



## NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

### YOU ARE NOT ALONE.



BY STACEY RHODES —

*Adult Day Program Director  
Dementia Care Specialist*



St. John's offers a variety of assistance and programs for caregivers. Our Savvy Caregiver classes are a wealth of information about caring for someone with dementia or other related illnesses. Our support groups give caregivers the opportunity to connect with other caregivers, share their challenges, and lift their spirits. Our Stress Busting classes teach caregivers stress techniques to incorporate into their lives as they are trying to do it all. The most essential advice I can give to a caregiver is to take care of yourself!

When caregivers utilize the tips and strategies our staff offers, they are extremely appreciative and, sometimes, amazed they work. These 10 tips may be helpful in your daily caregiving journey.

- 1.** Adjust your expectations. Having unrealistic expectations can leave you exhausted, frustrated, and discouraged. Don't sweat the small stuff. Step back and take a breath!
- 2.** Focus on what your loved one can do and not what they can't do. Encourage independence while recognizing limitations. How can you make a task easier?

**3.** Remind yourself this is a brain disease. They aren't acting this way on purpose. Assist them in maintaining their dignity and feelings of self-worth.

**4.** All behaviors have meaning. They are trying to convey a message because they can't tell you with words. They may need to use the toilet, be experiencing pain, be bored, be hungry, distressed because it's too noisy, etc.

**5.** Stop and think before you react to your loved one's behaviors. What are they trying to tell you? What just happened to trigger this behavior? It's not always easy to figure it out.

**6.** Step into their world. Do not try to bring them back into our logical world. Trying to reason or argue with your loved one will only bring you frustration and disappointment.

**7.** Find ways to help your loved one feel empowered daily. Give them choices as to what to wear, eat, etc. Limit choices so as not to confuse them.

**8.** Live in the moment. Use humor.

**9.** Get comfortable with taking control. You will need to make decisions that you once made together.

**10.** Learn to cope with your own stress, anger, and frustrations. Caregiving is a roller coaster of emotions. Reach out to family, friends, and professionals. The most essential advice we give to a caregiver is to take care of yourself first. You need to be healthy, physically and mentally, so you are at your best to care for your loved one.

As you read through these 10 tips, you will immediately relate to some of them. Others may make you feel uncomfortable or thinking, "how do I do that?" If you would like to discuss these tips further, contact our office. Consider joining our support groups or caregiver classes. You are not alone. St. John's is ready to assist you.

The Corner Of-  
Report



Nancy Berry, MHA  
Executive Director

# What Next

## Where do I start?

What do I say after hoping you are weathering this crisis well and assuring you that St. John's Community Care is doing what we can to support our families remotely? Lives all around our world changed almost overnight and the future is impossible to predict with any certainty. It is a time which is testing our faith.

## I try to remind myself that

**Our future has always been uncertain, but most of us assume life will go on as we've planned.**

**Worry accomplishes nothing other than wasting time and energy.**

**I need to focus on doing what I can and supporting those around me.**

**As a Christian, I say I trust in God, so why am I so anxious?**

So, what do I need to communicate with you – someone who cares about St. John's Community Care and our mission of empowering caregiving families to live their best possible lives?

## We are still here for you!

Because we all must shelter at home, much has changed, but we

Are calling our Adult Day Program families to offer them advice, connect them to other resources like home-delivered meals, and ease their isolation a bit.

Using Zoom to hold support groups.

Providing many helpful ideas and resources for

caregivers on a new page on our website. (Check it out! Many of the videos and ideas are valuable for anyone.)

Working to continue Memory Cafes and other activities virtually.

## We will still be here after the crisis is past.

There is no doubt things will be different in some ways, but our leadership is committed to assuring our ministries will survive this tough time. Our Board has

Continued to pay all our employees to assure they will be ready to care for our Adult Day Participants when we can reopen safely. (We could not do that without trained staff.)

Received a Paycheck Protection Program loan to cover eight more weeks of keeping staff employed.

