

## Visiting The Visionary

By Clare Kettell

On May 1, our group from Londonderry went to an interesting venue called the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) in Baltimore.

Visionary art is created by self-taught persons without any formal training. Their art can be mystical, humorous, and unexpected through the artist's own personal life. It is spontaneous and individualized.

We saw a ship (the Titanic) made entirely out of toothpicks, a huge bra ball consisting of hundreds of bras (left), a bird's nest about 20 feet wide attached to a building and much more.

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### In This Issue:

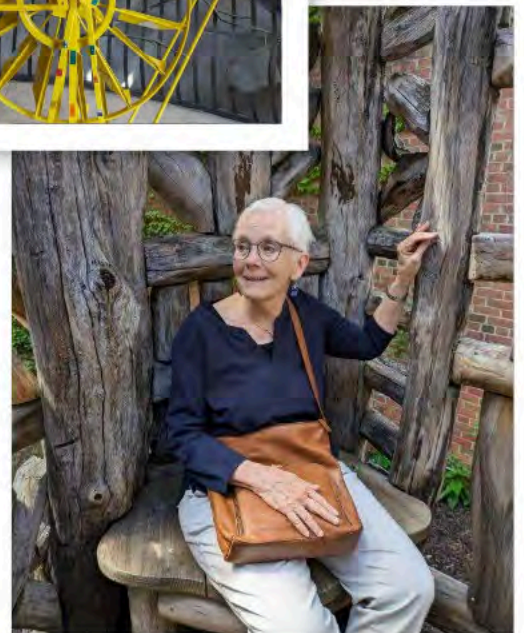
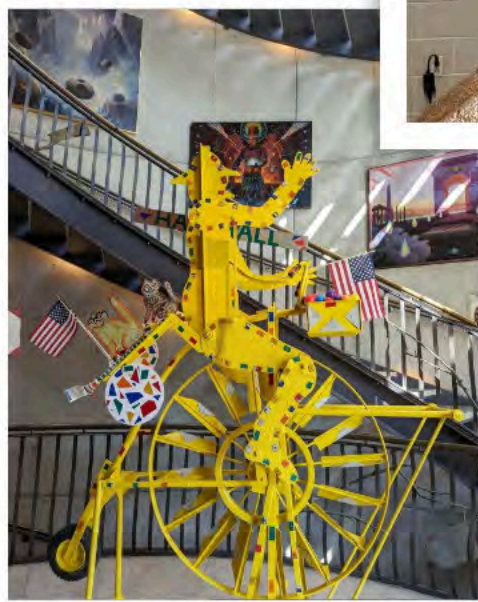
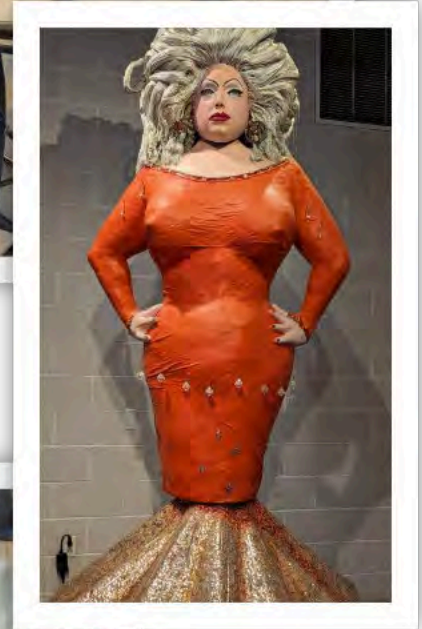
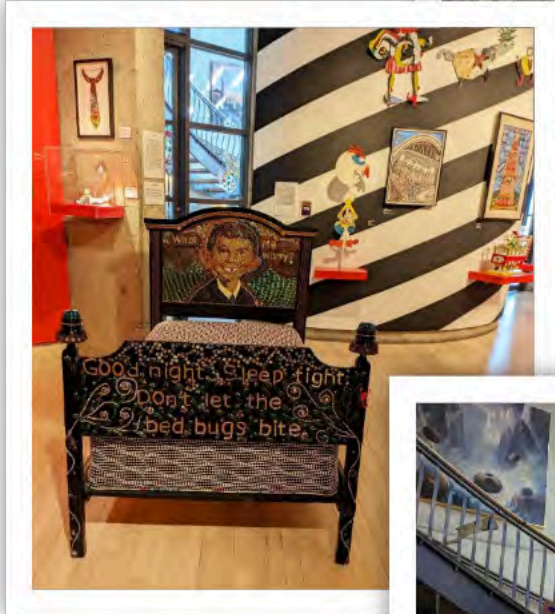
Museum Visit .....	1
Concert .....	3
Mother's Day .....	4
Fraud Alert .....	5
Contest Winner.....	6
Wine Tasting .....	7
In Memoriam .....	9
Birthday Milestones....	10
Creative HeARTS .....	11
CART Update.....	13
Day in Denton.....	14
Health Corner.....	16
Quiz Time Results.....	24
New Residents .....	24
Parting Shots .....	25

