

Spokane Area

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

Biannual Newsletter

Vol. 1 Issue No. 2 - August, 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

Welcome to the summer issue of the Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community Newsletter!

Enjoy this issue for a variety of committee updates, helpful resources, upcoming dementia programs, and tips on supporting someone living with dementia during the summer heat.

—*Savannah Reams-Taylor*

SADFC Website: [Click Here](#)

CLC Helpline: 509-960-7281

Alzheimer's Association

24/7 Helpline:

1-800-272-3900





MESSAGE FROM OUR DFC

~ Spokane Area DFC Update ~

As we released the first issue of the Spokane Area DFC Community Newsletter, we had just developed our team's 36-month Action Plan to help guide the work of our committee until December of 2024. Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW) had also received two-year funding from the State of Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to pilot the "Building Dementia Capable communities" program on the east side of the Cascades. As we write this column six months later, we are excited to share updates and progress on both pieces of work.

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How to Support Somebody Living With Dementia in Hot Weather

Warm weather is a chance to enjoy parks, gardens, and outdoor spaces. But the heat can also cause discomfort and a risk of dehydration. Dehydration is a common challenge for older adults, especially people living with memory loss. Alzheimer's and dementia means someone can easily forget to drink enough water, and can also cause a number of changes in the brain and body that may affect their safety, including changes in sensitivity to temperatures. If you have a loved one living with dementia, here are some ways to help them feel more relaxed and less overwhelmed when the temperatures soar.

Make a plan to regularly check in on a person living with memory loss during extreme heat and arrange alternative plans for cooler spaces if air conditioning is unavailable. Pay attention at night, and prepare for behavioral changes such as agitation or confusion triggered by physical needs related to the heat.

Here are some simple but effective ways of helping to prevent dehydration during hot weather:

- Place glasses or bottles of water within reach, especially for people with limited mobility who can't get themselves a drink.
- Make drinking easier! Have a clear glass so the person can see what's inside or a brightly colored cup to draw attention. Make sure the glass is within the line of sight, that it is suitable (not too heavy or an odd shape), and straws might be a good idea.
- Make sure they're drinking during mealtimes. Share a drink or popsicle together!
- Leave reminders such as notes around the house, a phone reminder, or set an alarm clock.
- Provide high-water-content foods such as jelly, ice cream, soup, and fruit such as melon.

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(Message from our DFC, Continued from Page 2)

36—Month Action Plan: Five task groups have been created to implement this plan and work on the identified community needs (increasing: awareness of the 10 warning signs of dementia, awareness of resources, skills of those interacting with people living with dementia, skills of physicians, and the built community). Each task group has started making progress towards these goals but is still in the initial phases of work. More updates will be coming in the next newsletter!

Building Dementia Capable Communities Pilot Program: **Teri Koski**, Dementia Resource Catalyst at ALTCEW, has started developing a comprehensive dementia training program. Currently, a variety of trainings on memory loss are being offered for mid-level professionals and those who provide direct assistance to people living with dementia. Trainings are being offered at ALTCEW and a handful of select organizations, and will be offered to additional groups in the near future. **Dawn Matlock**, Community Living Connections (CLC) Dementia Care Specialist, has been expanding the CLC efforts to grow our agency's database to include more dementia care resources and provide a comprehensive system of support for people living with dementia. Individuals can reach Dawn Mon – Fri, 8:30 AM – 5 PM through the CLC helpline at 509-960-7281.

Finally, a recent transition of leadership occurred when **Mark Haberman**, ALTCEW Planning & Resource Director and Spokane Area DFC Co-Chair, retired and **Bethany Osgood** stepped into this position. Please join us in wishing Mark a farewell and welcoming Bethany into her new role! You can learn more about both individuals by reading their intro and exit interviews on page 9.

As our efforts progress, we look forward to sharing updates with the community through this newsletter. A huge thank you to all of our volunteers who have worked together on this community effort. If interested in learning about volunteer opportunities, see page 6 to learn more.

