

Elaine's Hope[®]

LUTHERAN HOME MEMORY CARE

Reflection From A Caregiver

Marty Schreiber reflects on his time and experience in Elaine's Hope with his wife, Elaine.

"You are not 'putting' Elaine anywhere. You are giving her a chance to be who she is now. You are giving her the opportunity to live her best life possible."

Dear caregiver, until my counselor gave me this lesson, oh how I agonized about "putting" Elaine into assisted living. The counselor explained that the decision regarding placement is like a balance scale. Whenever the safety and/or health of the person with Alzheimer's or the caregiver are at risk, placement must be considered. She reminded me that 40% of Alzheimer's caregivers die before their loved one, so many to stress related causes. Caregivers have a 60% higher death rate than non-caregivers due to stress related causes. My children, knowing all this, told me emphatically they did not want to lose both parents. Therefore, assisted living was a must.

But you and I know that all of this is so much easier said than done. So very painful to the heart. One of the toughest necessary decisions I ever made...there will be emotionally filled moments as a new chapter in life begins.

It's natural to feel a mix of emotions-grief, guilt, and even relief mixed with sorrow. Allow yourself to feel these emotions. These feelings are entirely natural and a testament to your love and commitment. Choosing to transition to Elaine's Hope is an act of immense courage and love. It shows your dedication to ensuring the specialized care and attention needed, something incredibly difficult to provide at home as the disease progresses. This decision reflects your strength and unwavering desire to do what is best for your loved one.

FALL 2024
NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTER
CONTENT

REFLECTION FROM
A CAREGIVER: BY
MARTY SCHREIBER

HEATHER
BRUEMMER AWARD

KEEP IN MIND
DURING YOUR
VISIT...

CAREGIVER
SUPPORT

HOLIDAY
REMINDERS &
COMMUNITY
UPDATES

COMMUNITY
OUTINGS, TRIPS &
SIGHTS

Remember you are not alone on this journey. The support team here understands the complexities of dementia/Alzheimer's and is there for you. It is okay to ask for help. However, please know, you must take time for yourself.

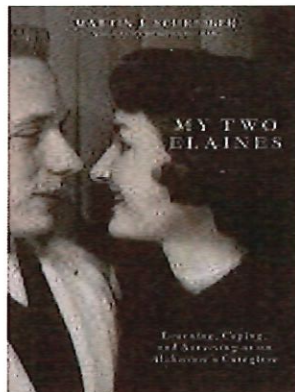
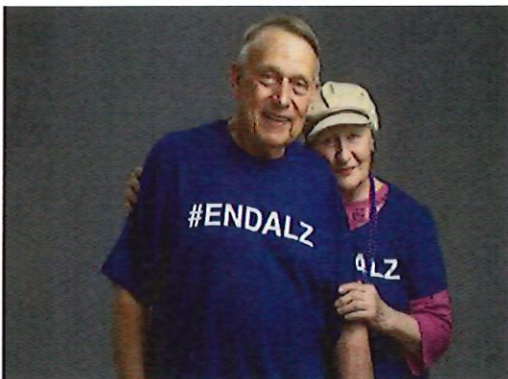
Your well-being is just as important. Taking care of yourself allows you to continue being the loving caregiver your loved one needs, knows and cherishes.

As Elaine retreated more into her own world, and I was withering on the vine, heartbroken, grieving, lonely. I took such great comfort knowing the care team was there giving her the love caring and compassion I so much wanted her to have. How great it was that the team was there to give care and compassion to both of us. Could I have survived without them? Maybe. Fortunately, I did not have to try.

For more information on dementia/ Alzheimer's, please consider reading *My Two Elaine's* by Marty Schrieber; or a recent article in *The New York Times*:

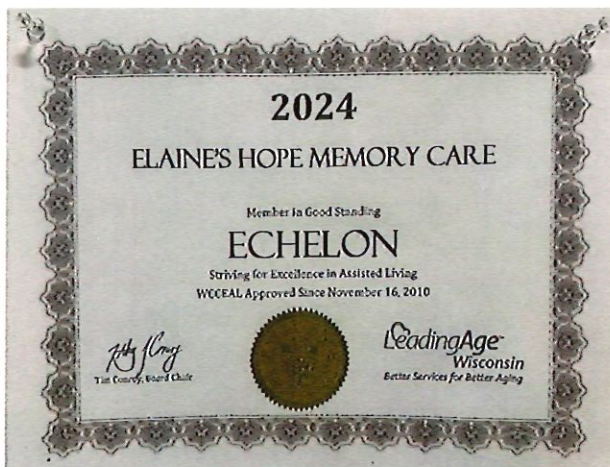
https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/23/well/mind/caregivers-dementia-mood-changes-management.html?unlocked_article_code=1.UU4.oHHz.gQPL3dX1kOWs&smid=url-share

Moments of Joy



Elaine's Hope Receives Heather Bruemmer Award

Dyonne Wilhelm, Administrator of Elaine's Hope Memory Care, accepted the **Heather Bruemmer WCCEAL Provider Award for Assisted Living Quality** on behalf of Elaine's Hope. Presented annually at the LeadingAgeWI fall conference, this is awarded to WCCEAL provider Assisted Living Communities (ALCs) that exemplify Heather Bruemmer by demonstrating going above and beyond to provide quality care to their residents. The ALCs selected for this award show examples of exceeding quality improvement initiatives by participating in the Wisconsin Coalition of Collaborative Excellence in Assisted Living (WCCEAL). By routinely submitting quality outcomes, checking benchmark scores, conducting and reviewing customer satisfaction surveys, and complying with regulatory requirements, Elaine's Hope is dedicated to setting themselves apart from the rest.