## Visionary Art (cont. from page 1)

There was a fart machine, that when stepped on, emitted realistic sounds and was so funny. There were sayings, quotes and writings—some were historic, some touching, some hilarious—mounted randomly on the walls here and there. All very interesting and entertaining.

Following AVAM, we had lunch at Double T Diner with reasonable prices and an extensive menu. There was a mound of pancakes with whipped cream and chocolate syrup put away by two in our group, and two others had something called “mile high meatloaf.” It was all delicious.

A good time was had by all, made possible by our thorough investigative planner, Erica Hardeo. ♦



# Big Band

By Florence Thompson

In the evening of April 30, a large audience gathered in the Clubhouse to hear a combo of accomplished musicians, in what might be their prime, play their hearts out in a solid hour plus of music. Their program began with an African hymn, on through a Eubie Blake rag, to Satchmo's St. Louis Blues, and then a break in order to ask and answer a trivia quiz question.

While a member of the band was reciting the details of remarkable record-breaking career of accomplishments in the world of popular music, he and the audience were surprised to hear a member of the audience blurt out the answer mid-question. Paula Gervis knows her music; the answer to the question was "Glenn Miller." The band then played three Miller favorite standards: "Chattanooga Choo Choo," "Moonlight Serenade," and "In the Mood." And the audience was in the mood. Scanning the room revealed attendees in a complete rapt involvement with the music.

The band consists of members of the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra: two trumpets, a trombone, tuba,

French horn and percussion. They are sponsored by the Music Performance Trust Fund. A recital of their individual histories revealed involvement in the histories of many nationally ranked orchestras. It was obvious that they were enthusiastic about this opportunity to get into their own mood using big band arrangements. Old favorites of their mature audience are seldom heard today. Some of the program's nostalgic pieces included "When the Saints Go Marching In," "I'm a Believer," "God Bless the USA," and "Walk With Me."

Erica Hardeo hit the spot again. The audience let her know that they will welcome a return visit from this group. ♦



# Mother's Day

By Florence Thompson

Mother's Day at Londonderry, May 12, was celebrated with a gift of a miniature flowerpot succulent plant placed in each cubby and a very special brunch menu for the special day. Each table was graced with an artfully arranged flower bouquet.

Residents were encouraged to invite family members, and many took advantage of the opportunity to gather with their loved ones. Hands down, the youngest diner was six-month old River Payne, great grandson of Anne Clark. And, hands down, the oldest diner was Margaret Bryan who that day was 101 years and one day old. God bless them both.



The enjoyment of the day was enhanced by the music of harpist Erin Baker. This was a repeat performance at Londonderry for Erin. Her graceful playing of the very large instrument was most appealing to her audience. Her internet identity says she is in her tenth year of performing, which is surprising given her young, fresh stage presence. An advantage of harp music is that conversations at table were easily heard, despite the large number of diners conversing in the room. Erin played many favorites for the enjoyment of a mixed-age audience. ♦

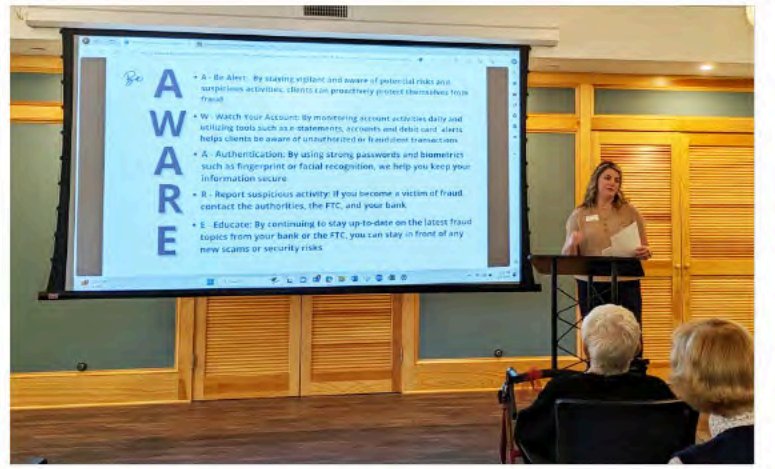
Photos by Ellen Ruberry

# Protect Yourself From Frauds & Scams

By Florence Thompson

On May 9, two representatives from Summit Community Bank presented a timely program to a large audience of Londonderry residents. However, they first took the opportunity to explain that their bank had undergone a merger with Provident Bank, and a more recent merger with Burke and Herbert Bank will bring about another round of changes. They took pains to assure that even though a person is not a customer of their bank, they would welcome requests for information on their topic: Fraud and Scams.

