



Caregiver Network News

*A newsletter for
caregivers of loved ones
with memory disorders*

CALLING ALL CAREGIVERS!!!

MemoryCare's

Conference for Multi-Disciplinary Healthcare Professionals Caring for People Living with Dementia

Tuesday, October 16, 9:00am - 4:00pm

Blue Ridge Community College, Flat Rock, NC

Join us for a day of learning more about how we can improve life for persons living with dementia, for their caregivers, and for their families!

*\$20 admission includes light breakfast and lunch
and CEUs.*

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE REGISTRATION FORM](#)

Please print, fill out, and return by October 10 to guarantee lunch.

Payments will be accepted at the door.



**Keynote Speaker:
Melanie Bunn
RN, MS, GNP**

Melanie has been in nursing for over 20 years, providing care to elders in a host of clinical settings. She received her B.S. in Nursing from UNC-Chapel Hill and her M.S. in Family Health Nursing with Clinical Concentration in Geriatrics from Clemson University, and completed the Gerontological Nurse Practitioner Program at Duke. She is a dynamic speaker and gifted clinician for those living with dementia.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 16
Conference for
Multi-Disciplinary Healthcare
Professionals
Caring for People Living with
Dementia**

With an aging population, caring for persons living with dementia is an increasingly common challenge. This conference will be a day of learning about dementia care, resources, and strategies for those providing direct care to persons living with dementia and students who anticipate working in these areas. Information presented will help participants understand dementia more fully and prepare them for practical issues such as communication, managing behaviors, offering support at end of life, and more.

Target Audience: RNs, LPNs, CNAs, PTs, PTAs, OTs, OTAs, SLPs, SWs, health educators, mental health professionals and other adult care staff working with persons living with dementia.

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A scholarship for students who plan to care for persons living with dementia will be awarded at the conference. Contact Senior Program Officer- Lee Henderson-Hill at Community Foundation of Henderson County (828) 697-6224 to learn how to apply.

**Blue Ridge Community College  
Technology Building  
Conference Hall  
49 East Campus Drive  
Flat Rock, NC 28731  
Tuesday, Oct 16th 2018  
9 am – 4 pm  
Registration begins 8:30am  
\$20 fee includes bag lunch  
Scholarships available  
CEUs will be available**



For additional information: [www.memorycare.org](http://www.memorycare.org) or call 828-771-2219

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**VISITING AUNT MILLIE**

Many years ago, I went to visit my Aunt Millie at the dementia unit in a nursing home where she had been living for several months. When I walked into her room, I said, "Hello Aunt Millie, do you know who I am?" She looked at me and said pleasantly, "No, dear, I don't, but if you'll go down the hall to the nurse's station, one of those nice ladies there can tell you!"



Actually, this never happened - at least, not to me. I don't even have an Aunt Millie. But I tell this story to bring up some of the unwitting blunders we often make when we visit a person who is living with dementia.

The truth is that many people put off visiting someone with dementia - even someone they know well - because they "don't know what to say." "After all," they'll say, "what if she doesn't recognize me? Should I remind them who I am, or just ignore it? What if she asks about a relative who has died, or asks why she can't go home? I'm afraid of saying the wrong thing and upsetting her. Or what if she doesn't talk at all?"

These are common concerns - being with a person who has dementia can be emotionally difficult, especially if you aren't used to it. It's likely that, at some time during your visit, the person will say or do something that may be disconcerting or even distressing to you. This is typical of persons whose brains aren't functioning the way they used to. Having some knowledge of what to expect, and how to respond in such situations, can help the visitor get through these episodes with understanding, compassion, and maybe even a little humor.

