

Spokane Area

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

Biannual Newsletter

Vol. 1 Issue No. 1 - January, 2022



Our Story

The **Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (DFC)** has been making a community effort to foster quality of life for people living with dementia in our region since 2018. A dementia friendly community is a town, city, or county that is respectful toward and informed about individuals with the disease, their families, and their caregivers. Because the number of Washingtonians living with dementia will continue to increase, our community needs to collaborate to make Spokane County a better place for people living with dementia.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Please enjoy the first issue of the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community Newsletter!

We look forward to releasing a biannual newsletter to keep the Spokane area updated on our community efforts.

If you or a loved one is suffering from memory loss, we are here for you. Please reach out to us at dementia@altcew.org if you have questions or need support.

—*Savannah Reams-Taylor*

Check out our website for more resources and information!
[Click Here](#)





MESSAGE FROM OUR DFC

~Next Steps Toward a More Dementia Friendly Spokane County~

As we write this column for the first **Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (Spokane Area DFC)** newsletter, we are excited to share two pieces of terrific news. Both are certain to accelerate our shared work on behalf of people living with dementia, their family care partners, and our community as a whole.

First, the Spokane Area DFC Action Team received a draft copy of its 36-month Action Plan during its October 2021 meeting. This plan is the direct result of the Dementia Needs Assessment Survey conducted during the autumn months in 2020. During April of 2021, the community offered

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Dementia Friendly America

The **Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community** is a member of the **Dementia Friendly America®** network sharing in a common mission of fostering dementia friendly communities throughout the US.

Dementia Friendly America® is a multi-sector, national collaborative on a mission to foster communities that are equipped to support people living with dementia and their family and friend care partners by working to become “dementia friendly.”

Dementia Friendly America, is taking an all-sectors approach to equipping communities in becoming dementia friendly and has

developed resources that can help all parts of a community effectively support people living with dementia.

Each and every part of the community can work towards becoming dementia friendly. As each sector takes its own steps to foster support, a community that is informed, safe and respectful emerges to foster quality of life for those living with dementia and their care partners.

If you would like to learn more about Dementia Friendly America and their initiative, head to the following link.

<https://www.dfamerica.org/>



(Message from our DFC, Continued from Page 2)

feedback to the survey results during two Zoom meetings. This feedback was integral to the development of the 36-month plan that was written across the summer months. In its January 2022 meeting, the Action Team will consider suggestions for implementation of this plan that will guide our work between 1/1/2022 and 12/31/2024.

Second, in July, Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW) received two-year funding from the State of Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to pilot “Building Dementia Capable Communities” on the east side of the Cascades. A distinct emphasis of this funding is the addition of a **Dementia Resource Catalyst** staff position. Long-time ALTCEW Case Manager **Teri Koski** was recently promoted into this position.

In her work, Teri will collaborate with community partners to:

- Provide training for ALTCEW staff and aging network partners.
- Act as a catalyst in developing community connections and resources to create and sustain Dementia Friendly Communities.
- Assist people living with dementia by providing education for groups about dementia care and services, and by developing community services, resources and volunteers.

Additionally, this funding will provide new and expanded dementia-capable direct services to address the needs of:

- Early-stage programming.
- Specialized supports that promote safety and/or help manage behaviors.
- Services to address complex needs.
- Culturally accessible dementia-capable services to support tribal members.

Some of these new and expanded services will be provided by two additional staff persons whose hiring was made possible by this funding. **Dawn Matlock**, ALTCEW’s new **Dementia Care Specialist** will build upon work already begun within Community Living Connections. **Cyndi Cook** joins the Alzheimer’s Association as **Community Outreach Manager**. In her work, Cyndi will work to recruit and expand the Alzheimer’s Association’s volunteer base to provide additional supports for people living with dementia and their family care partners. Additionally, across the two-year period, services and supports will expand into the Tri-County region and Whitman County.

Our sincere thanks to all who have put their shoulder to the wheel as part of the Spokane Area DFC across the past many months. There is a place for many more to join in the effort. Please see volunteer opportunities described on page 7 in this newsletter.

With Warm Regards,

Mark Haberman and Joel Loiacono

(Spokane Area DFC Co-Chairs)

The Role of the Built Environment

By: Bob Scarfo, PhD, Landscape Architect

The built environment plays a major role in the health, wellbeing, and dignity of people living with dementia and that of their caregivers. Given that most of us spend 99% of our lives in built environments — homes, hospitals, government buildings, grocery stores, schools, play areas and the like — the role of the built environment is at least equal to, if not more influential, in how people live in a dementia-friendly, inclusive community than the in-home services they receive.

