



Carolyn Cristina Manzoni will host a free presentation this Friday on creating a more dementia-friendly community. (Diane Urbani de la Paz/for Peninsula Daily News)

# 'Dementia Friends' presentation this week in Port Hadlock

Session is part of nationwide initiative

By Diane Urbani de la Paz

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PORT HADLOCK — Each of us has a chance to make our town a more inclusive place. And the little things — brief conversations, an offer of help — make a big difference.

That's the message from Carolyn Cristina Manzoni, the certified dementia practitioner who'll give a free presentation this Friday on "Dementia Friends."

"This is for anybody on the ground level: care partners, family members, people who work with people who have memory loss," Manzoni said of the talk.

Set for 1:45 p.m. Friday at the Jefferson County Library, 620 Cedar Ave., this session is part of a nationwide initiative. Its aim: to help people in rural communities understand their neighbors who are living with dementia.

People in the early stages of the condition are also welcome, Manzoni said.

Preregistration is necessary, so she and assistant Randi Winter encourage RSVPs at [RLWintin@gmail.com](mailto:RLWintin@gmail.com) or 360-379-3661.

The session is part of a pilot program, Manzoni said, noting that more information is found at [DementiaFriendsUSA.org](http://DementiaFriendsUSA.org). More than 39,000 Dementia Friends have joined this effort across the country, according to the site. In Washington state, the Dementia Action Collaborative, a public-private partnership, is taking the lead.

In the presentation, Manzoni will explore what it's like to live with dementia; dementia-friendly communication skills and actions people can take in their everyday lives.

These actions can be big or small, Manzoni said. For example, “If you see somebody struggling with their money in the grocery store, you can’t assume they have dementia. But instead of having a frustrated, impatient attitude, you might be able to help them,” she said. Another action: If you know a neighbor or friend is living with dementia, offer to bring a meal over. Sit and talk a while.

This first Dementia Friends session is just to begin the conversation, Manzoni added. She envisions communitywide awareness and better services for people with dementia — which starts with one person talking to another. When we connect with our neighbors who are dealing with memory loss, she said, we begin to get free of stigma and stereotype. Most important, we can help others who suffer from loneliness.

“What matters,” Manzoni said, “is the connection.”

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### **Dementia resources available in Jefferson County**

PORT HADLOCK — Two gatherings for people living with dementia and for their family and friends are coming up: one that happens every month and one brand-new program.

The Memory Cafe, a monthly get-together for people dealing with memory loss, will meet at 2 p.m. this Thursday. The place is Ferino’s Pizzeria, 846 Ness’ Corner Road, and preregistration is not needed. There’s no cost except for any pizza, salad or beverages participants want to order.

This is purely a social gathering with time for conversation and companionship. Participants can talk about everyday concerns they have as they cope with dementia.

The Memory Cafe meets at Ferino’s on the fourth Thursday of the month. For more information, contact Patricia Smith at [patriciandjaap@olympus.net](mailto:patriciandjaap@olympus.net) or 360-379-4186.

On May 31, certified dementia practitioner Carolyn Cristina Manzoni will host TimeSlips, a free program at the Jefferson County Library, 620 Cedar Ave. In this circle from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., everyone is invited to tell stories



inspired by pictures Manzoni and co-facilitator Randi Winter provide. It's all about imagination and fun — rather than memory, Manzoni said.

There's no need to sign up for TimeSlips, but anyone who is interested is encouraged to phone 360-379-3661 or email Winter at [RLWintin@gmail.com](mailto:RLWintin@gmail.com).



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