

JULY  
2009

# GEM Respite Report



## WHAT'S UP!

National ALZ Day  
Sept. 21

National  
Candle lighting  
11/15

National Memory  
Screening 11/17

OB  
Caregivers Meet-  
ing Thursday 8/13  
@2pm

Harmony Café  
Baum Center  
Friday 8/14  
ANGELO  
7-9 PM

## *Respite cited as Top Unmet Need at Dare's Summit of the "Older Adult"*

Nancy Griffin facilitated about 40 of us as we discussed what supports were required to "age at home." North Carolina's older population is projected to be 18% of the state's total population by the year 2030.

All of us had ideas and suggestions Nancy created a list of what was important and then we prioritized it. Respite was identified as the top unmet need necessary to help people age at home.

Respite is not *unmet*

### Gail's GEM Notes



but unfunded. GEM is a group respite program that has been providing care since April 2001. Currently the only funding that is available to support families using this care is from Dare County, and this support has been cut.

GEM's Group Respite is cost effective and adds the benefit of socialization and exercise to keep frail elders fit.

GEM can provide 80

hours of relief to caregivers as well as great programming for the frail elders they care for at a fraction of the cost of long term care placement. Who doesn't express the desire to age in-place at home? GEM, thanks to the Dare County Grant, offers a cost share to families requiring it.

Caregivers of GEM participants report that they can have a life and continue to pursue hobbies or go to work knowing their loved one is safe at GEM.

*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

## Thank you "Coyote!"

**Marcie Brenner and Lou Castro** performed at the Baum Center on May 8th at Harmony Café, a fundraiser for GEM Adult Day Services, Inc. and the Nags Head Lions Club.

What a wonderful evening! It felt like a group of good friends getting together and just enjoying Coyote's music and each other. The couple brought their daughter Charlotte and we all enjoyed meeting her.



# 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. 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 Fund-raising, 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**

**NOVEMBER is National ALZHEIMER'S Month**

**November 15 -Commerative Candlelighting at All Saints Episcopal Church  
in Southern Shores 4pm**

**November 17- National Memory Screening Day**

**Locations TBA**

**Call Gail Sonnesso at 480-3354 for more information or to volunteer.**

# Do I really want to know I have Alzheimer's ?

## The answer is "YES!"

An estimated 5.3 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease, the majority - 5.1 million –are over the age of sixty-five. Research suggests that less than **35 percent of people with Alzheimer's or other dementias are properly diagnosed.**

Here are some of the reasons why early diagnosis is so important:

- ✦ There are medications available today that can reduce symptoms in many people - at least temporarily - and improve their daily lives. There are also ongoing trials of new drugs that could slow or stop the processes that cause Alzheimer's disease.
- ✦ Knowing what's going on can lessen anxiety and allow for planning - not only for patients but for their families, friends, and caregivers.
- ✦ Although Alzheimer's causes 60-80 percent of dementia in patients over 65, there are other causes that should be considered, some of which are reversible, such as medication side effects or interactions, alcohol, low thyroid, low B12, depression, and infections.
- ✦ Dementia can also be caused by tumors, increased pressure, blood clots and other abnormalities within the head itself that can be detected by a CT or MRI of the brain.

✦ And patients with "vascular dementia" due to problems such as multiple small strokes (that may not have caused any other symptoms) can be treated with measures that include medications and lifestyle adjustments to lower their cardiovascular risk.

*Go to full story: [cbsnews.com](http://cbsnews.com)*

## Antipsychotics can double risk of death...

Neil Hunt, Chief Executive of The Alzheimer's Society, said, "

- ◆ Antipsychotics can double risk of death,
- ◆ triple risk of stroke
- ◆ and accelerate symptoms in people with dementia.

It is absolutely disgraceful that so many people across the UK are inappropriately prescribed these drugs." (and also the USA)

*We at GEM are able to control most symptoms of dementia with behavior management. Learn to "Care Effectively" for your loved one with dementia! Call Gail for more info about our classes @ 480-3354*

Go to full story:

[medicalnewstoday.com](http://medicalnewstoday.com)

**Visit our website**  
[www.gemdayservices.org](http://www.gemdayservices.org)  
**to see the newest checklist for symptoms.**

# GEM'S WISH LIST FOR 2009!

## A NEW PERMANENT HOME FOR OUR GEM FAMILY

All we need is about 900 square  
feet  
two bathrooms  
(one must be accessible)  
Ground level or short ramp  
Kitchen

Fresh Flowers & Gardening Supplies and  
gardeners' to help with projects  
(potting soil, small & large potting con-  
tainers)

Scrapbooking supplies

Gently used computer –ours blew up!

Fresh Fruits or Vegetables

Community Party Prizes -small gifts &  
wrap for our participants to give out at  
our community parties

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 Caregivers. 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!*

- ♥ **George** for defrosting our freezer
- ♥ **Camille** for a wonderful lunch
- ♥ **Rev. Pat** and the congregation of the Unitarian Universalist Church for hosting us in May and June and waiving all fees!
- ♥ **William Hughes** for his enthusiasm
- ♥ **Jennifer and Cliff** at Jockeys Ridge for our wild ride up the Dune
- ♥ **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
- ♥ **Demitri** for helping us create treats
- ♥ **The Dare Ministerial Association** for listening
- ♥ **ALL Saints Eposcopal Church** for hosting GEM for APRIL and waiving all fees