Yes, that is a bold statement. But as a landscape architect involved in healthy-living and aging-in-place environments for 40 years, that statement is one that can be backed up with a growing body of research and writing from countries around the world.

The critical role of the built environment in the greater public's health and welfare was nationally recognized in July 1990 with the enactment of The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Since then, homes, healthcare facilities, neighborhoods, town and city centers, and various forms of transportation have become increasingly accessible to individuals with physical disabilities. One outcome has been environments that increasingly support people with physical disabilities in living where they want and accessing needed services, forms of recreation and education, and freely enjoying social lives as simple and yet wonderful as going to a party, concert, play, or restaurant.

The ADA contributed to communities becoming more inclusive, but with a caveat. They have become more



inclusive for people living with physical disabilities and not dementia. However, fortunately, over the past 6 years the country and, more recently, Spokane has been working to be truly inclusive. This broader understanding of inclusion finds a growing sensitivity throughout the community to the needs of people living with intellectual and developmental disabilities, e.g., dementia, autism, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

As a designer and advocate of communities being as inclusive as possible, I was excited with the 2015 formation of Dementia Friendly America (DFA). I saw organizations quickly recognizing and providing the kinds of services that would enable people living with

dementia to live longer in their homes and communities. My excitement continued to grow as I saw national and local organizations and professional designers realize the importance of good design for people living with dementia (see <https://designdignitydementia.com/>)

Recognized under various banners, the advocating for needed changes to built environments that foster and support one's freedom to live where they want, sustain their individuality by being able to access their community, and the dignity to sustain a degree of control over one's life has become a global movement. See The World Alzheimer 2020 Report: Design, Dignity, Dementia <file:///C:/Users/Owner/Downloads/WorldAlzheimerReport2020Vol1.pdf>

As Dementia Friendly Spokane grows and touches more people's lives, I look forward to a balance between the promotion and the offering of the kinds of services and built environment changes that enable people living with dementia to remain in their community while engaging and thriving in day-to-day living.

OUR VISION

CREATE A DEMENTIA

FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

IN EASTERN, WA



Helpful Resources:

- [Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington](#)
- [Alzheimer's Association](#)
- [Community Living Connections](#)
- [Dementia Friends](#)
- [Dementia Friendly America](#)
- [Providence ElderPlace](#)
- [Providence Health & Services](#)
- [COVIA Well Connected](#)
- [WA State Dementia Roadmap](#)
- [Additional Spokane Resources](#)

All resources provided can be found at the Spokane Area DFC's webpage:

[Click Here](#)



Dementia Friendly Spokane and Spokane Symphony Connections

By: Bruce Dentler, MD, Long Term Care Ombudsman

Music is a significant and meaningful way to maintain a connection with persons living with dementia. A way to visualize this is to watch the YouTube video of **Marta Gonzalez**. She now has advanced dementia but earlier in her life she was a prima ballerina in Spain. She is now quite feeble and frail but, as she listens to the music of Tchaikovsky's ballet Swan Lake, her eyes become alert and vivid and she can repeat the arm movements of her past ballet performance. The music can reanimate people living with dementia who can respond with lyrics and emotion and even dance moves as they reexperience that music. This can occur because music memory is stored in different areas of the brain than speech and cognition, which are more severely affected in persons living with dementia, especially Alzheimer's Disease.

The Spokane Area Friendly Community Activities Subcommittee was looking for ways that could be promoted so that people living with dementia and their primary caregivers could avail themselves of some of Spokane's cultural and arts treasures that so many of the rest of us enjoy.

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Musical offerings and concerts are some of our best community assets. People living with dementia and their caregivers are not likely to attend and enjoy musical events because there is too much crowd stimulation, which creates anxiety, and too much prolonged sitting.

Jan Abrams made the connection to this idea and made a great suggestion in May, 2021, when we were still not having live concerts in Spokane. Ms. Abrams serves on the advisory board of Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington and she is also a member of the Spokane Symphony Associates. Ms. Abrams suggested that we (Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community Activities Subcommittee) reach out to James Lowe, the recently appointed Music Director of the Spokane Symphony.

James Lowe resides in Scotland and travels to Spokane to rehearse and direct the Spokane Symphony performances and community activities throughout the year. With COVID throughout the world affecting travel between countries and live concerts suspended, there have been no Symphony offerings. Mr. Lowe has a particular interest in music and its connection to persons living with dementia and Jan Abrams was aware of that fact. She said, “Why don’t you reach out and see what collaboration might be possible?”