Held special meetings to evaluate the impact of the situation on our financial reserves.

## We need your support now more than ever.

We had to close our Adult Day Centers on March 17 when the Illinois Department on Aging closed centers throughout the state. 80% of our revenue comes from Adult Day fees.

As I write this, we have paid our staff for five weeks which will not be covered by our Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan. Keeping our staff employed is the right thing to do but it has depleted our limited cash reserves.

We do not yet know when we will be allowed to open again, or if there will be limits on the number of participants we can welcome to each site. We need to average at least 17 participants per day to cover our expenses.

One of our Board members told me that he plans to make his annual donation now rather than at year-end as he knows we need his support now. If you have not been impacted financially by the COVID-19 emergency, I urge you to share your blessings with St. John's Community Care with a gift – through our website or by using the enclosed donation envelope. *(Remember, you can claim a \$300 donation on this year's taxes, whether or not you itemize.)*

**Thank you for being here for St. John's!**



**Gail Shaw**  
**Coordinator of**  
**Training & Support**  
**Dementia Care Specialist**

## *Coping with Caregiver Stress*

As the family caregiver, are you feeling angry, sad and overwhelmed? Maybe even feeling burned out from all the decision making and the

increasing hands-on care your loved one is now requiring. Then on top of it all, are you finding it increasingly hard to make time for yourself?

If you are, then you are not alone or wrong in what you're feeling. Those who are not caregiving don't always understand the stress that the caregiver is under while on the journey of caring for one with a dementia. The stress creeps up on the caregiver slowly and then becomes all consuming.

Caregivers are experiencing a lot of losses. They could be dealing with losses in the areas of income, personal, health, emotional and relationships. The term "hidden widowhood" is used to explain the caregiver's complete loss of the marriage relationship while the child caregiver is experiencing the loss of the parent they used to know.

Loss and grieving go hand in hand because the natural reaction to loss is grief. The grief that a caregiver experiences can affect their thoughts, emotions and physical well-being. It is not uncommon that their health will be impacted.

Grieving and stress can go together. Stress may make grieving worse. When a caregiver is unable to accept the changes associated with caregiving, then their stress will be increased. The caregiver feeling too much stress then will have

problems handling the challenges they face daily.

One way to look at grieving is using "The Grief Wheel" model. This model shows an individual starting off in a normal state. A loss occurs which has the individual dealing with shock, numbness, denial, disbelief, hysteria, and the inability to think straight. They then find themselves protesting this loss with feelings of severe anger, guilt, sadness, fear, yearning, and searching. They will move on to what is described as disorganization. Here the individual deals with overwhelming bleakness, depression, despair, apathy, anxiety, and confusion. The last stage takes the individual to reorganization. The individual is gradually returning to normal functioning but feels differently. The Grief Wheel model has them now resuming a normal state which is described as the "new normal".

St. John's Community Care is offering an evidence-based program called "Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers" which helps the caregiver who is experiencing feelings of anger, sadness, burn out, being overwhelmed, or just simply feeling stressed. The class meets for 90 minutes, one time a week, for 9 weeks. This program helps a caregiver to understand what they are going through in a way that is educational, fun and enlightening with a small group of others on this same journey. A variety of stress management techniques are reviewed to assist with coping due to losses, grief and depression. Individuals share their stories of challenges and the ups and downs of being a caregiver. The group members find comradery and support for what they are doing right or for the willingness to change and to accept a new normal.

# STRESS BUSTING

AgeSmart Community Resources underwrites the Stress Busting program with funds granted through the Administration for Community Living and Illinois Department on Aging. AgeSmart is our local Area Agency on Aging and promotes healthy aging by providing information and resources people need to age well their own way.

If you or someone you know is having a hard time dealing with all the feelings and expectations of caregiving, call St. John's Community Care to sign up for the "Stress-Busting Program for Family Caregivers". Caregivers will always have stressors in their lives. Being able to implement knowledge, tools and a variety of ways to deal with the stress can help bring some much-needed relief. You will end up being more effective and in control of dealing with your own loss, grief and depression.

