



115 WOLFE STREET
WINCHESTER, VA 22601

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NEWSLETTER

• SPRING 2007 •

ADULT CARE CENTER
OF THE NORTHERN SHENANDOAH VALLEY, INC.
115 WOLFE STREET • WINCHESTER, VA 22601
(540) 722-2273



FROM THE
BOARD PRESIDENT

Why My Dad Attends the Adult Care Center

Or Thank Goodness for the ACC!

by Diane Shipe, Ph.D.

Sometimes I think I'm going crazy, even though it is my Dad who has dementia. Thank goodness for the Adult Care Center here in Winchester. It has been good for both my Dad and me.

He has been attending the Center for 2-1/2 years. Before that, his day basically consisted of sitting in his chair, with his dog, and doing some reading. Mostly he slept in his chair. He had very little social interaction beyond my husband and myself. He sometimes said socially inappropriate things. He was reaching the point that he didn't want to go out, and I couldn't leave him alone with any peace of mind.

I needed a place he could go where his brain would be stimulated, where he'd have some company, where he'd have to move around for a bit of physical activity, and where I'd be comfortable leaving him while I did the things I needed to do. The ACC answered those needs far beyond my expectations. He had people his own age, as well as an enthusiastic staff to laugh and talk with; he had some other men to hang out with; he got some exercise walking up and down the hall, and he enjoyed some activities—particularly those related to food. It gave him something to look forward to two days a week. Most importantly, it turned out to be far more than just a babysitting service. The activities and routine are carefully planned to make it a warm, loving, and also a therapeutic environment that helps my Dad and the other participants maintain mental, physical, and social skills as much as possible.

Now, my Dad's disease has advanced and he is much more difficult to deal with. Simple daily activities like getting up out of bed, going to the bathroom, or taking a shower are routinely a fight. Instructions and information have to be repeated several times. I am constantly amazed at the endless patience of the ACC staff in working with my Dad.

I have been there as a volunteer for 4 and 5 hour stretches at a time and I've seen the staff in action. My Dad's disease has progressed more slowly than what I read is typical; some of that I'll credit to medication, but I'll also credit some to music therapy, art therapy, horticulture activities and all the other things that go on each day.

The staff takes care of me too. I've cried on Jane's shoulder more than once and she has listened and offered advice when I needed to pour out my frustration. I know Dana, the nurse, looks me over with the eye of a nurse as well as the eye of a friend. Jocelyn, a music therapist, has me on what I call my "stress reduction treatments" in her chair. I receive

support in various ways from each one of the staff (and hope I provide them with support too) in working with my Dad and dealing with the moments of frustration.

This is my first "letter" as president of the board. I've been a member of the board for two years. My husband and I think the work of the Adult Care Center is important enough that we support it with both our time and our money. If you are a recipient of this newsletter, you must be a supporter too, so thank you. One easy thing you can do as a supporter is to give this newsletter to someone caring for a family member who may benefit from the programs at

the ACC. Please help to pass along the word about the Center. A family member with questions is welcome to call the Center or call me at home at 955-4346. Don't let someone you know reach his or her wit's end, or the point of physical exhaustion trying to be a 24-hour a day caregiver. Thank goodness for the Adult Care Center!

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The Aromatherapy Garden

by Wendell Combest, Ph.D.
ACC Board Member

The idea of establishing an "aromatherapy garden" resulted from the awarding of a federal grant from the U.S. Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services to the Adult Care Center. This grant focused upon the development of an in-service training program by which practitioners trained staff, volunteers, and family members in several complementary/alternative therapies. Horticultural therapy and aromatherapy were two of these therapies along with others such as art, music, and therapeutic touch.

The theme of this year's American Horticultural Therapy Association annual meeting was "Gardens in Healthcare: Restoring Health and Wellness." Current research is revealing that working with or just being exposed to plants in a garden environment has important health benefits. Negative emotions of fear, anger, sadness, and anxiety are reduced whereas positive emotions and attitudes are enhanced. There are also significant effects on lowering blood pressure, reducing muscle tension, as well as speeding up recovery from a number of illnesses.

A small 30 x 50 ft enclosed courtyard garden adjacent to the sanctuary at Braddock Street United Methodist Church was selected as the best site for the garden. In early May of 2005 seven ACC volunteers begin the creation of the aromatherapy garden. The abundant Liriodendron was replaced with aromatic herbs many of which were generously donated by Sunflower Cottage. The plants selected for the garden were based upon research findings in the field of aromatherapy indicating possible benefits to individuals with dementia. It was felt that the garden would add another dimension to the implementation of aromatherapy at the center.