Mr. Lowe was contacted by members of the Activities Subcommittee in July and was immediately receptive to the idea of participation of the Symphony in enriching the lives of persons living with dementia and their caregivers in the community. After several emails back and forth, an in-person meeting in September occurred between Mr. Lowe and the Symphony administration team members, **Alexandra Rannow** and **Jan Ager Karel**, and three of our members of the Activities Subcommittee. Very quickly it was agreed that the Spokane Symphony organization would make available, free-of-charge, virtual access through their streaming services the Master Concert series of the Spokane Symphony. These performances are usually only available through subscription services but can now be accessed in the individual homes and in group activity settings (dementia support groups) for Spokane area persons living with dementia and their caregivers. This service has been on-going since November. It has been well received in the community.

Thank you James Lowe and the Spokane Symphony.



**JOIN THE MOVEMENT
TO BECOME A
DEMENTIA FRIEND!**



A **Dementia Friend** is someone who, through viewing a series of online videos or attending a live interactive session, learns about what it’s like to live with dementia and then **turns that understanding into action**. From telling friends about the Dementia Friends program to visiting someone who is living with dementia, every action counts!

There Are More Than 103,000 Dementia Friends Across the Country. Will you be a dementia friend?

If you are interested in learning more, head to the following webpage, or email dementia@altcew.org.

<https://www.altcew.org/become-a-dementia-friend/>

VOLUNTEER CORNER

The Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) is made up of collaborative partners seeking to ensure that our region is equipped to support people living with dementia and their care partners.

We count on our volunteers to lead the important work we do in our community.

Our volunteers meet monthly to support the initiative (all meetings are currently held via Zoom). Their primary role is to advocate for people living with dementia and their care partners. Volunteers additionally work on generating and implementing structures that enable people living with dementia to remain in the community, engage, and thrive.

There are several volunteer opportunities with our team:

- *Marketing & Communications Subcommittee:* This subcommittee works to generate marketing materials for the Spokane Area DFC. Our hope is to spread awareness about the work that we do, engage the community, and help people living with dementia access available resources and community supports.
- *Work Groups Supporting our 36-month Action Plan:* Three work groups work to advance priority areas of the recently completed 36-month Action Plan. Work groups will meet approximately monthly, currently by Zoom. Individuals from a variety of backgrounds are needed. We have a particular interest in people living with dementia and their family care partners.

Please email us at dementia@altcew.org if you are interested in volunteering. We will connect you to the right people!



WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS AND FAREWELL TO OLD!



Welcome Anessa Boyer!



I am brand new to **ALTCEW** and very happy to be here! I joined the team in January 2022 as the **Planning Coordinator**. In this position I will be involved in *(Continued on Page 8)*

(Volunteers, Continued from Page 7)

the activities subcommittee. I love Spokane and wanted a role where I could really be involved in the community. I have a Master of Public Administration, but was previously working for supportive housing in more of a client-facing role, so this is a bit of a change for me. I'm looking forward to this professional challenge and the opportunity for growth that this new role will provide, and I am extremely excited to jump in and get started.

In my free time I enjoy reading true crime and memoirs, spending time in nature and with animals, and visiting new places. My partner and I are expecting our first baby in March of 2022; a son, who will be named Koda.

Welcome Dawn Matlock!



Dawn Matlock started working at **Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington** as the **Dementia Care Specialist** on 11/29/2021. In this position she will be volunteering with the Spokane Area DFC and will help with the important work done by this group. She will find her place into one of the committees and looks forward to increasing her knowledge of resources available and improve support for those with dementia.

Dawn's background experience includes providing recreation therapy, diversional activities, and providing support for older adults and people living with dementia.

In addition to her work, Dawn enjoys gardening, reading, traveling, and getting to know people.

Welcome Teri Koski!



Teri Koski joined **Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington's** Planning & Resource Team on 9/20/2021 as the new **Dementia Resource Catalyst**. In this position she will be volunteering with the Spokane Area DFC. Teri's position is a new community facing position within Aging & Long Term Care to work on the responsibilities generated from the assessment survey in the autumn of 2020. Teri took this position because she has a passion for learning more about brain disorders. "I have past career experience working with those with mental health disorders, and I wanted to work within that same category of brain disorders but with something new." This program gave Teri the chance to utilize her skills, education, and experience in a new way.

Teri greatly enjoys being part of a team that develops new and innovative ways of doing things. "I spent eight years volunteering with our Spokane NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) chapter. I started as a regular volunteer and ended my time as the Board President. I enjoyed the experience thoroughly and I learned some life changing lessons along the way. I also have fifteen years of experience as a case manager to elderly and disabled individuals whose primary income is Medicaid/Medicare. I very much enjoyed learning from my clients over the years. I have a Master's in Public Administration and a Bachelors in Social Services. This position just seemed like a great fit."