# FAITHFUL SUPPORTERS

Because of your donations, St. John's can welcome new families to monthly support groups, say "yes" to hundreds of families each year who ask to borrow medical equipment, reduce stress and anxiety of family caregivers who attend our workshops and classes, and bring smiles and laughter into the lives of elders whose challenges have isolated them from old friends and lifelong activities. Your gifts connect your heart to the hearts of elders and their families through St. John's. Donations listed are from 1/1/20 through 3/13/20. Any donations after 3/13/20 will be acknowledged in the next newsletter.

## DONORS

Raymond & Bonnie Bean  
Nancy Berry  
Steve & Sandra Cseley  
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Kent & Faith Holsinger  
Norb & Linda Kniepp  
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Debi Ralston  
Paul Schutz  
Sherry Skelton  
Dean & Michelle VanDyke  
David & Diane Vogler  
Beverly Woodruff

## MEMORIALS

**Lena Fults**  
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Anonymous  
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Joyce Brendle  
John & Emma Johnson  
Randy & Barb Ziegler  
  
**Lois Schoeber**  
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Gary & Karen Langley  
Eldon Schoeber  
  
**William Metzger**  
Lois Metzger  
  
**Cindi Reagan**  
Todd Sanders  
  
**Frank Wasiski**  
Pauline Wasiski



Thank you to our board members who participated in baking and delivering 22 dozen homemade chocolate chip cookies made with love from Lois' recipe. Cookie packages were delivered to giving society members to honor Lois' birthday in February.

Love from  
Lois

This is the first of the Love from Lois Giving Society, in honor and memory of Lois Schoeber. Lois served on our board for two terms, was a member of our Finance

Committee, and gave generously of both her time and treasure to support our ministries. She was especially adamant about the need to continue and expand programs to help families cope with challenging caregiving situations. Our current fund-raising is focusing on the needs of those programs. If you would like more information about the Love from Lois Giving Society, please call 344-5008.

"Enclosing my donation, in appreciation for the good times she enjoyed in the adult day care program. It was the last place she danced."  
Larry

## **HELP US BE HERE WHEN YOU NEED US!**

*Would you or your business like to sponsor or help to underwrite a program at St. John's? Call us to discuss the options!*



Want to be more environmentally friendly? Sign up to get our E-News to receive the St. John's newsletter and other updates and important information.

E-mail us at [info@stjohnscc.org](mailto:info@stjohnscc.org) and let us know to add your email and remove your address from the mailed version.

**Thanks to Sheila Barlock for her many contributions to our ministries.**

Sheila joined St. John's as a Home Services Caregiver in 1991 when we were a young organization. She was always popular with our clients, and for good reason. She is dependable, capable, and caring. She left us in 2008 when her husband became pastor of a church several counties away. We were delighted when they moved back to Granite City in 2014 and she applied to work for us again. She said, "I've worked for several organizations, and St. John's is the best place to work. I've had great supervisors here."



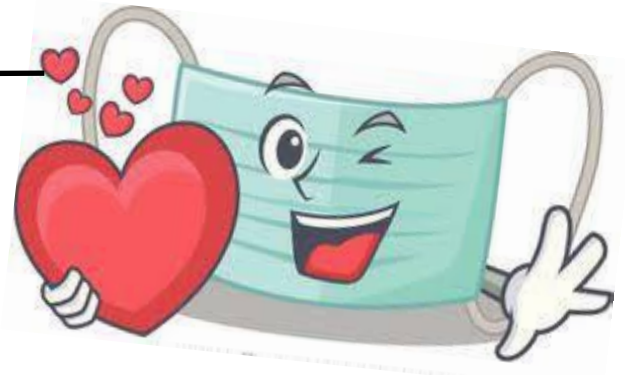
After resuming her role with Home Services for a few months, she moved to our Collinsville Adult Day Center where her cheerful personality and patient ways made her a favorite there, too. As she and her husband celebrate 50 years of marriage, they decided it is time for her to retire.