The practice of aromatherapy involves the therapeutic use of plant essential oils which are each composed of hundreds of small volatile compounds that interact with specific receptors on cells in the nasal epithelium. Stimulation of these receptors leads to activation of the olfactory bulb which communicates with higher brain centers. Odors or scents are connected to emotions, unconscious behaviors,

and memory. Greater than 50% of individuals with dementia display behavioral disturbances especially agitation characterized by aggression, restlessness, and anxiety. Drugs commonly used to treat agitation are often not well tolerated and can even accelerate cognitive decline. Several recent clinical trials have shown that aromatherapy is safe and may be an effective therapy for the management of agitation in dementia. For example a study conducted in the UK in 72 patients with dementia demonstrated that the twice daily administration of a massage oil containing the essential oil of the plant lemon balm resulted in a 35% reduction in agitation scores along with an increase in time spent engaged in constructive activities. Several other studies had good results using lemon balm as well as lavender essential oils.

Interestingly, the scent of lemon has been shown to increase theta brain wave activity which is associated with increased mental relaxation and creativity. Lavender increases alpha wave activity which is also associated with a calm and relaxed mental state.

Based on these studies we have planted many species of lavender and "lemon scented" herbs such as lemon verbena, lemon eucalyptus, lemon balm, lemon grass, lemon mint, and lemon thyme. Other aromatic herbs in the garden include several varieties of scented geranium, rosemary, basil, oregano, marjoram, and sages. We

have recently added several vegetables such as tomatoes and squash. The clients often go to garden to collect vegetables and herbs for various horticultural activities as well as to enhance the lunch time meal. This has contributed the added benefit of improving appetite and thus nutrition.

Recent additions to the garden include a large wind chime, hummingbird feeder, statue of St. Francis of Assisi, and a solar powered fountain. In 2006 volunteers constructed a 50 ft brick pathway along with several stone patios. Three benches and a table and chairs have made the garden a great place to sit and relax. A church member has recently donated a glass door that overlooks the garden from the sanctuary.

The aromatherapy garden at the ACC has evolved to become an important part of the center. It is a "functional" garden with the interesting focus of aromatherapy which makes it truly unique. The garden provides a special environment for exploring the many potential benefits of both horticultural therapy and aromatherapy in the day care setting.



Lunch N' Bid TO BENEFIT THE ADULT CARE CENTER

Sunday, April 22, 2007
Travel Lodge
160 Front Royal Pike
Winchester, Virginia

Tickets \$15.00
Tickets Available At:
The Adult Care Center
115 Wolfe Street
phone: 540-722-2273

Doors Open 11:00 am
Lunch 12:00 noon
Live and Silent Auctions to follow

THE ADULT CARE CENTER

The Adult Care Center is a day program for adults unable to stay by themselves due to conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, stroke, and others. The Center offers an array of recreational and therapeutic activities for participants, as well as routine medical monitoring by a registered nurse.

The Center also offers a resource library and support group meetings for caregivers. The Center is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services, is a Medicaid Provider, and is a facility approved by the Veteran's Administration.

Support Groups

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DEMENTIAS

3rd Tuesday of each month
7:30 pm to 9:00 pm
Cancer Center Conference
Medical Bldg 1
Winchester Medical Center
Facilitators: Loretta Dunn, LCSW,
Charles and Billie Casey

CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT

Call Dana Ankers, RN, Adult Care Center to schedule a visit.
540-722-2273

SAVE THESE DATES! FRIDAY & SATURDAY JUNE 8 & 9, 2007

SYMPOSIUM ON AGING
"THE HEART OF COMMUNITY"
Shenandoah University

FRIDAY, JUNE 8

"DIMENSIONS OF DEMENTIA"
A DAY LONG EVENT FOR PROFESSIONALS
AND CAREGIVERS.

Some topics include:

"Who's Afraid of Dementia?"
"How to Diagnose and Treat This Disease"
"Alzheimer's and Spirituality: Finding Calm
in the Storm"
"Family Dynamics and Caregiving"
And much more...

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

PRESENTATIONS AND EVENTS DESIGNED
FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

Dr. Leo Frangipane, nationally known wellness expert, surgeon and author will speak on holistic health for elders.

Other topics you will enjoy:

"The Impact of Seniors on the Community"
"Aging in Place: Adapting Your Home
to Meet Your Needs"
"Age-Restricted Senior Housing"
"Keeping Communities Safe for the Elderly"
"Seniors and the Spiritual Community"

This program is sponsored by Shenandoah University in collaboration with numerous Organizations who are committed to quality education and program services for older adults.

ADULT CARE CENTER

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