With Warm Regards,

The Spokane Area Dementia Friendly Community

Dementia Friendly America

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

DFA is Celebrating Their 7th Anniversary!

This summer we are celebrating Dementia Friendly America's 7th anniversary! "We are so thrilled by the growth and accomplishments of the DFA network over the past seven years. We're so grateful for the more than 350 DFA communities across 41 states and there are more than 119,000 Dementia Friends across the country!" If you would like to learn more about Dementia Friendly America and their initiative, head to the following link: www.dfamerica.org.

(Hot Weather, Continued from Page 2)

How to recognize dehydration:

If you spot any of the following signs that may show a person is dehydrated, encourage the person to drink water immediately and seek medical help, if needed. If the condition worsens or doesn't improve, go straight to the hospital.

- Increased confusion (compared to typical dementia symptoms)
- Not urinating very often (fewer than four times a day) , dark and strong-smelling urine
- Dry mouth, lips and eyes, dry hot skin
- Headaches or dizziness
- Feeling tired
- Unable to swallow easily

More tips to help people with dementia keep cool in hot weather:

1. Help the person dress appropriately—If someone with dementia is dressing themselves, they might follow their usual routine and forget to dress for the weather. Light-colored, loose-fitting clothes made from natural fibers and a hat or cap for outside are good ideas.
2. Keep the house cool—If you live without fans or air conditioning, open windows to allow air flow, and keep shades or curtains drawn in the hottest part of the day or when in direct sunlight. Do not use a fan when the air temperature is above 95 degrees because blowing such hot air can add to heat stress .
3. Avoid the hottest part of the day—Limit time outdoors or plan activities for cooler times of the day. This is even more important for people living with dementia. When you're out, seek out plenty of shade. Keep a bottle of sunscreen on you, and make sure it's reapplied regularly.
4. Find ways to keep cool—If someone with dementia is hot, help them take a cool bath or shower. You could place a washcloth and some iced water nearby, so they can dab themselves when they need to.
5. Ask friends or neighbors to check in—If you don't live near the person or are worried, ask a friend or neighbor to check in to make sure they're ok. They could stay and have a glass of water with the person and make sure they have what they need.

Local Spokane Resources:

- ⇒ [SNAP](#) is providing air conditioner repairs and free fans.
- ⇒ For information on cooling centers and extreme heat, visit the Spokane Regional Health District's website: [Extreme Heat Overview and Basics](#).
- ⇒ To learn about symptoms of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and how to treat it, visit the Spokane Regional Health District's website: [Guidance for Outdoor Activities in Excessive Heat](#) .
- ⇒ Check out [Spokane Regional Health District's "Smoke Ready Week" blog](#) on keeping yourself and others safe during wildfire season to prevent illness and stay healthy.
- ⇒ You can find additional resources on extreme heat at ready.gov/heat.
- ⇒ Information on hot weather safety and wildfires can be found at the [Department of Health's severe weather and natural disasters webpage](#).

Joy for All robotic pets

By: Teri Koski, Dementia Resource Catalyst

Joy for All robotic pets are assistive devices that offer comfort and companionship for anyone experiencing changes in how their brain works. I learned about the animals as a tool for individuals affected by dementia, but they could also be suitable for people with developmental delays, mental health diagnoses, trauma survivors, or anyone that would like the comfort of a pet but can't—or doesn't want to care for one.

The pets are a product of Ageless Innovation and began with the goal of inspiring adults to “play”. After interest in the robotic pets became widespread, ten separate independent studies were done to measure the efficacy of the pets in reducing loneliness and social isolation, and how they supported individuals with dementia and their caregivers. All of the studies found common threads of success across the board. The pets not only reduced feelings of loneliness and isolation, they also assisted in reducing difficult behaviors, improved cognitive activity, and helped the individuals feel a sense of purpose.

The pets have sensors on them and are covered with realistic feeling fur. They are also pretty cute to look at! They react based on voice activation and physical touch. In petting the robotic cat, I have heard it meow, purr, and roll over in a manner similar to a real cat. The robotic dog has barked, turned his head to follow my voice, and will whimper a little bit if he's being ignored. All that's missing is the knocked over flower vase and the pooper scooping!

