

SEPTEMBER  
2009

# GEM Respite Report



## WHAT'S UP!

World ALZ Day  
Sept. 21

National  
Candle lighting  
11/15

National Memory  
Screening 11/17

OB  
Caregivers Meet-  
ing Third Thurs-  
day @2pm

Harmony Café  
St Andrews  
September  
Rick & ANGELO  
Sept. 11 7-9 PM

## What are the Levels of Dementia?

**Teepa Snow**, a noted ALZ expert, has developed these levels or stages of Dementia. First please remember that memory loss is NOT a normal part of aging!

The other thing to consider and remember is that dementia is a progressive and terminal disease.

The progression of the disease varies from person to person, people with ALZ can live

### Gail's GEM Notes



from 8-20 years. People with dementia can function in their own environment/home because they are running in routine. Knowledge that they are having problems will cause them to withdraw from long enjoyed activities –like church and clubs. They will usually have good reasons/excuses why they don't/won't go. Understanding the stages & symptoms will

help family and friends to know when they need to step in and help.

**Level 5 Diamond**-Uses routines & old habits to function \*can complete personal care in a familiar place\* Follows simple prompted schedules –mostly \* misplaces things and can't find them \* resents takeover or bossiness \* notices other people's misbehavior or mistakes \* Territorial "this is mine"–refusals-"NO I won't"\* Varies in lack of awareness

**The GEM Center is**  
A specialized local non-  
profit providing:

### Therapeutic Group Respite Services

- ◆ Education and training for all caregivers
- ◆ Drop-In Care for people at risk if left alone
- ◆ Advocacy for caregivers and frail elders

## “WALK FOR THE MIND”

"Walk for the Mind", an event to raise awareness for Alzheimer's, will be held on Monday, September 21st at Roanoke Island Festival Park in Downtown Manteo. Check-in will begin at 7:45-8:15am outside the pavilion area. Walk begins promptly at 8:30am. By pre-registering prior to September 10th, you will receive a free t-shirt the morning of the walk. All walkers will receive a Forget-Me-Not Flower pin. Registration forms are available at all Parks & Recreation offices, all libraries, and online at [www.darenc.com](http://www.darenc.com). Please call 252.475.9270 to sponsor a walker or for more information. ALL PROCEEDS will come to GEM Adult Day Services, Inc.– the ONLY Dare County program specializing in dementia care, education and support for people facing Alzheimer's.

# Shop & Share With Food Lion & GEM!

**What is Food Lion Shop & Share?** It's the easiest and most convenient way to raise money for the GEM Center, a local non-profit organization providing dementia care and support. After registering, each time you shop at Food Lion and use your MVP Card, a portion of your total grocery purchase will be donated to GEM. It's that easy! To sign up, visit [www.foodlion.com](http://www.foodlion.com), click on Fundraising, and enter your name, MVP Card number, and address. Make sure to select GEM as your organization! Or, you can mail in the following form and we'll do it for you. Thanks for your support!

## Customer Sign-up for Food Lion Shop & Share with GEM

\_\_\_\_\_  
First Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Middle Initial

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
MVP Card Number (12 digits)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

Please detach and mail to: The GEM Center  
PO Box 3601 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

## Recognizing ALZHEIMER'S Disease

**September 21 is WORLD ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE DAY**

**Walk for the MIND September 21 at Festival Park**

**NOVEMBER is National ALZHEIMER'S Month**

**November 15 -Commemorative Candle lighting at All Saints Episcopal Church in Southern Shores 4pm**

**November 17- National Memory Screening Day**

**Locations TBA**

## Level 4 Emerald

This is the stage that is very difficult for caregivers who now are unable to use the familiar tools of logic and discussion to interact with their loved one. (Person with Dementia)

PWD now had limited awareness of time sensitive needs

PWD Needs some "HELP"- **not doing for or to**

PWD Wants the familiar – hard to find it ( I want to go home!)

Asks a lot about "What...? Where..? But due to the brain damage caused by dementia cannot remember the answers

Increasing mistakes and errors—but resents corrections

Likes to stay busy with familiar tasks but the quality is poor

Fears being seen as incompetent and is VERY successful at hiding this with humor.

Will start withdrawing from once loved activities such as friends and church, has very good excuses

This is the time that "love and good intentions" **FAIL TO WORK**

Now is the time to reach out for help from a professional in Dementia Care, who will help you learn the skills necessary to care for your loved one.

A person with dementia CANNOT be treated as a child; they are not children.

When the caregiver begins to treat the person like a child, the relationship can and will begin to deteriorate!

