

APRIL 2021

CAREGIVER NEWSLETTER

Official Newsletter of Senior Community Services



🎵 Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens, bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens, brown paper packages tied up with strings, these are a few of my favorite things 🎵

I am sure we are all familiar with the tune that these words are from, but it just struck me that what Julie Andrew's is singing about is the same thing we have been talking about with caregivers over the last year. It may seem simplistic but remembering your favorite things when you're feeling sad can be the first step to feeling better. In the song Maria starts out soft and with apprehension but gets louder and more confident as the song goes on. There are so many things we have not been able to do this past year, but with COVID cases declining and more and more of us becoming vaccinated, we can actually start planning our favorite things and not just dreaming about them! With the arrival of spring and the realization that our dreams can once again become reality, brings new hope, something that we have missed. So, whether it is a visit to friends or family we have not seen in a while, a trip we would like to take, or an activity we have not been able to enjoy, start planning! And when the dog bites, or when the bee stings, or when your just feeling sad, think about those favorite things and how close we are to resuming them....and then maybe you won't feel so bad!

"My Favorite Things" from The Sound of Music



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Minnesota Department of Health's COVID-19 Update

The [Minnesota Department of Health's \(MDH\) website](#) provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 disease, testing, vaccinations, and ways to continue to cope.

Learn More About the Vaccine

We all know that the vaccination roll out has gained momentum and is progressing along very nicely. But how much do we really know about the science behind the vaccine? [This video](#) shows physicians explaining more about the vaccine, how we obtained it, and how it works.



She's Not Missing Her Appointment!



If I told you a couple of years ago that a 90-year-old woman had to walk 3 miles through snow to get a vaccine, what would your thoughts be? She must be in a third world country? She must be poor? She must not have family? None of the above are correct. Not only did she succeed at making the trip, she was happy to do it!

[Read the whole story here.](#)



FAMILY CAREGIVERS NEEDING COVID-19 VACCINE



The State has now issued instructions for how family caregivers can sign up for the COVID-19 Vaccine, and the letter can be issued by organizations who provide caregiver support services. Senior Community Services is able to provide a letter for family caregivers meeting the State's criteria to help them obtain the COVID-19 vaccine. [Contact us at 612-770-7005 to learn more.](tel:612-770-7005)

Tracking Devices for Care Receivers with Dementia

Spring has sprung, and that means getting out and enjoying the outdoors! However, caregivers are often concerned about their loved one being out and about, even for a short walk, alone. [This article](#) details the various types of tracking devices made for those who are experiencing minor to mild cognitive impairment. It is recommended you speak with your care receivers' doctor to determine if a walk is ok, and then finding a tracking device would provide that extra security for you to know that if they take a wrong turn, you can find them easily.



Caregiver Coaching & Consulting Services: Is It Right for You?

Senior Community Services has a team of six licensed social workers who are trained and experienced in providing coaching or consultation services to caregivers. This is a program which provides intensive 1:1 support for caregivers. Under the coaching model, a structured format is used to identify problems and offer solutions. Consultation also involves identifying problems and offering solutions but allows for a more casual schedule. A schedule is formed between the social worker and the caregiver which best fits the needs of the caregiver. It is recommended that meetings are held weekly or bi-weekly during the first phase of the coaching/consulting, and then often will lessen in time. This service is offered as private pay or on a sliding fee scale, and no one is turned away due to inability to pay. For those caregivers, whose care receiver is on an Elderly Waiver or CADI Waiver program through the state, the waiver can pay for the services.

If you are interested in our coaching/consulting services or just want to learn more about the program, please contact us at 612-770-7005 or visit [our website](#).

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Hospice Can Help

When is it time for hospice? Caregivers struggle with making the decision to add hospice care for their loved one. More and more of us are understanding that adding hospice does not mean we are “giving up” on someone, or “letting them die.” Hospice is simply adding end of life care to a patient which will make them as comfortable as possible and make the end-of-life stage as fulfilling as possible. Hospice care focuses solely on the mental and physical needs of the patient, as well as the family. Hospice does not provide “custodial care” for a patient, that is left to the family, or hired caregivers. However, under the hospice benefit, medical equipment, which is not covered by Medicare, is covered. Learn more about hospice [here](#).



When to Consider Placement outside of the Home

There are so many mixed emotions involved in considering a placement for someone out of the home. Many caregivers consider placement as a “last resort” and feel overwhelming guilt at the idea. However, placement is sometimes the right choice and is often done too late, after some type of crisis ensues. Below are links to a couple of articles offering help on deciding if and when placement is the right choice.

[Senior Link Article](#) & [Aging Care Article](#)

Education Event

Wills, Trusts & Other Estate Planning Tools

Wednesday, May 5th from 1:30pm-3:30pm

Cost: FREE

What is the difference between a Will and a Trust? Which tools are right for you given your goals and intentions for your estate?

Attorney Elizabeth Michaelis, J.D., M.B.A. will review the key planning tools available to you, including Wills, Trusts, Powers of Attorney and Health Care Directives. Information will also be provided on probate avoidance and recent shifts in the laws that may impact your planning options and strategies.

