

Caregiver Connection

Called to
CARE®
A program of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

A publication that connects caregivers with resources, support and each other

September/October 2017

Caregiver Cafés

Drop in to enjoy a snack, chat with fellow caregivers, and learn about health and community resources that can help you take care of yourself and the ones you love.

Sept. 14 and Oct. 19, from 2 to 3:30 p.m.

The Soul Center at Beth El Congregation
8101 Park Heights Avenue, Pikesville, Maryland

Info./Register: rachels@bethelbal.com or
410-484-0411 ext. 1103

Sept. 27 and Oct. 25, from 4 to 5 p.m.

Johns Hopkins Bayview
5th floor waiting room, FSK Pavilion
4940 Eastern Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland



Yoga, Chat & Chew for Caregivers, Oct. 20

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Sollers Point Multipurpose Center
323 Sollers Point Road, Dundalk, Maryland

Get rejuvenated with invigorating exercise, a healthy lunch and uplifting conversation. For more information or to register, call 410-550-1660.

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Phone: 410-550-8018

Web: hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmcc2c

Community Partner Spotlight: Alzheimer's Association®

alzheimer's  association®

the compassion to care, the leadership to conquer®

More than five million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease. It's the sixth-leading cause of death in the United States. In 2016, nearly 16 million American caregivers provided an estimated 18.2 billion hours of unpaid care, which is valued at over \$230 billion.

The Alzheimer's Association works on global, national and local levels to provide care and support for all those affected by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, including:

- A professionally staffed 24/7 helpline—1-800-272-3900
- Face-to-face support groups (64 throughout Maryland)
- Comprehensive online resources and information at alz.org
- A 24-hour nationwide emergency response services for individuals with Alzheimer's or a related dementia who wander or have a medical emergency

What You Can Do To Help

Contact the Alzheimer's Association of Maryland at 410-561-1337 for more information. Volunteer opportunities are available with the helpline, outreach and advocacy (bilingual English/Spanish speakers are especially valuable).

Community Event: 2017 Walk to End Alzheimer's

Help raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research by participating in the 2017 Walk to End Alzheimer's, sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. Walks will take place throughout Maryland, including Baltimore on Saturday, October 28, starting at Canton Waterfront Park. Register at alz.org/walk. To volunteer, call 410-561-9099, ext. 210.

Voice of the Caregiver: Shirl Parnell



Who are you caring for?

I'm caring for my mom who is 87 years old and living with Alzheimer's.

As a caregiver, what is the biggest challenge for you?

My biggest challenges are when I don't get support from my family and cannot get respite care to cover my mom. From an emotional standpoint, watching my mom go through her process living with Alzheimer's is very hard.

How do you take time for yourself?

As a caregiver, I take time for myself by taking part in a variety of activities, like support groups, caregiver conferences, musical plays, dance team, movies, church, volunteer activities, etc. As a caregiver, when I can't find respite care, it's very difficult to participate in the community activities I love to do.

What Called to Care services have you found to be supportive?

As a caregiver, respite care has been a huge help in making my life a little easier, knowing my mom was going to be safe at home while I tended to other things. It's also really helped my mother stay active and encouraged. Referrals to other valuable services have also been a big help, including to the Alzheimer's Association's support telephone line, Baltimore Aging caregiver conferences, the Coffee, Tea and Me caregiver support group, and Heritage Adult Medical Daycare. Each of these support services, and the Called to Care respite care volunteers, have been very important to me.

What advice would you give to other caregivers?

Serving as a caregiver for my mom the last five years has not been an easy job. From one caregiver to another caregiver, I'd offer these helpful steps: Accept help (especially with respite care). Focus on what you are able to provide. Set realistic goals. Get connected with local resources. Join a support group. Seek social support. Set personal health goals and see your doctor. Know you're not alone.

"I see Ms. Ella once a week or so for two or three hours. We just sit and do simple arts and crafts, like coloring or cutting flowers out of construction paper. Yesterday, we swept her porch and enjoyed the nice weather. Shirl is usually home, resting or working on her own tasks."

—Sarah Rasmussen, respite care volunteer



Time for You: Put Your Oxygen Mask On First

"In the unlikely event of a loss of cabin pressure, please put your oxygen mask on first before assisting others." How often has each of us heard this message upon boarding a plane?

Rev. Gregory Johnson, SMM, MDiv, reminds caregivers that this is the key to successful caregiving—both for professional and family caregivers. Your caregiving journey can be rewarding, but also difficult. Here are some small, incremental steps caregivers can do each day to promote relaxation, calm and a clear mind:

- Breathe.
- Be present.
- Begin and end each day with prayer.
- Lean on your "team."
- Seek therapy.
- Participate in support groups.
- Safeguard your own health and well-being.

Rev. Johnson is the senior advisor for family caregiving at EmblemHealth in New York.