As humans, we crave that interaction, attention, and love that only a pet can give. We enjoy seeing our dog greet us when we come home from work or having our cat “allow” us to pet it. Robotic pets allow

individuals to experience that love and joy in a way that doesn't create a burden of care on them or their caregivers. As a robotic pet caretaker, I can attest that “Smokey and Bandit”, Aging & Long Term Care's office companions, love the work they do, and very much enjoy helping their community.

For qualifying clients that have access to Community First Choice or Copes funding, these pets can be purchased through state funding via their case manager. If a client is eligible for Older American Act funding and meets additional criteria, they can also qualify for a pet at no cost to them. For the general public, the animals are available for sale online at various companies for between \$100 to \$125, typically. If you have further questions about the AAA Joy for All robotic pets, please contact Ageless Innovation online, or contact **Teri Koski** at teri.koski@dshs.wa.gov.



Learn how Alzheimer's disease affects the brain!

Take the Brain Tour

[Click Here](#)

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 remain in the community, engage, and thrive.

Please email us at dementia@altcew.org or [click here](#) if interested in volunteering.

We will connect you to the right people!



JOIN THE MOVEMENT TO BECOME A DEMENTIA FRIEND!



There Are More Than 119,000 Dementia Friends Across the United States.

BECOME A DEMENTIA FRIEND TODAY!

To learn more, head to:

www.altcew.org/become-a-dementia-friend

Or email: dementia@altcew.org

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION®

Home Safety Checklist

Individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are at increased risk for injury or harm in certain areas of the home. As the disease progresses, they may become unaware of the dangers that exist. Consider taking the following precautions to create a safe environment which can prevent dangerous situations from occurring and help maximize independence for as long as possible.



[General Home Safety Tips](#)



[Kitchen](#)



[Laundry Room](#)



[Bathroom](#)



[Bedroom](#)



[Garage and Basement](#)

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

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](#)



10 Warning Signs of Dementia

By: Teri Koski, Dementia Resource Catalyst

Dementia is an umbrella term that can refer to many different changes in a person's memory. Alzheimer's is one form of dementia. Other forms include but aren't limited to: Vascular dementia, Frontotemporal dementia, and Dementia with Lewy bodies. The Alzheimer's Association's website, www.alz.org, is a great resource for learning about dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.

There are ten common warning signs related to Alzheimer's disease that we should all be aware of.

The first is memory loss that disrupts daily life. This could look like: asking the same question repeatedly, or forgetting important dates, such as their child or spouse's birthday. This doesn't mean occasionally forgetting names or appointments, which is a normal part of aging.

The second warning sign is having challenges in planning or solving problems, such as paying bills or following a familiar recipe. Everyone can make mistakes doing these tasks, but the concern here lies in the frequency of the problems.

Difficulty in completing familiar tasks, such as going grocery shopping, is a third sign to be concerned about. A normal age-related problem

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might be programming a remote control. (I know I have problem with that one!)

Confusion with time or place, such as forgetting where a person is going, or how they got there, can also be a warning sign. This should not be confused with a normal sign of aging, such as forgetting the day of the week, a common thing that all people do from time to time.

Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships, such as judging how far away something is, or the color of an object, is another warning sign. Cataracts can be a normal part of aging, but generally vision will be cloudy or dim in that situation.

Sometimes, a person developing Alzheimer's might have new problems with words, either speaking or writing them. A person may repeat themselves a lot or have problems naming a common object. Many people have problems finding the right word as we age. I like to think that it's because we've gotten so smart there's just not enough room in there for all the information! Again, the difference here lies in the frequency or severity.

The seventh warning sign is misplacing things and not being able to retrace your steps. If we lose our car keys, for example, we might ask ourselves questions like, "when did I see those last?" or, "Did I lend my keys to someone?" For a person with Alzheimer's, those questions often don't occur to them.

