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PRESS RELEASE

Annual Reports

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From left, Ray and Carolyn Finn review information in the "Caregivers Bible" with Karen Sutherland, ADC, CDP, activities director at The Pavilion at BRMC.

The Pavilion at BRMC offers care and support for those with Alzheimer's and dementia

Becoming progressively forgetful can be an indication of the looming onset of dementia or Alzheimer's disease as people age, but it hardly happened that way for Carolyn Finn's husband, Ray. He was always considered to be a sharp-minded individual until there was a distinct change shortly after an explosion occurred 11 years ago at their Lawton Road home. "His dementia was caused from a gas line explosion at home," Mrs. Finn said. "I noticed the dementia right afterwards because he suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome. It was diagnosed by a psychologist."

From that point on, "His dementia started to get progressively worse," Mrs. Finn said. November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. Taking care of him ultimately became a 24-hour job for Mrs. Finn, giving her little time to relax and many sleepless nights. "I slept with a hearing aid in so I could hear him," she said. Complicating matters was the fact her husband became diagnosed with Parkinson's disease two years ago. Mrs. Finn knew in her heart she needed more help but she didn't want to disappoint her husband, herself or others. Finally, "A doctor in the summer of 2005 said he needed 24-hour care," Mrs. Finn said. "He didn't want to go. He preferred to stay at home," Mrs. Finn said. So with no small amount of reluctance and guilt, she brought him to The Pavilion at BRMC, which is adjacent to Bradford Regional Medical Center. "It was a hard decision," Mrs. Finn said. "In many ways, it broke my heart." Through guidance and counseling from The Pavilion's staff, Mrs. Finn said she learned to rid herself of the guilt of taking her husband to a nursing home which can provide 24-hour skilled care. Helping lead the way for Mrs. Finn was Karen Sutherland, CDP, ADC, who is a certified dementia practitioner and also The Pavilion's certified activities director. She earned her dementia practitioner certification through the National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners. Mrs. Sutherland said, "Certified dementia practitioner is sort of new in the field so it's unusual for The Pavilion to have two who are certified." The other certified dementia practitioner is Laura Mansour, BSN. "Karen was a big help. I cried on Karen's shoulder, literally," Mrs. Finn said.

Just as importantly, Mrs. Sutherland offered counseling. "Karen was helpful because she said, 'You need to help yourself.' She also said, 'You need to understand he needs to be there.' She helped me get rid of the guilt," Mrs. Finn said. "When it's time to place someone in a nursing home, families are often physically and emotionally exhausted," said Mrs. Sutherland. She co-leads BRMC's Alzheimer's Support Group which meets the last Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at The Pavilion. Meetings are open to anyone who wants to attend, whether or not they have a family member or friend who's a resident at The Pavilion. Each month the Alzheimer's Support Group is led by either Mrs.

Sutherland or Mrs. Mansour. Nancy Crandall of Bradford helped co-found BRMC's Alzheimer's Support Group after dealing with the struggle of having both parents develop dementia. Her parents, Henry and Marion Lathrop, got to the point they required additional help and moved into a shared room at a skilled-care facility in 2002 in Bradford. Mr. Lathrop then moved into BRMC's Pavilion in the summer of 2003 and his wife also became a resident there nine months later. "They were in separate rooms at The Pavilion but it was better that way for them" because their mental conditions had worsened from dementia, Mrs. Crandall said. [more...](#)

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