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EDITOR'S PICK

FEATURED

Dieterich woman receives governor's volunteer award

Charles Mills Daily News

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Shannon Nosbisch recently received the 2020 Governor's Volunteer Service award. Nosbisch is co-founder of Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness.



A Dieterich woman became one of 27 honored across the state by Gov. J.B. Pritzker this week, receiving a 2020 Governor's Volunteer Service Award.

Shannon Nosbisch received the governor's award for East Central Illinois under the senior category for her work at the Suzette Brumleve Memorial Effingham Public Library.

There were 215 nominations for the 27 awards. Nosbisch was nominated by Effingham Public Library Assistant Director Johnna Schultz.

"I nominated Shannon since she's been a big part of the education around dementia and helping to dispel a lot of the stigma around a dementia diagnosis for people in our region," Schultz said. "We've been working collaboratively since 2014."

"All these things that Shannon does for the most part she volunteers," Schultz said. "So this is amazing."

Nosbisch said discussions were underway with Schultz about the possibility of opening a resource center before the library moved from the intersection of East Market Avenue and North Fourth Street to its current location at 200 North Third Street in fall of 2015.

When the new library reopened, a special area was created called Forget-Me-Not Resource Center with information and materials provided by Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness (EAAA), a nonprofit organization co-founded by Nosbisch, a certified dementia practitioner and dementia care specialist. The library section now features 200 different resources of information about the two diseases.

"At first, we only had information about Alzheimer's and Johnna was a major help with that," Nosbisch said.

“Within a year, I had people calling me with different dementias like Frontotemporal dementia and Lewy Body dementia,” Nobsisch said.

Nobsisch said since several people in the area were experiencing those types of dementia they added information about them along with their original Alzheimer’s information.

“Depending upon who you talk to, there is over 100 types of dementia,” Nobsisch said. “They say education is one of the best ways a caregiver can care for someone with dementia.”

“There are a lot of challenges for caregivers,” Schultz said. “Some caregivers are experiencing depression themselves.”

“When Amy and Shannon started doing this their reason was they couldn’t find support when they needed it,” Schultz said. “So, they knew they needed to provide the information they didn’t have for our community.”

Nobsisch co-founded Effingham Area Alzheimer’s Awareness with her daughter, Amy Sobrino.

“My daughter is the one who really got this started,” Nobsisch said. “My mother-in-law had Alzheimer’s.”

Nobsisch said her kids grew up in a family taking care of an Alzheimer’s patient. When her daughter started college, she decided to study geriatric social work. During her coursework, Sobrino had an internship with the Alzheimer’s Association in St. Louis and Memory Care Home Solutions (MCHS), where she is employed today. Sobrino has a master’s degree and is a licensed clinical social worker.

Sobrino wanted to bring the wealth of information she had learned about Alzheimer’s and dementia through her training and hands-on work experience back to Effingham County.

“She knew what a struggle it was with our family to care for my mother-in-law,” Nobsisch said. “She asked me if I wanted to form a not-for-profit agency here in Effingham County. And I said sure.”

“It evolved from that,” Nobsisch said. “We are just wanting to help anybody who needs help dealing with the disease. I just wish I knew then what I know now.”

Nobsisch focuses on one resource such as a book, DVD or something in the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center by writing a review she calls the “Forget-Me-Not Spotlight.” She is currently developing partnerships with local newspapers to publish a monthly article titled “Memory Moment” offering tips to caregivers and dementia-related information.

The Forget-Me-Not Resource Center also has information about brain health. Nobsisch said learning a musical instrument, new language, maintaining a good diet, exercise and staying active could help delay dementia or possibly prevent it.

Nobsisch said they developed several reminiscence tool kits designed to trigger a patient’s lost memories. Each toolkit is in a plastic box filled with several items, including needle point and sewing, fishing and farming just to name a few. Someone who has fished most of their life would want to explore a fishing reminiscence toolkit while someone engaged in farming throughout the years would sort through a farming toolkit to find that item that might trigger a past memory.

A limited number of reminiscence toolkits are available for checkout at the Forget-Me-Not Resource Center at the Effingham Public Library. However, Nobsisch said the toolkits might spark an idea for someone who wanted to create their own reminiscence toolkit focusing on an area of interest.

