

# FRIENDS CLUB NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2016

*Celebrating more than 25 years of serving the Alzheimer's community!*

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### DRIVING AND DEMENTIA

People living with dementia and their families often have many questions about the safety of driving. This is a very complicated subject, as driving is often closely connected to independence. At a time when the future of one's independence is uncertain, clinging to driving can be a way to make sure this disease doesn't steal away more than it already has. I urge you, however, to consider that reaction time and spatial judgement abilities are affected by dementia. The person with dementia may not be aware of these changes, which makes the decision all the more difficult. Driving with dementia can put someone at greater risk for having an accident. Accidents can result in property damage, financial liability for damages, and, worst of all, injury to ones self or another person. Drivers in Maryland are required to report a diagnosis of dementia to the Motor Vehicle Administration so that they may be properly tested and re-tested by the Medical Advisory Board. The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration urge everyone to consider the following warning signs that a person's driving is becoming unsafe:

- Needing more help than in the past with directions or learning a new driving route
- Having trouble remembering the destination of the trip or locating one's parked car
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Having trouble making turns, especially left turns
- Feeling confused when exiting a highway or by traffic signs such as a four-way stop
- Receiving citations for moving violations
- Finding that others frequently honk their horns
- Stopping at green lights or breaking inappropriately
- Drifting out of the lane
- Causing damage to one's car without the ability to explain what happened
- Finding others are questioning driving safety
- Having difficulty controlling anger, sadness or other emotions while driving

Source: [www.mva.maryland.gov](http://www.mva.maryland.gov) and *Driving Transitions Education (NHTSA 2009)*

**For more information on how to report a diagnosis, call the MVA Driver Wellness and Safety Division at 410-768-7511.**

## Emotional Fatigue

### To deal with it, you need to recognize it

By Eileen Beal, MA

Source: [www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com)

Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, founder of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving, says there are four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers.

There should be a fifth on the list: Those who don't realize they have begun the caregiver journey – and their ranks are growing daily.

“They are helping Mom balance her checkbook, phoning Dad every morning to make sure he takes his cholesterol-lowering, diabetes, and arthritis medications, picking up groceries for a disabled neighbor – all sorts of things. They don't self-identify as caregivers because they are ‘just’ being a good daughter or son or neighbor,” says, Amy Goyer, AARP's caregiving expert and author of the recently published *Juggling Work & Caregiving*.

### Why is it important to “self-identify”?

Because the earlier you realize you have begun the caregiver journey, the earlier you'll understand the emotional weariness you may be experiencing – and start looking for ways to manage it.

“It [the weariness] encompasses a surprising range of feelings,” says Goyer, who is caring for her 90-year-old father, “and if you don't recognize what's happening and why, you'll just end up feeling guilty about your feelings...And guilt is a really useless feeling.”

### Recognizing the symptoms

“Early on, symptoms of emotional fatigue tend to come and go; and they tend to overlap, too, so people need to identify them – right off the bat – so they can take care of their emotional health and other needs,” says Jo McCord, a senior caregiver consultant at San Francisco-based Family Caregiver Alliance ([caregiver.org](http://caregiver.org)).



### Initially, symptoms are insidious, but usually include:

- Waiting-for-the-other-shoe-to-drop nervousness or tension
- Situational bouts of sadness, “the blues” or tearing-up
- Forgetfulness, inability to concentrate and/or mental sluggishness
- Intermittent feelings of frustration, anger or guilt due to interruptions and not being able to get things done
- Sporadic, and often situational, feelings of resentment, impatience, and/or irritability at colleagues, family members or the person you are “just” helping
- Poor or interrupted sleep
- A looming feeling of isolation
- A growing realization of the sacrifices – time, money, opportunities, etc. – you are experiencing
- An increase in aches, pains and, not surprisingly, blood pressure  
(Note: Recent research indicates this is worse for women than men.)
- **Five steps to better emotional health**  
If you have just begun the caregiver journey, and are experiencing the above symptoms, the following strategies will help you identify the new role you have taken on and help you manage the emotional stressors that can come early in the caregiver journey.
- Put a name on what you are doing. Caregiving isn't just helping out, it's taking on responsibility for the well-being of another person. “The quicker a person self-identifies as a caregiver, the quicker they'll be able to recognize and deal with the emotional roller-coaster [symptoms] that can come as caregiver responsibilities increase,” says McCord.
- Listen to what your emotions are telling you. “Those feelings [see above] are normal responses to caregiving...Realizing that – that you are experiencing what everyone else is experiencing – will go a long way toward helping you take action for your own well-being and not react to them in a negative way,” says Jody Gastfriend, LICSW, the VP of Senior Care Services at Care.com, an online resource connecting families and caregivers.
- Embrace change. “Early on, people need to understand that the keys to being a successful caregiver are flexibility and adaptability on the journey,” says Goyer. *continued...*

Let go. “Most of what’s causing [feelings of emotional fatigue] is out of the caregiver’s control, so early on, caregivers need to recognize their limitations and give themselves permission to let go of or delegate some of the responsibilities they have taken on,” says Gastfriend. “When they do that,” she adds, “they can get the ‘replenishment’ they need to continue replenishing others.”