- ♥ **Gladys Jenkins** for helping with Harmony Café
- ♥ **Mary Ellen Hawthorne** for her endless support and assistance
- ♥ **Sandy Scarbourogh**
- ♥ **Jim Kelly & Ben** for their monthly music
- ♥ **Rev. Wilson** of ALL Saints for **always** finding time
- ♥ **Con Weltman** for taking us around the world
- ♥ **Val Cummings** for our delicious lunches
- ♥ **Faith Pilcher** for sharing her skills & expertise
- ♥ **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
- ♥ **Erma Cahoon** for refreshments at the game s
- ♥ **St. Andrews by the Sea** for hosting Harmony Café in April and June

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



**Harmony Café  
Baum Center August 14th**

**79PM**

\*\*\*

**Jerry Cook & The Musicmakers of the  
Outer Banks -Angelo Sonnesso-Rick  
Aguilar - The Wright Tappers'**

**VOICES & VIOLINS Festival Park a  
Classical Christmas December 11th  
7PM**

**PLEASE Help Support GEM &  
Nags Head Lions Club**



**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 7/15

Entertainment by the Lost Colony Players  
Lunch w/Manteo Lions Club

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

# Call to change (our) Alzheimer's Attitude...

**On a Wednesday in May the GEM family visited Jockey's Ridge** and rode to the top of the Dune, 5 people at a time, in a brand new ATV. Our Driver, Cliff, an 86 year old volunteer, gave us the ride of a lifetime. Four GEM participants ranging in age from a mere 80 to 94 years enjoyed the day. We strapped on our seatbelts and off we went down a tree lined path and up and up till there we were at the top of the ridge with the bay and the ocean spread around us. We all held on tight as we rode up the ridge with the wind in our hair, waving as we passed people. When we arrived back at the ranger station we were all flushed with the wind and sun and laughing exuberantly. This is the face of our GEM participants (People with dementia!). This joy of doing something fun belongs to all people. Being shut in a house sitting in the same chair all day long **does not have to be the face of Dementia.**

*The following article emphasizes our treatment/plan of care for our participants.*

## **Call to change Alzheimer's Attitude**

Day trips to the seaside, painting and community activities are as successful as drugs in treating Alzheimer's, according to one of America's leading experts on the condition.

Speaking at the Cheltenham Science Festival, Dr John Zeisel argued that dependence on drug interventions and leaving sufferers in care homes is outdated and often damaging.

Dr Zeisel, president of Hearthstone Alzheimer Care, an international provider of non-pharmacological treatment for people with dementia, said: "We need a complete change in attitudes towards Alzheimer's if we are to even begin to respond to this growing health crisis, which is expected to double in the UK alone within a generation."

"My own research and practice across the world, as well as the work of many other scientists, has proved that non-pharmacological treatment of Alzheimer's, such as environmental design responsive to their capacities, caregiver education, and visits to museums with research-based selection of art works and specially trained guides, can be just as powerful as other medicinal treatments in reducing symptoms of dementia and the big four A's of Alzheimer's: agitation, anxiety, aggression, and apathy."

Dr Zeisel wants cultural and arts organizations to develop programs that involve people with Alzheimer's in community life. He said: "Current attitudes to Alzheimer's are woefully outdated and could be compared to the way that epilepsy or autism was viewed in the 19th century."

"People living with Alzheimer's should not be continually confined to their homes, to hospitals, or to care homes. Treating these members of society as real people and enabling them to participate in society as far as possible benefits those living with the illness and society as a whole."

**"The stigma surrounding Alzheimer's limits our ability to see the real person. It is now time to see past the disability and understand that people with dementia are still there."**

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 Memory and Honor of  
Our Friend Naomi Hester*

*Many memorial donations were given to GEM in honor of Naomi Hester.*

*The memorials are from:*

*Rosie Fielder, Shirley Fischer, Mabel Clupper, Kathy Franey,  
Mrs. Huber and Margaret Birkemeier*

*These memorials were greatly appreciated and a real tribute to such a wonderful woman. Thank you all for the generous memorials and thank you to Naomi's family for allowing us to be a part of her life.*





GEM PO BOX 3601  
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

Phone: 252-480-3354  
Fax: 252-480-0359

**866. AFA 8484”**



*Stamp*

*Address*

### GEM News

**First of all** we want to thank All Saints Episcopal Church and the Unitarian Church for hosting our GEM family for the months of April, May, and June. It has been a pleasure to meet the wonderful people of these welcoming congregations.

We look forward to making new friends at St. Andrews by the Sea as we will be meeting there for the month of July.

Although we enjoy meeting new people and thank our church hosts, we are looking for a permanent home and welcome any suggestions as to a location that will work for us!

**Have a location???**  
**Please call Gail at 480-3354**

### July Highlights

1. We Welcome Robin Holten, RN as a new staff member
2. Harmony Café Friday July 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm –Jim Kelly & Angelo Sonnesso. This benefits GEM & Nags Head Lions
3. GEM’s Community Party July 15<sup>th</sup> from 12:30-3:30; lunch & performance by Lost Colony Players
4. David Spangler plays for our sing-a-long at 2pm Wednesday July 22
5. Every Thursday@ 11:30 –Exercise with Marcia Marshall (YMCA personal fitness trainer) and her husband Greg
6. Outer Banks Caregiver Education & Support Group meets the second Thursday (July 9<sup>th</sup>) from 2-3:30 pm. All Welcome!
7. **EVERY DAY:** brunch & meal prep, exercise, hot 5 course lunch, game, craft, snack, dominos

**Dates to be announced:**  
Visit with Rev. Green, Bowling with the Friends of Youth, Trip to Baum Center for Luau, Prep for Women’s Club Craft Fair (we are making dog biscuits & bowls)