Many of the scams on their program were familiar to residents, having a long history, beginning before the computer era. Their presentation can be summed up in **A.W.A.R.E.:** Be **A**lert; **W**atch your accounts daily; use multi-factor **A**uthentication and biometrics; **R**eport unauthorized charges immediately; **E**ducate yourself. It is also suggested that you check the three available credit reports regularly.



The two presenters, Jacqueline D. Wilson and Hali M. Leeson, pointed out that your checks bear vital information for a scammer: your bank, your account number, the routing numbers, your signature. Your bank is alert to unusual use of your account and will, in some circumstances, call you with questions for validation. And in cases of possible scams, you should not be embarrassed to seek help from your bank.

The latest opportunity for scammers is artificial intelligence (AI). The presenters were not able to recommend solutions to the possible problems from AI, but again refer to the bank's overlook of your accounts and their possible questions on your behalf.

In the audience of senior citizens, some of whom have experienced phone calls allegedly from a grandchild or other relative, it is suggested that a family agrees on a code word alert. Also, a phone call question from an unidentified number should not result in your spoken word "yes." The recording of your voice replying "yes" can be used in a scam.

Many members of the audience related stories of their falling for and/or resisting the scammers' machinations. Be aware and alert. ♦

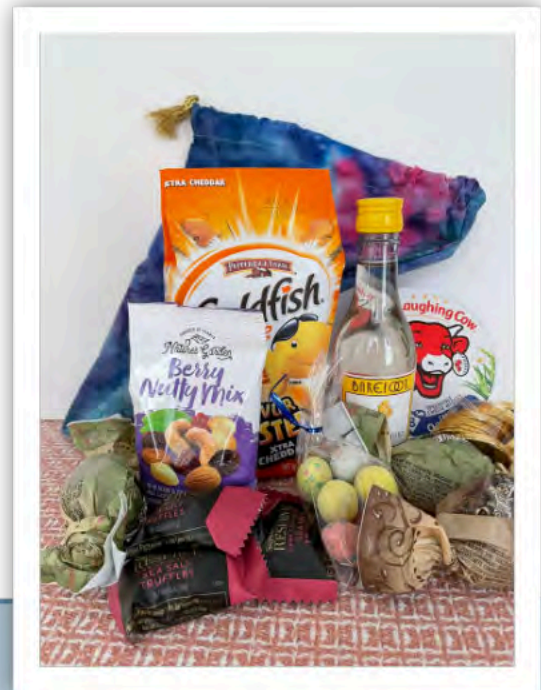




## Congratulations!

**FAITH DOBRENSKI** is the winner of last month's Tred Avon Time's "Where's Windmill?" contest. Faith received a handmade gift bag filled with treats. Three windmills were found on pages 1, 7 and 12 of the May issue.

Find the windmill(s) in this issue and enter to win your own gift bag of goodies. See instructions below.



If you would like to receive Tred Avon Times by email for easier reading or printing, please contact Cyndy Miller to be added to our distribution list.

## Where's Windmill???

**A MONTHLY CONTEST** open to all Londonderry residents!

Somewhere in these pages, we have hidden from **one to three windmill icons** like this one: They can be any size, any color, anywhere.



Your mission is to find all the windmills and win a small gift bag of goodies!

**This one doesn't count!**

To enter, write on a slip of paper

- your **name**,
- your **unit number**,
- the **number of windmills found**, and
- the **page number(s)** where you found them.

Drop off your entry in **box #338** in the mailroom **BY JUNE 20**. A winner will be drawn from correct entries on June 21 and announced on CATIE.

# Wines of Summer with Mike Mesko of Town and Country

By Susan Andrews

On the second Tuesday of the month, Mike Mesko of Town and Country discusses and pours six wines for residents. At the wine tasting May 14, we all paid a tribute to Ed Schmidt, who along with Marilyn, was one of the founding members of the wine tasting group. Mike said he was approached by Ralph Krump, a resident, about 10 years ago to hold a wine tasting for Londonderry residents. He thinks current residents Gail Woodall and Sheila Wheeler, along with Ed and Marilyn, were part of the original group.