[Click Here to Register!](#)

This Virtual Event brought to you by the Senior Outreach & Caregiver Services program of Senior Community Services



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Stress and Caregiving



Have you found yourself in a situation like the one in the cartoon? I know I have. I once called my work phone from my cell phone to test it and ended up answering the call and wondering why no one was there! I have brought up Google Search on my phone and then forgotten what it was I had planned to look up! And perhaps most horrifying, I have searched the house for my reading glasses which were safe and sound perched atop my head. While all these situations can bring a chuckle looking back at them, it's not always very funny in the moment and may cause us to worry that something is very wrong with our cognitive function. I find myself discussing this often with caregivers who are seriously concerned that they are literally “losing their mind.” It's a very valid concern, but the reality is that caregivers are under repeated stress, and there is a scientific cause for what is happening to their brain.

In an online article by Yuko Hara from December, 2018 in alzdiscovery.org she discusses a study published in “Neurology” which showed that higher blood levels of the stress hormone cortisol are associated with decreased cognitive function. So, when we are under stress, our cortisol level increases and can cause cognitive impairments. This is an acute condition and remedied by lowering our stress level. Other studies have shown similar results, but this was one of the largest with over 2,200 participants. The good news is that the condition is reversible. The CDC recommends eating healthy, exercising, and getting enough sleep. We often work with caregivers on self-care just for this reason. Worrying that you are experiencing cognitive problems is just adding more stress to an already difficult situation, and probably causing even more incidents of momentary mental lapse!



In Honor of April Fools Day,
please enjoy this clip from
one of my favorite shows,
Candid Camera!



April Fools

Some historians speculate that April Fools' Day dates back to 1582, when France switched from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar, as called for by the Council of Trent in 1563. In the Julian Calendar, as in the Hindu calendar, the new year began with the spring equinox around April 1. People who were slow to get the news or failed to recognize that the start of the new year had moved to January 1 and continued to celebrate it during the last week of March through April 1 became the butt of jokes and hoaxes and were called "April fools." These pranks included having paper fish placed on their backs and being referred to as "poisson d'avril" (April fish), said to symbolize a young, easily caught fish and a gullible person.

In modern times, people have gone to great lengths to create elaborate April Fools' Day hoaxes. Newspapers, radio and TV stations and websites have participated in the April 1 tradition of reporting outrageous fictional claims that have fooled their audiences. In 1957, the BBC reported that Swiss farmers were experiencing a record spaghetti crop and showed footage of people harvesting noodles from trees. In 1985, Sports Illustrated writer George Plimpton tricked many readers when he ran a made-up article about a rookie pitcher named Sidd Finch who could throw a fastball over 168 miles per hour.

In 1992, National Public Radio ran a spot with former President Richard Nixon saying he was running for president again... only it was an actor, not Nixon, and the segment was all an April Fools' Day prank that caught the country by surprise.

In 1996, Taco Bell, the fast-food restaurant chain, duped people when it announced it had agreed to purchase Philadelphia's Liberty Bell and intended to rename it the Taco Liberty Bell. In 1998, after Burger King advertised a "Left-Handed Whopper," scores of clueless customers requested the fake sandwich. Google notoriously hosts an annual April Fools' Day prank that has included everything from "telepathic search" to the ability to play Pac Man on Google Maps.



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CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

– VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS –

**Contact the facilitator for the
Zoom meeting link!**

1st Thursday of each month, 1:00—2:30 PM
Contact: Krystal Wiebusch 952-767-7899 or
k.wiebusch@seniorcommunity.org

3rd Thursday of each month, 4:30—6:00 PM
Contact: Lee Ann Eiden
952-934-3370 or l.eiden@seniorcommunity.org

– VIRTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS – Memory Loss Focus

**You are invited to attend one or more
of the following groups – just contact the
facilitator for an invitation via Zoom.**

1st Tuesday of each month, 1:30—3:00 PM
Contact: Lee Ann Eiden 952-934-3370
l.eiden@seniorcommunity.org

3rd Tuesday of each month, 10:00—11:30 AM
Contact: Lee Ann Eiden 952-934-3370
l.eiden@seniorcommunity.org

1st Thursday of each month, 1:30—3:30 PM
Contact: Lee Ann Eiden 952-934-3370
l.eiden@seniorcommunity.org

– IN-PERSON SUPPORT GROUPS –

**Please Contact the Facilitator in Advance,
as Circumstances May Change!**

Monticello Caregiver Support Group
2nd Wednesday of each month, 1:30– 3:00 PM
Contact: Becky Allard 952-746-4028 or
b.allard@seniorcommunity.org

Plymouth Caregiver Support Group
3rd Wednesday of each month, 10:00–11:30 AM
Contact: Becky Allard 952-746-4028 or
b.allard@seniorcommunity.org

Minnetonka Caregiver Support Group
2nd Thursday, of each month, 10-11:30 AM
Contact: Adele Mehta 952-767-7888 or
a.mehta@seniorcommunity.org

Crow River Caregiver Support Group
3rd Thursday of each month, 1:30 – 3:00 PM
Contact: Becky Allard 952-746-4028 or
b.allard@seniorcommunity.org

– VIRTUAL MEMORY CAFÉ – General Focus

**Please contact the facilitator
for attendance details**

3rd Wednesday of each month, 1:30 - 2:30 PM
Contact: Becky Allard 952-746-4028 or
b.allard@seniorcommunity.org

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For more information call us at 612-770-7005
Or visit our website www.seniorcommunity.org