So to make it a little easier, here is a primer to help you get started:

1. **Introduce yourself right away:** "Hi, Aunt Millie, I'm Nancy. I'm your sister Edith's daughter." If she already knows who you are, no harm done. If she doesn't, she will be grateful that you are helping her through a difficult moment. Be patient - even with that information, it may take a minute or two for her to get up to speed with who you are. Sometimes it may be your voice or mannerisms that connect rather than your face. Or it may not connect at all...so let it go. NEVER ask "Do you know who I am?"
2. **Slow down.** Less is more - less stimulation, less talking, less commotion. People living with dementia have a slower processing speed (think 33rpm in a 78rpm world), so it takes them longer to hear what you said, figure out what it means, and come up with a response. Practice using shorter sentences with fewer words. Give them time. A little "air" in the conversation is a good thing.
3. **Stick with one thing at a time.** Multi-tasking is a lost art for them, and too many things coming at them at once is white noise, or can even be upsetting. So turn off the TV, and introduce anything new ("let's go for a walk" or "let's look at these pictures together") gradually.



4. **Play to her strengths.** Her memories of long ago are probably much stronger and more easily recalled than anything recent, so reminiscing is usually a safe way to make a connection. Her short-term memory is much less dependable, so Fact-Finding questions ("What did you have for lunch?" "Has Suzy been to see you?" "Where is that quilt I made for you?") may be frustrating. The farther along her dementia progresses, the more she will remain in her long-ago

past. Visit her there rather than trying to reorient her to the present: "Tell me about growing up on the farm" or "Was it fun having a big sister?"

5. **Never correct when she says something inaccurate.** Misremembering is part of dementia. As her brain makes mistakes, she makes mistakes, so once again, let it go. If you want information about something, ask someone whose brain is working normally.

6. **Don't talk so much.** Understand that dementia typically damages the language center, so she may not be speaking in complete sentences or using words correctly. Try to focus on the words you do understand and repeat them back to her, rather than trying to complete her sentences for her. Avoid playing Twenty Questions: "Now are you talking about Cousin Ralph?" "Do you mean the house on Emory Road?" Try to match their pace: if they are talking in complete sentences, then you can. If they are just using a few words, then you do the same.

7. **Meet them where they are.** Trying to keep up with a conversation can be exhausting for them, so try looking at pictures together, completing fill-in-the-blank games or seeing how many animals you can name, or working on a simple task together (arranging silk flowers, sorting coupons or balls of yarn, or working a puzzle). If their dementia is more progressed, look for things to do that don't involve a lot of talking, such as a short walk (if they are able), reading aloud (childhood poems often work well), petting an animal (real or stuffed), or just a hand massage. Snacks and sweets (if permitted) are always welcome icebreakers. Sometimes bringing in some things for them to hold can spark interest, such as a Nature Box (leaves, rocks, moss, etc), or an Oldies Box (old toys, tools, clothing, or treasures from their past). And never, ever, underestimate the power of singing familiar songs from long ago (I've Been Working on the Railroad, You Are My Sunshine, Amazing Grace, God Bless America).

8. **Let her talk about what's on her mind in the moment.** If she brings up the tough subjects (home, mother, etc.), don't avoid them - go there with her. For instance, to respond to "I want to go home," don't explain that she lives there now - that won't work with a person whose reality is probably 50 years behind where yours is. Instead, acknowledge then ask: "Yes, I know you miss home. Tell me what it was like to live there?" Or if she asks "Where is Daddy?" do the same thing: "Yes, you miss him, don't you? Tell me about him."

9. **Bring a child.** It doesn't have to be a grandchild or even anyone she knows. Sometimes a person with dementia can relate better to children than to adults - and, like animals, children don't insist on a lot of conversation. Children can teach us a lot about being in the present and accepting a person where they are.



*Most important, know that the purpose of your visit is to create a few pleasant moments for a person who is losing touch with the world around her...whether or not she remembers you*

B.B. BARNS 2018



# Ladies Night Out

Benefitting **MemoryCare**  
Quality Time Quality Care

**NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> & 8<sup>TH</sup>  
THURSDAYS • 6PM-8PM**

Go to [bbbarns.com](http://bbbarns.com)  
Call 828.650.7300  
or Buy at the Garden Center