Another warning sign is decreased or poor judgement. An individual might suddenly decide to spend \$500 on lottery tickets, for example, or decide to not pay their mortgage and go clothes shopping instead. We all make bad decisions, such as getting that daily coffee even though our budget doesn't allow it or eating that donut when we're trying to stick to a healthy diet. Decisions made by a person affected by Alzheimer's may not be typical for their personality.

The last two warning signs are a withdrawal from work or social activities, and general changes to mood and personality. Most people who eventually are diagnosed with Alzheimer's are usually still working a job at the time their symptoms start. They may not be able to follow a conversation like they used to. The person who has always been a social butterfly might be withdrawn or quiet. Individuals affected by Alzheimer's might get confused, fearful, or anxious.

Many people don't know what to do when they notice these signs in themselves or their loved ones. They often hope things will improve or they just ignore what's happening because they are afraid of finding out that something is wrong with them. That fear is normal and to be expected. It is also best to encourage the person to get checked out by their doctor. There are over one hundred conditions that can mimic the symptoms of dementia, including a Urinary Tract Infection and hearing loss. Most of us have not attended medical school (except for the Google University) and we should always consult with a physician about any health concern. There may be treatments we don't know about or medical trials to participate in.

Finding out about any major health issue is not a fun thing but it's part of being an adult. While we cannot control if we get Alzheimer's, we can control how we handle any diagnosis that comes our way. We need to be able to plan for not only our future, but for the future of the people who love and care about us.

TRANSITION OF LEADERSHIP

Farewell Mark Haberman!



The Spokane Area DFC recently said goodbye to **Mark Haberman, Spokane Area DFC Co-Chair**. Mark retired this past May after working at Aging & Long Term Care as the Planning & Resource Director since 2018, and through this work, Co-Chairing the Spokane Area DFC since its creation in 2018. Mark has been an integral part of the team and conducted important work that made this effort possible. Thank you, Mark, for the amazing work and contributions that you made during your time with the DFC!

Mark greatly enjoyed rolling up his sleeves to work on dementia friendly leadership and programming within the community. Mark's final words of wisdom are that "even as an introvert, I have discovered, over and over again, that if you surround yourself with good people, your journey will be enriched and together you can change the world around you, one moment, one action, and one day at a time." Mark also offers encouragement to not take yourself too seriously and enjoy the ride. "I wish **Bethany Osgood**, the new Planning & Resource Director and Spokane Area DFC Co-Chair, the very best as she steps into her new position."

Thank you, Mark, you have gone above and beyond to support the work of the Spokane Area DFC. It has been a privilege working with you, congratulations on your next adventure. **Please join us in wishing Mark farewell!**

Welcome Bethany Osgood!



Bethany Osgood joined Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington as the **Planning & Resource Director**. In this position, she will additionally be taking on the role as **Tribal Liaison** and **Spokane Area DFC Co-Chair**, contributing to and expanding the work of this committee and local ALTCEW efforts.

Bethany is a graduate of the University of Oregon with honors for Healthcare Administration and Applied Cultural Anthropology, and a minor in Archeology. She holds certificates in High Reliability Organization and Communications as an instructor and has a master's certificate in grant writing. She has also been an exchange student to Mexico, Japan, and Argentina.

Bethany grew up in Walla Walla, is a retired firefighter, and is currently an EMT in Pend Oreille. She enjoys being outdoors, hiking, traveling, 4-wheeling, and going on adventures. "I love collecting vintage fire equipment, and I have a passion for history, archeology, and learning about new cultures. My faith and kindness guide me in life and work and inspire me to be a servant leader. My passion for helping people drives my intent to learn more and break down barriers to care."

Thank you for joining the team, Bethany. We are happy to have you here! **Please join us in welcoming Bethany!**





UPCOMING ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA PROGRAMS – LEARN MORE: WWW.ALZ.ORG/ALZWA

Spokane County Support Groups: Build a support system with people who understand. Alzheimer's Association caregiver support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of person with dementia to develop a support system, exchange information on challenges and solutions, talk through issues and coping, share feelings, and learn about resources.