## Level 3 Amber

Lots of touching, handling, mouthing  
manipulating

Focus on fingers & mouth ( & private parts )

Gets into things

All about sensation

Invades the space of others

Do what they like, AVOID what they do not

Can copy you & watches what you do

## Level 2 Ruby

Big movements

Hand actions- not fingers

Tends towards movement unless asleep

Follows gross movements & big gestures for actions

Limited visual awareness

Major sensory changes

Major movement skill loses

Fine motor skill losses- mouth, hands, feet, private parts

## Level 1 Pearl

Immobile-can't get started

Bed or chair bound

Has more time asleep or unaware

Has many "primitive" reflexes present ,startles easily

May cry out or mumble "constantly"

Increases vocalization with distress

Difficult to calm

Knows familiar from unfamiliar

Touch and voice make a difference in behaviors

**Visit our website**

**[www.gemdayservices.org](http://www.gemdayservices.org)**

**To learn how we can help!**

# GEM'S WISH LIST FOR 2009!

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Volunteers</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">To help with:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Memory Screenings</b></p> <p><b>Harmony Café (we are planning s Sock Hop for October 9th-7pm)</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cooks ready for a crowd 10 –12</b></p> <p><b>Caring people to assist with our Care-givers Education &amp; Support Group</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Our Community</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Outreach parties 3rd Wednesday of each month</b></p>	<p>Fresh Flowers &amp; Gardening Supplies and gardeners' to help with projects (potting soil, small &amp; large potting containers)</p> <p>Scrapbooking supplies</p> <p>Gently used computer –ours blew up!</p> <p>Fresh Fruits or Vegetables</p> <p>Community Party Prizes -small gifts &amp; wrap for our participants to give out at our community parties</p>
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We thank everyone who donated items to the GEM Center. If you are interested in donating items, you may either drop them off at the GEM Center or call 252-480-3354 to arrange for someone to pick up the items. If you wish to make a financial contribution, please fill out the form below and mail it, along with your donation, to:

The GEM Center PO Box 3601 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

I want to make a tax deductible financial gift to The GEM Center. My gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

We appreciate your gift! \* To learn more about non-profit vs. for profit visit our website [gemdayservices.org](http://gemdayservices.org)

## Help fight Alzheimer's by honoring your pharmacist

The Alzheimer's Association and Eisai Inc. are once again teaming up to honor a pharmacist with the C.A.R.E. (Commitment to Alzheimer's. Recognition of Excellence.) Pharmacy Award. The annual honor recognizes the vital role pharmacists play in helping as many as 5.3 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease and their 10 million Care-givers. To vote go to [info@alz.org](mailto:info@alz.org) and follow the link.

*Thank you to all of these wonderful people who make GEM so very special!*

- ♥ Laurie Kellogg for coming at just the right time
- ♥ Rev. Pat and the congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church for hosting us in May and June and waiving all fees!
- ♥ The congregation of Colingotn Methodist Church for hosting GEM for August
- ♥ Camille for delicious lunches
- ♥ Just Playn Dixieland for Harmony Café
- ♥ Rita Carson for her taxi service
- ♥ Marsha & Greg Bradley for our workouts
- ♥ Chuck Poe and the CDC for including us
- ♥ Nancy Proctor for her on-going support
- ♥ Val Cummings for many yummiie lunches
- ♥ The Dare Ministerial Association for listening
- ♥ ALL Saints Episcopal Church for hosting GEM
- ♥ St Andrew by the Sea for hosting us in July and sharing their space with us for Harmony Café & our community outreach parties!

- ♥ Gladys Jenkins for helping with Harmony Café
- ♥ Mary Ellen Hawthorne for her endless support and assistance
- ♥ Sandy Scarbourogh - For bringing the Manteo Folks to our parties
- ♥ Jim Kelly & Ben for their monthly music
- ♥ Rev. Wilson of ALL Saints for always finding time
- ♥ Con Weltman for taking us around the world
- ♥ Faith Pilcher for fixing our parachute
- ♥ Arlene Price for her skill in leading games
- ♥ Vera Berg for cooking us delicious meals
- ♥ Michelle Warner for our fabulous lunch
- ♥ Shirley Fisher for our wonderful Friday lunches
- ♥ Christine Jackle for welcoming us and helping us set up for the day

Volunteers are unpaid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless  
-Anonymous



**Harmony Café  
Sock Hop October 9th**

St. Andrews by the Sea  
\*\*\*

**\*\* Save the Date**

VOICES & VIOLINS

Festival Park

A Classical Christmas

December 11th 7PM

Tickets are limited \$10 in advance

\$12.00 at the door

PLEASE Help Support GEM



*Monthly Parties!*

We also offer monthly parties to all senior citizens who would like to attend. The parties are the third Wednesday of each month. We'd love to have you visit with us!

Wednesday 9/16 @2pm

THE WRIGHT TAPPER'S

St. Andrew by the Sea, Nags Head

If you would like to volunteer at any of our parties, please call Gail at 252-480-3354 .