Some of Effingham Area Alzheimer’s Awareness community programs and initiatives include community education series, Friends in Rural Places and Forget-Me-Not Cafe held at Tuscan Hills Winery in cooperation with Willowbrook Memory Support Residences, Memory Moments and Forget-Me-Not Spotlight articles.

EAAA, which started with one resource center at Effingham Public Library, now has Forget-Me-Not Resource Centers at Evans Public Library of Vandalia, Flora Public Library, Greenup Township Public Library, Mattoon Pubic Library, Newton Public Library and Shelbyville Public Library. Each resource center offers books, videos and reminiscence toolkits available free of charge for the public to use.

Nosbisch also has community education programs in Fayette, Clay, Jasper, Cumberland, Coles and Shelby counties in addition to programs she offers at the Effingham Public Library. Some programs she personally presents while others are presented by professionals in the subject title field, including elder law, long-term care and communications for caregivers. She also provides educational and informational programs to businesses interested in learning how to help dementia patients.

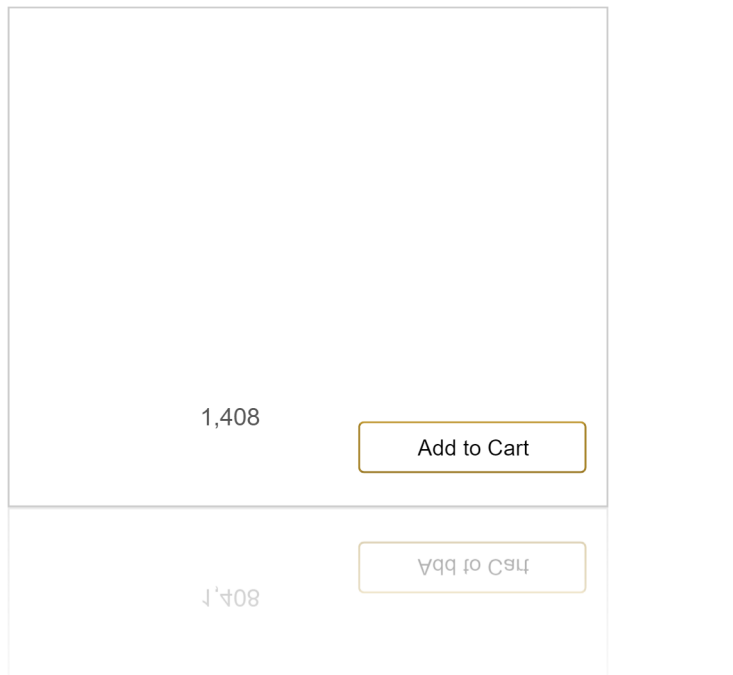
Currently, all in-person community educational programs have been canceled until COVID-19 is under control. She says her average class size is 30.

Nosbisch said she appreciates the help the EAAA organization has received from the community.

Teutopolis State Bank hosts an annual charitable cookout and donates the proceeds to a nonprofit organization. In 2016, the bank chose EAAA. She said many of the books that are in the resource center today were purchased with donations that were generated by the cookout.

Nosbisch said EAAA is always looking for dedicated volunteers and appreciates donations and monetary gifts.

For more information about Effingham Area Alzheimer's Awareness or Alzheimer's or dementia contact Nosbisch at 217-663-0010, eaaa.shannon@gmail.com or Sobrino at 618-363-8372, eaaa.amy@gmail.com or by visiting their website at effinghamalz.org.




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Divorcing Parents Class

Effingham, IL



WED
23

THU
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FRI
25

SAT
26

SUN
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MON
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TUE
29

WED
30

THU
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Effingham Public Library Events

Effingham, IL

Drive-Thru Flu Shot Clinic

Cornerstone Church

Effingham Farmers Market

Effingham, IL

FRI
2

SAT
3

SUN
4

Food Truck Saturdays

Tuscan Hills Winery

MON
5

TUE
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WED
7

THU
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FRI
9

Praise in Effingham worship broadcast

Community of Chr

Charles Mills

Reporter/Videographer

Charles Mills is reporter and videographer for the Effingham Daily News. A 1983 graduate of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, he worked as senior video editor for a Nashville television station. He is a native of Vandalia.