Keep In mind during your visit...

Safety is important in Elaine's Hope. Our goal is to keep employees, visitors, and vulnerable residents safe.

We need your help by following a few simple steps when you visit:

1. Try and only let yourself in/out of the building. When exiting, we ask that you do not let visitors in who do not have a key fob. This increases the risk for unwanted guests anywhere in our building, including the childcare.
2. Check in at the desk and obtain a visitor badge. All visitors, vendors, and employees are expected to wear a badge so we can easily identify someone who doesn't belong in our building.
3. **Only use your key fob when escorting your loved one on or off the unit. If you use the key fob unnecessarily, the security alarm for us to know when a resident is attempting to leave the unit unescorted will become deactivated.**
***Additionally, if you set off an alarm, please be sure to disarm that alarm you may have set off. It saves staff time and minimizes our worry thinking someone is trying to elope.**
4. Look behind you. When you are leaving the unit, there may be a resident or two who will try to sneak off the unit with you. It is important to make sure only you are the only guest leaving the unit and not any residents.

Are you healthy? Our goal is to keep residents and employees healthy during this winter season. While viruses are rampant, unpredictable, and unavoidable, it is best to be aware of our own health and when it might be best to stay home.

Before visiting, ask yourself- am I free from any cold, flu, covid, respiratory symptoms? If the answer is no, please consider delaying your visit or wearing a mask to protect those around you in the Elaine's Hope communities. Thank you!

When is the best time to visit? Visitors wonder when it is the "best" or "right" time to visit the resident. Each resident has a different sleep/ wake/ nap pattern. And just like most of us, each resident has their own "good" or "bad" days. More importantly, we really enjoy having the residents participate in the amazing activities we offer each day. These activities provide socialization, stimulation, reminiscing, physical and mental activity, intergenerational programming, and overall FUN!

Oftentimes, when a resident knows you are coming to visit, they don't want to partake in the fun because they fear they will miss out on your visit. While your visits are equally important, we ask that you keep in mind some of the items we have scheduled and consider coming during the "down time" to engage with your loved ones as this offers a nice balance of family, friends, and engagement. We strongly encourage you and any other guests to monitor the social calendars we have posted in the lobby and at the entrance to the units and consider scheduling your visits outside of these activities. **Space is limited and activities are reserved for residents to help minimize distractions.** Please consider a visit outside of scheduled activities.

Caregiver Support



Stephanie Leanes, Director of Caregiver Support, has been with the organization for over 14 years. Stephanie's primary role within the organization is to provide support, resources, education, and opportunities for respite for caregivers. Stephanie is also a certified PAC Independent Consultant with training by Teepa Snow.

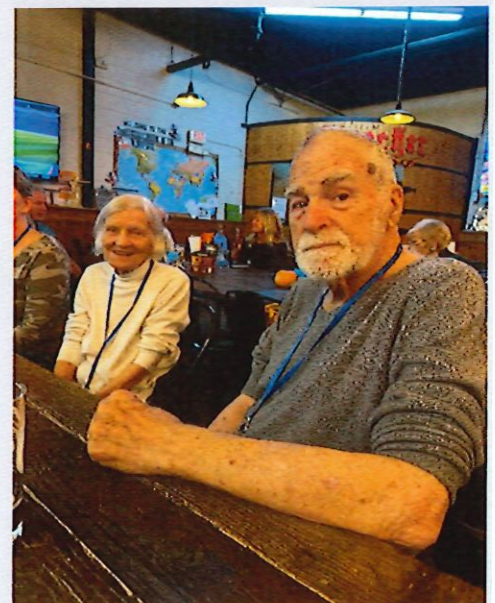
TAKEAWAYS FROM STEPHANIE

Do you know the importance of the occipital lobe of the brain and how it is vital to data input into the brain? The occipital lobe is responsible for processing visual information for all of us. It is especially important to the quality of life for someone with dementia when we are trying to communicate with them. As the disease progresses, it is even more important to understand how this visual input matters.

Less understanding of the data around them, the less the quality of life. Visual Agnosia is the difficulty of recognizing objects, faces or places that should be familiar to them. Dementia can also affect spatial ability and awareness as well as depth perception. When depth perception is skewed, it leads to safety concerns when navigating their environment.

How can we do a better job of visually communicating with our loved ones with dementia?