⇒ **Deer Park Caregiver Support Group:** 2nd Wednesday of each month, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

For information call Paul J. Dionne: (509) 290-1816

⇒ **Spokane North Caregiver Support Group:** 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

For information call Paul J. Dionne: (509) 290-1816

⇒ **Spokane Downtown Caregiver Support Group:** 3rd Tuesday, 1:30 to 3 p.m.

For information call Cyndi Cook (509) 207-7667

See a full list of local support groups at: alz.org/alzwa/helping_you/support_groups

Staying Connected: A free small-group seminar for people with early stage memory loss and a care partner. Held in 4 weekly sessions. Join us to learn about coping with challenges of memory loss, staying engaged, the importance of activity and social relationships, and how mood affects memory.

⇒ **Downtown Spokane:** Four consecutive Thursdays; August 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2022, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Registration is required: For more information or to register, call Joel Loiacono at (509) 321-4581 or email jloiacono@alz.org.

Living With Alzheimer's for Early-Stage Care Partners: An education program. In the early stage of Alzheimer's disease, families face many new questions. Join us for this three-part series that answers these and other questions that arise in the early stage. Hear from other care partners and individuals living with Alzheimer's and learn tips and strategies to help you support a person living with the disease.

⇒ **Liberty Park Library 402 S. Pittsburg St. Spokane, WA 99202**

Part 1: Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2022, 1 to 3 p.m.

Part 2: Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, 1 to 3 p.m.

Part 3: Wednesday, Aug. 31, 2022, 1 to 3 p.m.

To register: Phone 800.272.3900. For more information phone Joel Loiacono at the Alzheimer's Association at (509) 321-4581 or email jloiacono@alz.org.



SPOKANE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT

HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAMS – FALL 2022 – LEARN MORE: WWW.SCLD.ORG

Tuesday Memory Cafés: Memory Cafés are a comfortable way to connect, socialize, and build new support networks with other caregivers and people experiencing memory loss. We will have a variety of activities to experience and enjoy, including music, crafts, and more.

⇒ **NORTH SPOKANE LIBRARY:** Tuesdays, Oct. 4 – Nov. 29, 2022, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Supporting Those with Dementia During the Holidays: Holidays are often difficult for people experiencing changes in their brain, such as dementia. This presentation offers education and tips on how you and your family can support your loved one who might have a difficult time with the hustle and bustle of the upcoming holiday season.

⇒ **SPOKANE VALLEY LIBRARY:** Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022, 3 to 4 p.m.

⇒ **ONLINE:** Monday, Oct. 17, 2022, 6 to 7 p.m.

**All to be presented by Teri Koski from Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW)*

Registration is required: Visit the events calendar to register at www.sclld.org/health-wellness-programs.

Dementia Friends Information Session: Dementia Friends USA is part of a global movement that is changing the way people think about, act toward, and talk about dementia. Anyone can be a Dementia Friend, and we'll discuss five key messages about dementia, activities to raise understanding, and actions that support people living with dementia.

⇒ **NORTH SPOKANE LIBRARY:** Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022, 3 to 4 p.m.

⇒ **ONLINE:** Monday, Nov. 7, 2022, 6 to 7 p.m.

⇒ **CHENEY LIBRARY:** Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2022, 3 to 4 p.m.

**All to be presented by Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW)*

Registration is required: To register, visit the events calendar at www.sclld.org/health-wellness-programs.

Talking About Brain Changes: When we notice something different about our health, it can be scary and put us on edge. We might ignore what is happening or be reluctant to take action. This presentation talks about recognizing those fears and the things we can do to move forward.

⇒ **SPOKANE VALLEY LIBRARY:** Thursday, Dec. 1, 2022, 3 to 4 p.m.

⇒ **ONLINE:** Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2022, 6 to 7 p.m.

**All to be presented by Teri Koski from Aging and Long Term Care of Eastern Washington (ALTCEW)*

Registration is required: To register, visit the events calendar at www.sclld.org/health-wellness-programs.