Get help. A recent study published in the International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry shows that, even at the earliest stages of caregiving, caregivers experience increased feelings of well-being when they seek help.

But, cautions McCord, every caregiver’s situation is different so “the options that are going to help them have to be individualized.”

To find those individualized options, tap into the wide array of home-based services and community programs and supports that are available, no matter where you live. Some are paid for on an hourly or daily basis; some are provided for a small or sliding fee; some are free. Perhaps the fastest way to find the ones you want, will use and can afford is to check with the HR department where you work. “More and more companies have recognized that their employees are also caregivers and use consultants to help them deal with caregiver issues,” says Gastfriend.

But you can find a consultant on your own, too, by contacting local care managers, social service agencies, and/or national agencies, such as the National Association of Geriatric Care Managers. The caregiving expertise and knowledge of community resources these professionals can provide will help you prioritize your needs and help you locate the services, agencies and organizations that can provide the help you need to manage the emotional stress that comes with caregiving.

“This can be an expensive option, but they’ll be doing a lot of the heavy lifting for you...and often you only need a couple of consulting sessions to get things moving in the right direction,” advises McCord.

To find information on your own, start with your local Area Agency on Aging’s Family Caregiver Support Program and then widen your search net to include county or municipal offices on aging/disability, disease specific organizations (many publish excellent caregiver resource lists and guides), religiously-affiliated service groups, reputable caregiver Web sites and/or help lines, including those provided by Elder Locator (1-800-677-1116) and Family Caregiver Alliance (1-800-445-8106).



The Friends Club welcomes Susan Beasley as the (not-so-new!) program director. Susan has worked extensively in the senior services industry, most recently at Springvale Terrace. She has a bachelor’s degree from Rochester Institute of Technology and a master’s degree in social work from Howard University.

She is an enthusiastic leader of the daily programming at Friends Club. Susan took over as program director after Leah Covert decided to stay home with her new daughter, Eleanor.

Susan spent time training for the program director position with long-time executive director GayLynn Mann, who stepped in for Leah during her maternity leave.

Susan’s 16-year-old son, Xian, is a student at Walt Whitman High School. Her daughter, Sofiya is 13 and is a student at Westland Middle School.

In her spare time, Susan runs on the Capital Crescent Trail and is training to compete in a marathon. She lives with her family in Bethesda.

I apologize for just getting this introduction together now, although Susan has already been with us for some time. Please do drop in and introduce yourself if you haven’t done so already.



## **“These Hands”**

by the gentlemen at Friends Club, April 18, 2016  
With the help of Arts for the Aging Storyteller Candace Wolfe

These hands have been busy  
Applauding  
Playing drums  
Shaking hands  
Saying goodbye

*These hands!*

These hands have thrown curveballs  
They have thrown fastballs  
They have turned the pages in many books

*These hands!*

These hands have shaken a lot of hands  
These hands have washed my face  
These hands have helped me play basketball

*These hands!*

These hands have helped me heal people  
These hands have followed me across many countries  
These hands have helped me with Diplomacy

*These hands!*

These hands have chopped a lot of wood  
and washed a lot of dishes  
and picked up many rare, old stamps

*These hands!*

These hands have made radio stories  
that you can feel with your heart

These hands have schlepped a lot of people around  
and made homemade bread

*These hands!*

These hands have taught generations of doctors how to treat patients

These hands have rowed many boats  
and climbed many mountains

*These hands!*

These hands have held my clarinet

These hands have shaken the hand of the United States of America

These hands have caught a fast ball  
and thrown a runner out at first base

*These hands!*

These hands have embraced friends  
These hands have comforted my baby girl  
These hands have buttoned a lot of buttons  
These hands have repotted a lot of plants  
These hands have made a lot of dinners  
and written a lot of letters  
and made a lot of beds