In Teri's free time, she enjoys doing DIY home improvement projects on her 1904 Farmhouse, riding motorcycles with her girlfriend, spending time with her friends, and doing new and fun things."

Welcome Cyndi Cook!

Cyndi Cook started working at the **NE Washington Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association** on 1/3/2022 as a **Community Outreach Manager**. She will be supporting the work of the Spokane Area DFC in her position and looks forward to this work. She will be joining the Community Engagement Committee but will be contributing wherever the team needs her.



Cyndi comes to the team with experience in community resources, programs, and social services from her 20+ years of non-profit experience. During her career she worked with the Northwest Parkinson's Community as the Director of the Parkinson's Resource Center, Providence as a Community Relations Coordinator for their local Assisted Living Community, and at the EWU Hearing and Speech Clinic. Some of her experience also comes from being a family caregiver, taking care of her family at times and her father. Cyndi believes in aging in place if possible and providing resources, assistance, and respect to those who need that help.

In her volunteer work with the Spokane Area DFC, Cyndi wants to learn how to take her current knowledge and grow and adapt it to support the communities she will be helping to serve. She is very excited to utilize her experiences to help those affected by Alzheimer's, Dementia, and related conditions.

In addition to her work and volunteering, Cyndi enjoys being outside in the forests. Finding streams in the forest in Spring, Summer, and Fall, but playing in the snow in the Winter. She loves painting, crafting, reading, and watching movies. She also enjoys going on road trips, traveling, and visiting her family.

Farewell Cindy Fine!

During my time with the Dementia Friendly Community, I really appreciated the chance to get to know the other people who were involved with the project. The collective wisdom of the group is amazing! It was exciting to be able to be involved in the beginning steps of the project and be a part of the growth and development of the group.



As the daughter and granddaughter of women who have had dementia, this work is very personal for me. Learning about memory loss and increasing my knowledge and skills has changed my perspective of the disease and I'm grateful for that.

As the **Master Champion for Dementia Friends** in Eastern WA, I am proud that we provided information session to more than 140 people – each of them changing the way people think, act, and talk about dementia.

We know that the increasing numbers of older people living with memory loss will be a strain to our already-struggling healthcare system. While there is promising research, for most of us looking ahead to care for our aging parents, or for ourselves, the grassroots work of the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community offers connection to the best resources the community can offer. I'd encourage anyone with an interest in the topic to take part, as a Dementia Friend or possibly as a volunteer in a larger role. The work is necessary and meaningful.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." -Margaret Mead

Farewell Janet and Alan Tarbutton!



The Spokane Area DFC would like to thank Janet and Allen Tarbutton for volunteering with us! We wish you well on your next adventure and hope you enjoy your new home! You both have been an integral part of our team and have made impactful contributions.

During Janet's time volunteering, she greatly enjoyed meeting individuals with passion, commitment, and a wealth of knowledge regarding memory loss. "It let me see how this journey isn't about navigating alone." Janet primarily volunteered on the Action Committee, and contributed guidance about what caregivers struggle with, what memory loss looks like, and the many hurdles.

One of the biggest things Janet learned through the Spokane Area DFC, was about local resources. "I have had many of my concerns and questions answered and guidance as to where I need to go and who to talk with. I am so happy to see that Spokane is tackling this serious issue with results! Thank you for the positive outlook for the future."

Janet's final piece of advice for other volunteers is "Be active and advocate for your loved one. Also, it is not selfish to have self-care on a regular basis."

Farewell Shannon Groesbeeck!



I am an **Applied Health major with Brigham Young University- Idaho** and an **intern with ALTCEW**. My goal is to receive my bachelor's degree next year and work in health education and health promotions. I applied for an internship position with ALTCEW earlier this year when I saw it posted on my school's social media site from a former intern student. I have experience with Alzheimer's from taking care of my father-in-law with my husband for over eight years. I felt that I could possibly contribute to ALTCEW's efforts. Since working with ALTCEW, I have had the opportunity to be introduced to many people who are giving their time to help make the community of Spokane, Washington dementia friendly.

I have been able to gain skills not only in group communications and program evaluations that will strengthen and bring resources to ALTCEW, but also contribute to marketing, communications, and being able to bring my personal experiences to the group as well. I have never worked in marketing before, so this was a new challenge for me. I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn and to see how much is needed to create such successful materials for each aspect of ALTCEW. It is about all the thoughtful programs and information that are offered to assist the residents of Spokane, Washington and the fine details that brings everything together.

I feel so fortunate to have been a part of this wonderful community. This internship has been a great learning experience, and I have incorporated the research that I have learned about Alzheimer's and Dementia to be able to help others who may be facing the disease and their own challenges. We learn by example. I have had great examples at ALTCEW to help me endeavor in my next steps.