

Lake Norman & Mooresville MAY 27, 2015

Alzheimer's awareness series held in June

BY BRUCE DUNBRIDGE

Correspondent



According to the Alzheimer's Association, the statistics regarding Alzheimer's disease are daunting. It is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and one in three seniors will die with some form of dementia.

Because family members are most often called upon to act as caregivers for afflicted individuals, the physical and emotional challenges that ensue can exact a terrible toll.

Recognizing the need of local residents for information and guidance in dealing with aging issues including but not limited to dementia, Denver United Methodist Church is sponsoring a four-part Alzheimer's dementia awareness series.

The program is facilitated by Judy Brockman, chair of the Senior Adult Ministry, a service of the Golden Disciples at DUMC. Brockman is personally affected by aging issues: Her father died of Alzheimer's

disease, and she is the caregiver for her 89-year-old mother, who lives with Brockman's family.

There is no charge to attend the series, which is a presentation of the Alzheimer's Dementia Awareness Team, a nonprofit, with all expenses paid for by the five team members, who are experts in the field. In addition, each of them has been personally touched by the tragedy of dementia in the family.

Meetings are 7 p.m. Thursdays in June at the church. The four seminars will touch on specific aspects of the issues involved. The first seminar, June 4, will consider, "Is it Just Aging – or Alzheimer's Disease?"

The presenter, Robert Brown, is a licensed clinical social worker, as well as a certified dementia practitioner and trainer. He is CEO of Supportive Solutions of Hickory and has more than 20 years of experience dealing with behavioral health issues.

The seminar on June 11 will deal with the issue of "Avoiding Financial Disaster." The speaker, David Hudson, is a certified estate planner, a registered financial consultant and an author. He has 20 years of experience helping families "use advanced planning techniques to pay for long-term, health-care expenses."

"Protecting Your Legal Rights" will be addressed on June 18 by Hickory attorney Tom Hannah. He has 30 years of experience helping families with legal matters.

Susan Vincent will speak on "Alzheimer's Disease, Managing Behaviors" on June 25. Vincent, the owner of the Hickory franchise of Home Instead Senior Care, founded Hickory's Senior Information Resources Inc., a nonprofit.

Each of the four sessions will last approximately one hour, with time allowed afterward for individual questions, at which time consultations may be offered to direct individuals to the right agency for further information or help.

It is not necessary for interested individuals to attend all four sessions and no advance sign-up is required. Attendance at previous sessions has averaged 35, so there is ample opportunity for individual questions to be addressed.

"A group like this is a godsend, helping individuals who are going through issues of aging, dementia or Alzheimer's," said Brockman. "It can be such a burden that you may find it hard to function on a day to day basis, You learn along the way as you try to adapt to the needs of your loved one."

"It helps to talk with someone who has been in this situation before," Hudson added. "It's a difficult, and at times even terrifying, journey, and there is no one better able to help you because they know what you are going through."

For Hudson personally, sharing valuable information is critical. "It touches my heart," he said, "because people are so much in need of help and encouragement. We don't want to give the impression that we have all the answers, but we can point people in the right direction."

Bruce Dunbridge is a freelance writer. Have a story idea for Bruce? Contact him at

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LEARN MORE:

To register for the seminars, held 7 p.m. June 4, 11, 18 and 25 at Denver UMC, 3910 N. N.C. 16 Business, Denver, call 704-483-8346.

For information, call Judy Brockman at 678-576-1704.

Information on ADAPT is available on its Facebook page (Alzheimer's Dementia Awareness Professional Team).

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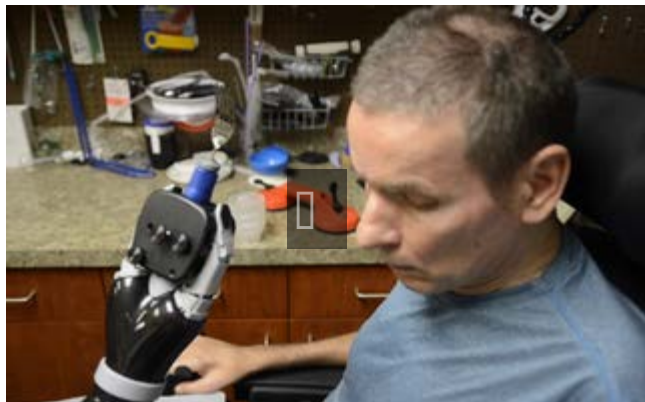
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