***Congratulations and thank you, Sheila.***

Thank you to our generous friends who made in-kind gifts to our Adult Day

Jennifer Adams	stuffed animals
Rae Price	greeting cards
Judy Mentz	notepads and bingo prizes
Mary Bethel	nursing supplies
Shelby Chapman	sugar free candy
Rae Lee Brill	cake mixes and frosting, kitchen towels
Carol Kelso	kitchen hot pads
Marie Ruth	5 large tins of flavored popcorn
Mary Kay Lype	cake mixes and frosting
Pam Knobloch	cake mixes
Heidi Bailey	cookies
Jane Schoeber	cookies
Jan Scanlan	craft supplies

**"My husband enjoyed the Brain Wave classes and now enjoys the Adult Day Center."**



**St. John's is ON-LINE!**

**Like us on Facebook or check the website at [www.stjohnscc.org](http://www.stjohnscc.org) for current up-to-date events and program information.**



**Our CHAT line on St. John's Community Care website is now available to you.**

## **CORONA VIRUS RESOURCE PAGE**

**BY MISSY ATHMER,**

*Marketing Director*

Many of you already know about our website [www.stjohnscc.org](http://www.stjohnscc.org).

We update the site regularly with events and program information. With the recent stay at home mandate, we thought we should offer some helpful information to ease the isolation effects for people and especially for those caring for a loved one. We created a Corona Virus Resource Page on the website and we hope you check it out.

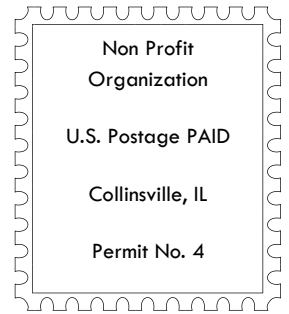
The page is dedicated to health and wellness information, activities, and general informational links to help you cope better. We hope you find the resources relevant and helpful. If you have a suggestion for a topic or link for us to include, just email me at [mathmer@stjohnscc.org](mailto:mathmer@stjohnscc.org).

**Call for Calm – text TALK to 552-020 to have a mental health professional call you.**

**COVID diagnosis hotline for Southern Illinois 833-673-5669**

# ST. JOHN'S COMMUNITY CARE

222 Goethe Avenue  
Collinsville, IL 62234  
Phone: 618-344-5008



## ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Email: [info@stjohnscc.org](mailto:info@stjohnscc.org)  
[www.stjohnscc.org](http://www.stjohnscc.org)  
618-344-5008

**An outreach ministry of:**  
**St. John UCC**  
**Mailing permit address:**  
**307 West Clay**  
**Collinsville, IL 62234**



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## CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUPS

St. John's support groups provide opportunities for families and friends to discuss their concerns and uncertainties, as well as find resources to help regain a sense of balance and hope. We also provide information about helpful coping techniques and resources to make your job as caregiver a little less stressful. The sessions allow you to listen and discuss common issues with the group, leaving you with more understanding and a sense that you are not alone. There is no charge to attend. These meetings will be conducted online via Zoom group meetings until further notice. **Groups will resume in-person meetings when possible.**

**Alzheimer's Support Group**  
Tues., May 12, June 9, July 14  
1:30—3:00 p.m.

If you would like to join the Zoom group meeting online please email [gshaw@stjohnscc.org](mailto:gshaw@stjohnscc.org) by May 7. She will send you the instructions and invitation to join the meeting.

Join others dealing with dementia and memory loss 2nd Tuesday of each month.

**Family Caregiver Support Group**  
Wed., May 13, June 10, July 8  
6:00 p.m.

If you would like to join the Zoom group meeting online please email [srhodes@stjohnscc.org](mailto:srhodes@stjohnscc.org) She will send you instructions and invitation to join the meeting.

Intended for family caregivers caring for loved ones with any type of disability held the 2nd Wednesday of every month.