JUNE IS BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

Heart Health and Memory
Heather Snyder, Ph.D., Alzheimer’s Association Vice President of Medical & Scientific Relations, has said “what we know is what’s good for your heart is good for your brain so eat a balanced diet but also get active, get moving and stay engaged.”

A diet that is rich in vegetables, fruits, olive oil and fish, such as the Mediterranean diet, may help protect the brain. There is increasing evidence that links healthy eating habits with brain health and cognitive performance in old age.

Exercise may also slow memory loss in older adults with mild to moderate Alzheimer’s disease according to researcher Fang Yu at Arizona State University Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation. After either riding a stationary bike or doing stretching exercises for 6 months, participants had significantly less memory loss than those who did not exercise.

Leading a healthy lifestyle through activities like those listed below may help to address risk factors associated with dementia.

• Control high blood pressure
• Manage blood sugar
• Eat a healthy diet
• Stay physically active
• Sleep 7 to 8 hours every night

“WHAT WE KNOW IS WHAT’S GOOD FOR YOUR HEART IS GOOD FOR YOUR BRAIN.”

Education Opportunities.
For those interested in learning more about dementia, a 4-Part Virtual Educational Series will be offered on Mondays, June 7, 14, 21 & 28 from Noon- 1:00 PM.
Milwaukee County Division on Aging Dementia Care Specialist and the Alzheimer’s Association WI Chapter are partnering to offer this series. Topics include Understanding Alzheimer’s Disease, Effective Communication, Understanding & Responding to Dementia Related Behaviors and the DICE

Importance of Friendship for Alzheimer’s Patients
A recent article in the Wall Street Journal drew attention to the importance of staying connected to family and friends for persons living with Alzheimer’s. There is no known cure for this neurological disease, but loneliness was associated with a 40% increased risk of dementia in a 2018 study. A 2019 study found that those with Alzheimer’s who have a close circle of friends had better cognition. Maintaining friendships requires determination.
Approach to Care. Registration is required. You can register by calling 1-800-272-3900. Other educational programs to watch for this Fall, sponsored by the Dementia Friendly Greendale work group, include a late September workshop on Effective Activities for Persons Living with Dementia such as Time Slips and Music & Memory. This workshop will be appropriate for family caregivers and paid caregivers. Watch for more information in future newsletters. A Research Update by the Alzheimer’s Association is planned for Wednesday, November 10. Watch for details in later newsletters.

Elder Isolation During Covid
The many restrictions accompanying Covid-19 compounded the isolation experienced by many older persons. To respond to this challenge, Anne Basting, UWM professor, prestigious MacArthur Fellow and originator of Time Slips responded by mobilizing people to send 150,000 postcards to persons in care facilities. By engaging people with memory loss in creative activities, they shift their focus to invention and spontaneity instead of memory and limitations. Early results showed a 41% reduction in loneliness for participating elders. Anne has a new book out entitled “Creative Care: A Revolutionary Approach to Dementia and Elder Care.”

At the Movies
This month we are highlighting the documentary film SPARK Robin Williams and his Battle with Lewy Body Dementia. This FREE viewing is on Thursday, June 10th 1:00-2:30 PM Central time. The documentary will be followed by a panel discussion including Mike Belleville and Barney Nelson who are living with Lewy Body dementia and LeeAnn Mandarino from Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health. The event is free, but you must register at http://bit.ly/SPARKshowing
The film is appropriate for all audiences, including family, caregivers, persons with Lewy Body dementia and professionals.

Coming Events
We are pleased to announce that the Greendale Memory Café will be returning in person the 4th Wednesday in August, August 25th, from 2:30-4:00 PM at the Historic Hose Tower building on Parking Street. Additional details and registration information will be available soon.

Longest Day: June 20th is the longest day of the year and a day when people all around the country take time to raise money for Alzheimer’s research and services. Local people, young and old, can join in a Hike to fight back against Alzheimer’s, leaving from the Greendale Gazebo at 2:00 PM. Refreshments will be available at the end of the hike. The Hike honors Lynn K, a member of the Dementia Friendly Greendale work group. To pre-register or make a donation, go to https://bit.ly/TLDMarilynLange

This e-newsletter is being provided through the Greendale Health Department and the Dementia Friendly work group of SAGE, Successful Aging in Greendale for Everyone.

We welcome suggestions for topics or information you are interested in. Call the health department 423-2110 or email us dementiafriendlygd@googlegroups.com. If you do not have access to receive the newsletter electronically, call 423-2110 to have it mailed to you. We will not share your address or email address with any other department or organization.