**20% Off**  
Your Total  
Purchase

▶ **TICKETS** \$25 per person in advance



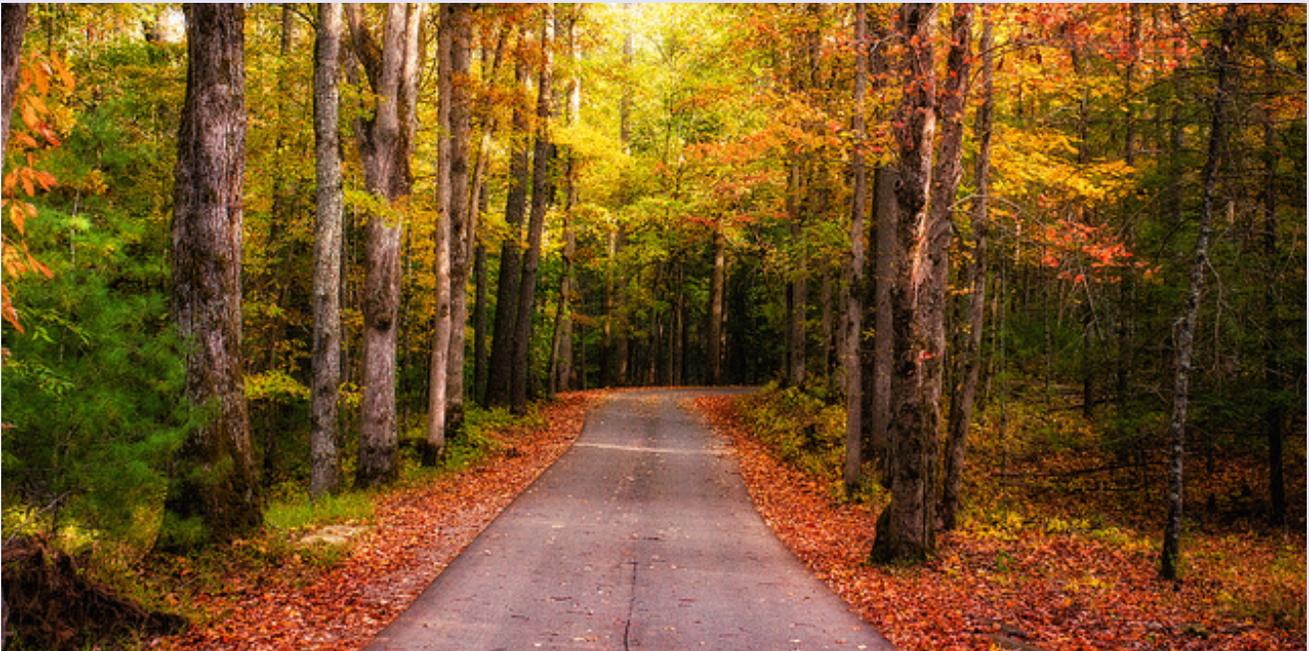
"My husband questions me about everything, and it seems the more I tell him, the more he gets upset. For instance, he always wants to know what we're doing or where we're going, but then when I tell him, he often says he doesn't want to go, and we end up having an argument. I learned at my support group that sometimes it's better not to give them as much information because it's hard for them to keep up with it. So now when he asks me, "where are we going?" I'll smile and wink and answer "It's a surprise!" It never fails - he is always ready to go! I'm also learning to use this method to answer other questions. For instance, he'll ask when something is going to happen and I'll say, "when the bell rings!" (I have a large bell that I can ring at the right time). He loves the bell and always says "Ding-Dong, time's up!" even though he may not remember what's about to happen! It's made things a lot easier for both of us!"



## Notable Quotable

*"I saw old Autumn in the misty morn stand shadowless like  
silence, listening to silence."*

-Thomas Hood





# ONGOING PROGRAMS

*Open to the Public*

## **MEMORYCAREGIVERS NETWORK** **PEER SUPPORT & EDUCATION GROUPS**

### **FLETCHER GROUP**

First Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Fletcher 7th Day Adventist Church

Howard Gap Road and Naples Road, Fletcher, N.C.  
(just past Park Ridge Hospital)

### **NEW HOPE GROUP**

Third Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

New Hope Presbyterian Church

3070 Sweeten Creek Road, Asheville, N.C. 28803  
(across from Givens Estates)

### **NORTH ASHEVILLE GROUP (formerly the Weaverville Group)**

Fourth Tuesdays, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Woodfin YMCA at Reynolds Mountain