These hands have hugged my wife  
These hands have caressed my grandchildren

*These hands!*

# IN MEMORIAM

## MICHAEL HUGGER

August 31, 1943 – February 13 2016



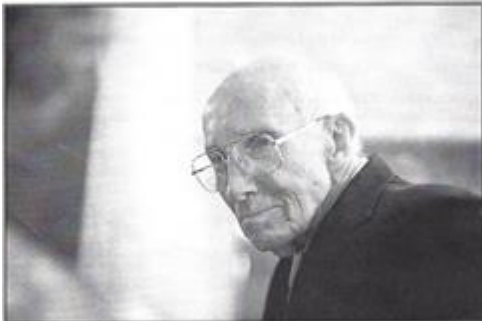
Dr. Michael Hugger grew up in Ridgewood, New Jersey and earned a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Cornell University. He went on to get a master's degree from Stanford University and a doctorate from George Washington University, both also in electrical engineering. Michael was a true patriot who served the Central Intelligence Agency for 37 years before retiring in 2004. While at the CIA, he received multiple awards for his work. From 2004 to 2008, he worked as a contractor in counter-terrorism for Booz, Allen, Hamilton. Michael traveled all over the world and was an avid runner. He also enjoyed golf and mountain climbing.

He loved reading about a variety of topics including military history, politics, finance and biographies. He treasured the ocean and learned to sail as a teenager at a camp in Maine. He was an avid Dodgers fan, attending games in New York and continuing to watch games after they moved to Los Angeles. He was also a New York Giants fan and followed the Redskins along with his son, Tom. Michael volunteered for the YMCA's Adventure Guides and Princesses program for 20 years. He was also a member of an investor's club. Michael was a gentle soul who always wore a smile at Friends Club. He is survived by Janet, his wife of 34 years, and their three children, Tom, Jacqueline and Courtney.



## SIMPSON "SIM" LAWSON

September 19, 1924 – April 9, 2016



Sim Lawson was born in High Bridge, Kentucky in a lock house on the Kentucky River. He lost his father at age three and was raised by his mother in central Kentucky with the help of his grandparents and aunts. He was drafted in the Marine Corps during WWII and was shipped to the South Pacific shortly before Japan surrendered in 1946. After an honorable discharge, Sim earned a degree in journalism from the University of Kentucky on the G.I. bill. He went on to get a master's degree in political

science, also from the University of Kentucky. He worked as a journalist for The Louisville Courier-Journal and City Magazine, among other publications. He also spent time working in the press office of the Environmental Protection Agency and for the non-profit Urban America. Sim took loving care of his wife, Polly, as she traveled the Alzheimer's journey. Sim was truly a citizen of the world. He loved keeping up with social justice issues, and he routinely brought in enlightening articles to share with Friends Club. Sim was a long-time member of Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, and he was always looking for ways to help out at Friends Club. He is survived by his three daughters, Paula, Jane (husband Earl) and Joan, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He will be remembered by all as both a gentleman and a gentle man.

# SPECIAL NOTICES

## UPCOMING CLUB CLOSURES

**Friends Club will be closed Monday, July 4, for Independence Day. The club will also be closed the week of August 15 through 19 while upgrades to the church are completed.**

### **Friends Club Caregivers Support Group**

Meets 9:30-11:00 a.m.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Monday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month in the church library

#### JUNE

Monday, June 6

Wednesday, June 15

#### JULY

Wednesday, July 20

No meeting will be held Monday, July 4

#### AUGUST

Monday, August 1

No meeting will be held Wednesday, August 17

## *A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS*

*We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Board Member Chuck Weir for once again sponsoring a fantastic Caregivers' Luncheon at Congressional Country Club. We cherish this special time to gather with other members of the Friends Club family.*



## BIRTHDAYS

### JUNE

NONE!

### JULY

Art L. 6  
GayLynn M. 29

### AUGUST

Bernie A. 1  
Bif W. 5  
Andy L. 10  
Wayne S. 16  
Kanesa T. 23  
David L. 29  
Mark R. 29

*Happy Birthday*



## **After Caregiving Support Group Forms at Iona**

Designed for those individuals who cared for a loved one with a long-term, chronic illness like Alzheimer's or another type of dementia, Parkinson's disease or stroke, this support group provides a forum to talk about the caregiving journey.

Professionals at Iona have found that spouses, partners, adult children and other family members and friends aged 18 and older may have been a member of a caregiver support group when their loved one was alive and would like the continued support of a group in this next phase of their life.

This group provides the opportunity to find solace and support during this new stage, while offering the chance to learn new coping strategies and to share and discover valuable resources.

**When:** Second and Fourth Thursday of every month from 4-5:30 p.m.

**Where:** Iona Senior Services, 4125 Albemarle Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016

**Cost:** \$10 per session. Limited scholarships available.

**Preregistration is required. Call 202-895-9448**