1. Use visual prompts. This can include a photo album full of pictures from the past or pictures of food items they can choose from. Rather than overwhelming them with choices, visually prompt them with making a choice between two objects.
2. Use physical contact to communicate your interest and provide reassurance. Holding someone's hand or putting your arm around them if it is appropriate can go a long way to increase your communication. It can communicate care, concern and trust.
3. Make sure the person can see your face at eye level. If they are sitting, sit with them. Do not stand over them. It visually



communicates that you are in a position of authority if you stand above them. Respect their personal space but make sure you both are connecting visually.

4. 93% of how we communicate is through body language. Be aware of how they are interpreting your stance. Do you look relaxed? What is your facial expression saying? If this is what they see, the words are going to matter less. Try to smile when talking about happy memories and don't forget to interpret their body language.
5. People with dementia can experience visual field losses. Which makes it difficult to see things outside of their direct line of sight. Standing next to them or behind them and trying to communicate can make it more difficult.
6. Increase the contrast between the background and what you are looking at to make it easier for them to see. Red, lime green, and for some the color blue can help better locate and identify objects if the background is a contrasting color.

Stephanie also facilitates two support groups every month through the Alzheimer's Association. The group meets at the Lutheran Home every third Monday of the month with a morning and afternoon group. Flyers are available at the check-in kiosk at Elaine's Hope.

Please call her at 414-258-6171 x726 or email at Stephanie.Leanes@thelutheranhome.org if you would like to speak with her.

FREE UPCOMING DEMENTIA EDUCATION WORKSHOPS!

Saturday, November 16th 9:30am-11:30am
Elaine's Hope Community Room

Tuesday, December 17th 5:30pm-7:30pm
Elaine's Hope Community Room

Tuesday, January 21st 8:30am-10:30am
Lutheran Home Board Room

RSVP to Stephanie (see info above)



Moments of Joy



Holiday Reminders & Community Updates

Use of Patios and Main Courtyard

Our patios may be covered in snow this winter, but you are welcome to take advantage of our *Courtyard Café* for a warm cup of coffee, bowl of soup, ice cream treat, or a nice change of scenery.

Holiday Gift Ideas

Consider these gift ideas for your loved one this holiday season:

- Store bought cookies (if sharing with more than your loved one)
- Photo Blanket
- Gripper socks
- Photo album (labeled)
- Fleece jacket

Dropping of new items for the holidays? Please include a name and drop off the items in the cart in the lobby

REMINDER – No real trees, wreathes, or extension cords allowed due to fire code

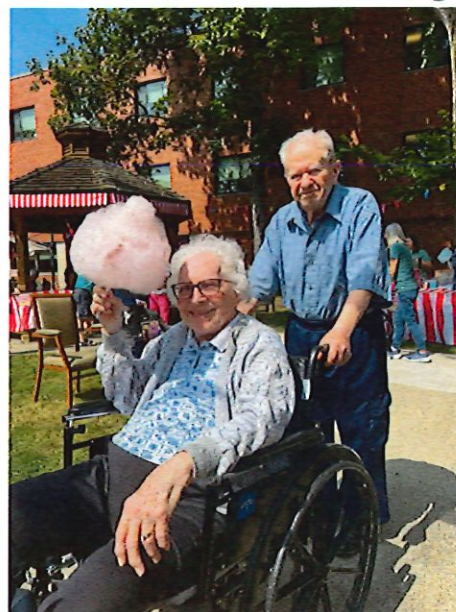
Donations Needed...and appreciated!

- Small stuffed animals for bingo prizes
- Body Spray or Perfume (new/store bought)
- Nail Polish (new/store bought)
- Activity Books (word searches, coloring pages)

Connect with a member of the team!

This time of year, is always helpful to work with a member of our team and help us clean and organize your loved one's closet. We need your help thinning out clothes, switching out seasonal items, checking for proper fitting clothing, and removing some of those items that are showing extra wear and tear. Any time you have to tackle this task, please ask!

Moments of Joy



Community Outings, Trips & Sights

Each year we are fortunate to have the luxury of our own bus to transport us to many fun and unique locations around the Milwaukee and Wauwatosa area.

Outings are planned to specifically provide an experience for residents to reconnect with the community. We see the benefit and joy it brings to our residents with this change of scenery.

Residents are selected on a rotating basis, including those who may not often have the opportunity or ability to leave the facility with family. If your loved one is not selected, you are always welcome to plan an outing of your own choosing.

Due to rotating our residents for outings, we also take into consideration these requirements and items:

- ✓ The bus only accommodates 3 wheelchairs at a time
- ✓ The bus has limited seating (staff included)
- ✓ Each trip needs a proper staff to resident ratio to ensure the safety of each resident during the outing. While there are residents and staff on the outing- we also need to maintain proper staffing ratios in the building
- ✓ Is the particular outing of interest to the resident?
- ✓ Has the resident been out of the building recently?
- ✓ Is the resident unhealthy or experiencing any mood or behavior concerns which may exacerbate with a change of environment?

