, increased caregiving skills, better coping strategies, and improved motivation. And most importantly, having connections with others who are going through similar things, you will find that you are not alone and that you have help and support along this caregiving journey.

Sharing openly about the struggles of caregiving can be very healing. Plus you never know when your own words and experiences may help another fellow caregiver. So please join us! Hope to see you in person or virtually at our Fall support group meetings.*

*Meeting schedules can be found on this page under the column titled *Family Caregiver Support Groups*.

Here Come the Holidays! (continued)

- Adjust your expectations. Don't try to do it all; ask for help. Schedule a potluck dinner or let someone else host the holidays this year!
- A brunch or lunch celebration may work better, especially for someone who is affected by sundowning.
- Involve your loved one in the holiday preparations as much as possible while maintaining their normal routine.

Take time for you~ do something you like, have fun and enjoy your holiday!

Thank You, Family Caregivers!



National Family Caregiver Month

Celebrated every November, National Family Caregivers Month is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It offers an opportunity to raise awareness of caregiving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers.

Celebrating Family Caregivers during NFC month enables all of us to:

- Raise awareness of family caregiver issues
- Celebrate the efforts of family caregivers
- Educate family caregivers about self-identification

Increase support for family caregivers

The national observance is spearheaded by Caregiver Action Network (CAN), a nonprofit that provides free education, peer support, and resources to family caregivers. The Caregiver Action Network (the National Family Caregivers Association) began promoting national recognition of family caregivers in 1994. President Clinton signed the first NFC Month Presidential Proclamation in 1997 and every president since has followed suit by issuing an annual proclamation recognizing and honoring family caregivers each November.



Family Caregiver Support Groups

Jennifer Sapp, MSW, MSG, facilitates monthly support groups:

Glen Burnie Support Group

October 13th
November 10th
December 8th
1:00-2:30 pm

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/91500934491>

Meeting ID: 915 0093 4491

or call

301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 915 0093 4491

Annapolis Support Group

October 19th
November 16th
December 21st
1:00-2:30 pm

Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/93285848158>

Meeting ID: 932 8584 8158

or call

301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 932 8584 8158

Caregiver Support Facebook Group



Family caregivers, living in or caring for someone in Anne Arundel County, are invited to join our Facebook Support Group page. We hope this gives you the opportunity to connect with each other, share your concerns and your experiences and, hopefully, laugh in-between meeting times. For those of you unable to attend the day-time meetings due to work schedules or other commitments, this format provides you with the opportunity to connect, share with and support other caregivers. You can find the group on Facebook.com/ArundelSeniors.



National Family Caregiver Support Program

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Glen Burnie, MD 21061

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**Family Caregiver Support
Program Staff**
Mary Chaput, Program Director
Patricia Lortie, NFCSP Coordinator
Dee Scharff, RCRP Coordinator
7320 Ritchie Highway
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

- Information & Assistance (I&A)
- Adult Evaluation & Review Service (AERS)
- Adult Public Guardianship
- Americans with Disabilities Act Office (ADA)
- Assisted Living Facilities Program
- Evidence-Based Health Promotion
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman/Resident Advocate
- National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)
- Respite Care Referral Program (RCRP)
- Senior Activity Centers
- Senior Care, Senior Center Plus
- Senior Nutrition Program
- Supports Planning
- State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP)
- Telephone Reassurance Program
- Volunteer Programs

Anyone needing accommodations to caregiver events must contact Mary Chaput at 410-222-4339 or by e-mail at agchap01@aacounty.org at least seven days in advance of the event. TTY users, please call via Maryland Relay 7-1-1.

To join the NFCSP mail list and receive information regarding up-coming workshops and conferences, or to receive the *Caregivers' Voice* by email, call 410-222-4339 or email us at: caregiver_support@aacounty.org
Back issues of the newsletter are available on the Family Caregivers' website at www.aacounty.org/aging.

For information on sponsoring an edition of the *Caregivers' Voice*, contact Mary Chaput at 410-222-4339 or email caregiver_support@aacounty.org.