# When is it time to add GEM?

## Easy answer:

### **WHEN YOU CAN NO LONGER LEAVE YOUR LOVED ALONE SAFELY.**

You will know when this time arrives. The medicines you set out have not been taken, the lunch you left has not been eaten, the neighbor called and said your loved one was at her house and could you pick him or her up?

If your loved one breaks a bone or has the flu you know that something must be done! But when it comes to "Slight Memory Loss", families have a tendency to hope for the best and ignore it. I know this because of my time at GEM.

Our culture understands medical care, but it gets a little fuzzy when it comes to mental health care. First of all there is the perceived "Stigma" and second the "Cost" which is barely if at all covered by our insurance.

## **What exactly is Dementia?**

**Dementia is a loss of brain function that occurs with certain diseases**

**Problems may involve language, memory, perception, emotional behavior or personality, and cognitive skills (such as calculation, abstract thinking, or judgment).**

Dementia usually first appears as forgetfulness. (Source: ADAM Date: February 13, 2008)

When people hear Alzheimer's is a form of dementia they think "memory loss" but the more debilitating symptom is "**judgment loss**" and what is most frustrating for loving caregivers are the changes in emotional behavior or personality. Many families report that their loved one is "mean" and has always been "mean."

This unfortunate description is the result of those "changes in emotional behavior and personality". Just as you would seek out a Doctor right away if your loved one broke a bone, so should you seek professional help if your loved one is having memory problems! A thoughtful diagnosis is the first step in ruling out reversible causes of dementia. But if it is a form of dementia, there are medications that will improve the "Quality of Life" for a longer period of time. (There is no cure for ALZ at this time.)

Therapy does not stop once the surgeon has repaired the broken bone; then rehabilitation with a physical therapist begins to complete the care. Once a person has been diagnosed with dementia, the treatment does not stop with adding medications. The family must learn more about the disease ( consider joining our Caregiver's Education and Support Group) to better care for their loved one. Also consider adding rehabilitation at our program. We cannot cure the disease but we successfully address the symptoms. GEM provides your loved one a day filled with success and validation. Activities are planned just for them and they bask in a wondrous sense of well being felt when one is socializing with PEERS! These relationships are not un-equal as the role of caregiver to care recipient can be.

Think about it: would you rather give help or receive help? I have found that most people would rather be the helper than the 'helpee', and people with memory loss feel the same way. We at GEM are specialists in providing "JUST ENOUGH HELP" to enable our folks to have a great day.

**I hope that when you hear the term Alzheimer's disease, you will remember that it's not just the memory loss but also the loss of language, perception, emotional behavior or personality, and cognitive skills (such as calculation, abstract thinking, or judgment).** Gail Sonnesso, MS



**Sometimes** it just helps to do something special to remember a lost loved one. Flowers dry up and a card just doesn't always seem enough. A lasting acknowledgment of their life and your love in the form of an "In Memory" donation to GEM can be the answer. Simply complete this form and return to GEM with your donation. Your loved one will be remembered in our next newsletter

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ PH: \_\_\_\_\_

Your address: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Remembrance/remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cut out and Mail to GEM P.O. BOX 3601 Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948**



**In honor of**  
**James Corcoran**  
by his daughter  
**Patricia**



GEM PO BOX 3601  
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948  
Phone: 252-480-3354

**866. AFA 8484”**



Gail Sonnesso email:  
[gailsonnessoAgemdayservices.org](mailto:gailsonnessoAgemdayservices.org)

### GEM News

### Lunch with the Stars



THANK YOU ALL!! !

The Lost Colony Players -Jan Underwood, Rita Mann of the Manteo Lions Club & St. Andrews by the Sea! What a great party! Shown here are the Lost Colony payers with John Buford singing joyfully! Over 60 people enjoyed the day!

Stamp

Address

## September Highlights

1. **WALK FOR THE MIND** the 21st at Festival Park
2. **Memory Screening** at The Baum Center September 15th @10 am registration required
3. **Harmony Café** Friday October 9th at 7pm **Sock Hop**
4. \*This benefits GEM & Nags Head Lions)
5. GEM's Community Party September 16th 2-3:30; The Wright Tappers' at St. Andrews by the Sea

**Every Thursday@ 11:30** –Exercise with Marcia Bradley Marshall (YMCA personal fitness trainer) and her husband Greg.

**Outer Banks Caregiver Education & Support Group** meets the second Thursday (September 10<sup>th</sup>) from 2-3:30 pm. All Welcome!

**EVERY DAY:** brunch & meal prep, exercise, hot 5 course lunch, game, craft, snack, dominos  
Plus

**Love, Laughter and Joy!**