40 N. Merrimon Ave (exit 23 off I-26 West)

*Network meetings are open to the public.*

*The Network relies on charitable support to keep its program going.*

*To make a donation, [CLICK HERE](#).*

***For more information about the MemoryCaregivers Network, contact:***

Mary Donnelly

828.230.4143

[network@memorycare.org](mailto:network@memorycare.org)

Pat Hilgendorf

828.301.0740

[patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com)

## **"CAREGIVER COLLEGE"**

### **MemoryCare's ongoing educational series for caregivers**

A series of six lectures will be provided for anyone caring for a person with a memory disorder. The program is taught by one of the MemoryCare physicians, and is designed to improve caregiver understanding of different aspects of dementia care. Related presentation materials will be provided.

There is no cost for families who are enrolled in MemoryCare. For those not enrolled, the cost is \$85 for the 6-part series.

### **Course Content:**

**What Is Dementia?**

Transitioning from Independence to Interdependence  
Functional and Behavioral Changes of Dementia  
Dementia Treatment Options & Risk Reduction  
Caring for the Caregiver  
Dementia and Legal Planning Issues

***The next ASHEVILLE session of Caregiver College  
begins on Thursday, October 11  
and continues on consecutive Thursdays through November 15  
2:00 - 5:00pm  
at the SECU Center for MemoryCare  
on the campus of Givens Estates***

***Watch this space for information about the next Waynesville session!***



### **Do you need a program for a group event?**

The MemoryCaregivers Network staff presents on a variety of subjects, including Recognizing Early Warning Signs of Memory Loss, Facts and Fiction about Dementia, Better Communication Techniques, and more.

We are happy to speak at your event to raise awareness and knowledge about Dementia.

Contact Mary Donnelly at [network@memorycare.org](mailto:network@memorycare.org)

***Caregiver Network News and The MemoryCaregivers Network are auxiliary programs of***



***We rely on charitable donations to continue these programs!***

***Please consider donating...  
perhaps in honor of a loved one's birthday...  
or a memorial...  
or a sustaining gift to support families like yours  
who depend on the services that MemoryCare provides!***

**Make a difference. Make a donation.**  
[CLICK HERE](#) to donate.

**For more information about MemoryCare, click this link to visit our website:**  
[www.MemoryCare.org](http://www.MemoryCare.org)

**Thank you for your interest and support!**

**OTHER COMMUNITY PROGRAMS & EVENTS**

### COMMUNITIES

People living with dementia can continue to be active in their chosen pursuits for years following their diagnosis. The entire community benefits when all members are allowed to contribute.

We provide interactive community education programs to raise awareness and dispel myths about dementia. Contact us to schedule a 60 – 90 minute training session.

### THE MANY FACES OF DEMENTIA

"As a caregiver, I have a much deeper appreciation for the time we have together as a family and I have learned to focus on all that we can do together. It just takes a lot more planning and patience."  
*Michelle Goyeau*



### JOIN US AS WE CREATE A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

[www.LandofSky.org/DementiaFriendly](http://www.LandofSky.org/DementiaFriendly)

**Cathy Hebert:**  
828-712-4811  
[cathyhebert87@gmail.com](mailto:cathyhebert87@gmail.com)

**Nancy Smith Hunnicutt:**  
828-778-0063  
[nva8@aol.com](mailto:nva8@aol.com)

WNCdementiafriendly  
Communities@gmail.com

A Member of the  
Dementia Friendly  
America Network

Supported  
by the Area  
Agency on  
Aging at





Committed to the well-being of people living with dementia and their families through a welcoming and knowledgeable community

Meetings are open to family members, professionals, or anyone interested in making WNC more Dementia Friendly!

For more information, contact [wncdementiafriendlycommunities@gmail.com](mailto:wncdementiafriendlycommunities@gmail.com)

or call Land of Sky at 828.251.6622

### West Buncombe Caregivers

An education & support group for caregivers sponsored by Pisgah Valley Retirement Community

**Meets every second THURSDAY  
1:00 - 3:00p.m.**

Pisgah Valley's Community Center  
6 Rhododendron Way, Candler NC

**Free and Open to the Public**

**Mary Donnelly**  
828.230.4143  
[marydd60@charter.net](mailto:marydd60@charter.net)

**Pat Hilgendorf**  
828.301.0740  
[patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com)

### Memory Loss Caregivers of East Buncombe

An education & support group for caregivers sponsored by the Highland Farms Residents' Corporation

**Meets every second Tuesday  
9:30-11:30 a.m.**

Lounge Room 3 (lower level),  
J-K entrance of Brookside Building  
Highland Farms Retirement Community, Black Mountain, NC

**Free and Open to the Public**

For more information, contact:

**Mary Donnelly**  
828.230.4143  
marydd60@charter.net

**Pat Hilgendorf**  
828.301.0740  
patricia.hilgendorf@gmail.com

**Henderson County Caregiver Support Group**

**Meets every third Tuesday, 1:30 - 3:30**  
**First United Methodist Church**  
**204 6th Ave W, Hendersonville, NC 28739**  
*For more information, contact Lisa Kauffman at 828.696.9799*

**Haywood County Caregiver Support Group**

**First United Methodist Church of Waynesville**  
**4:30 on the fourth Tuesday of each month**  
*For more information, contact 828.926.0018*

**Mitchell County Caregiver Support Group**

**"Care & Share"**

**First Friday of each month, 1:00-3:00 p.m.**  
**Hospice & Palliative Care of The Blue Ridge**  
**36 Hospital Dr., Spruce Pine**  
*For more information, contact Jane Ouzts at [jnutouzts@yahoo.com](mailto:jnutouzts@yahoo.com)*

**Support Groups for Persons Living With Memory Loss**

*Initial screening required for all early-stage groups.*

**Memory Loss Navigators (The New Hope Group)**

1:00-2:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month  
(meets concurrently with the MemoryCaregivers Network New Hope Group above)  
Contact Mel Kelley, 828.301.0529, [avant\\_garden@msn.com](mailto:avant_garden@msn.com)

**Memory Loss Navigators (The Biltmore Group)**

1:00-2:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month  
Biltmore Methodist Church  
376 Hendersonville Road Asheville, 28803 (Exit 50 off I-40)  
Contact Mel Kelley, 828.301.0529, [avant\\_garden@msn.com](mailto:avant_garden@msn.com)

**Memory Loss Navigators (The Highland Farms Group)**

9:30-11:00 a.m. on the second AND fourth Tuesdays of each month  
(2nd Tuesday group meets concurrently with the Memory Loss Caregivers of East Buncombe above)  
Contact Mel Kelley, 828.301.0529, [avant\\_garden@msn.com](mailto:avant_garden@msn.com)

**The Hendersonville Group**

1:30-3:30 on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month  
Mud Creek Baptist Church, 403 Rutledge Rd., Hendersonville

**Support Groups at the Creek**

Two separate groups for those in early stages of dementia and their significant others

Every Thursday afternoon from 1:30-3:30pm

Mud Creek Baptist Church, 403 Rutledge Rd., Hendersonville

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Contact Patty at [AlzMaze@gmail.com](mailto:AlzMaze@gmail.com)

**THE MEMORY LANE CAFE**

**Reminisce & Visit.....Socialize & Laugh.....Relax & Enjoy!**

2nd Monday of each month

1:00 - 3:00 pm

Mud Creek Baptist Church

403 Rutledge Drive, Hendersonville NC

No registration necessary, but those with a diagnosis must be accompanied by a caregiver unless they drive themselves to the Memory Lane Cafe.

*For more information, contact Patty at 828.692.1262 or [alzmaze@gmail.com](mailto:alzmaze@gmail.com)*

**MemoryCare is a charitable non-profit organization whose mission is three-fold:**

**To provide specialized medical care to older adults with cognitive impairment;  
to support caregivers with education, counseling, and improved access to services; and to provide community education.**

Caregiver Network News is written and edited by Mary Donnelly.

Contact [network@memorycare.org](mailto:network@memorycare.org) for more information.

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