The group of tasters on the 14th were Marilyn Schmidt and her son, Paul; Rose Ertz; Barbara Stoops, Jean Rhian, Sam Forlifer, Susan Andrews, Bill Lawton and his daughter and son-in-law, Beth and Dick. Mike described the wines as some old favorites and some wines that were new to the shop. We all learn so much and have such a great time with Mike!



With the wine! With the cheese platters that Chelsea provides! With each other!

We started our tasting with Dibon Cava Brut (\$12.29) from Spain. This Cava (Spanish for a sparkling wine) is made in the traditional style which means it is fermented in the bottle. This is labor intensive since the bottle is temporarily corked, sits while the sediment goes to the cork, the neck of the bottle is frozen, the sediment and cork are removed—and then the cork and wire cage are put on the bottle. How can they market a really good wine for \$12.19 with all that work!?

The second wine was an Italian wine, Perfectus Pinot Grigio (\$13.39). The brand is new to the store; you might be attracted by the bottle with its decorations on the bottle. This is a fuller Pinot Grigio with a nice herbal flavor. We all liked it, but thought it should be “perfectish” not “perfectus.”

(continued on page 8)



## Wine Tasting (cont. from page 7)

Our next wine was from Chile, Art of Wine Sauvignon Blanc (\$14.49). The label also attracts the buyer. Each of the wines by this producer has a famous piece of art for a label; part of the proceeds go to preserve art works. The art work for this wine was “The Wave,” a famous Japanese painting. This wine is made from grapes from all over the world - sometimes in the form of juice, sometimes with the grapes. This was a clean, crisp wine and very drinkable.

We then tried Les Hauts Plateaux Rosé (\$12.19). Mike referred to this as a “porch pounder,” a delicious and inexpensive wine that drinks easily. This was a dry rosé with hints of strawberry. Mike said this would be great with salads and seafood. We all agreed that this is definitely a “porch pounder.”

The first red wine we tasted was Coelus Tempranillo from Spain (\$9.99). This was a new wine to the store, and it was one of the group’s favorites. The three levels of wine in Spain are determined from the time the wine

is aged in the barrels. This wine was aged in stainless steel, no oak. And against all wine rules, it is okay to chill this wine, slightly.

Our final wine, Centonze Nero D’Avola, was from Sicily (\$16.89). We asked Mike about the grape, Nero D’Avola; he said there are over 16,000 different varietals in Italy, and this red grape is one of them. Sicily is known for “heavy, big, bold” wines; someone commented that Sicilians are not noted for subtlety. We ended up discussing the effect of weather change on the wine industry—such as sparkling wines now being made in England.

In asking the group what were their favorite wines, the two reds were top choices. But it turns out we wanted to select more than one wine—including the Cava was also a favorite. Bottom line, we liked them all!

Mike will return in the fall for additional tastings. However, during the summer we will have a beer tasting hosted by Beth and Dick on the first Tuesday of June, and then wine tastings hosted by Londonderry residents on the second Tuesday of July and August.

We all have a wonderful time at wine tasting—learning about the wine industry, enjoying items from a cheese platter, tasting some wonderful wines, even ordering wine, and having fun with other wine enthusiasts. Thank you to Mike for a really fun afternoon. ♦





# In Memoriam

By Florence Thompson

**EDWARD MATTHEWS SCHMIDT** grew up in Chicago and earned a BSEE (Electrical Engineering) at Northwestern University and MSEE at Purdue University. Joining the Borg Warner Research Center in Des Plaines, Illinois, Ed was a group leader in development of solid-state products, including missile power supplies, motor control systems for DuPont, DC to AC converter systems, and semiconductor ignition systems for automobiles.

Ed and Marilyn met on a bicycle trip under the auspices of American Youth Hostel. Together they pursued many activities: sailing, skiing, canoeing, and hiking.

Married in 1959, the couple moved to West Lafayette, Indiana, Ed in pursuit of the PhD degree from Purdue University. In a joint research appointment in electrical engineering and veterinary science, he worked in decoding neural information from nerves. Moving to Bethesda, Maryland, he accepted a research position at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). His research centered on determining if long-term connections can be made to control devices outside the body of paralyzed individuals. The second area of research was to determine if electrical stimulation of the visual cortex could provide a form of vision to a blind person.

While at the NIH he was active in the Boy Scouts of America, eventually becoming a Scout Master. With his sons in scouting, their activities included biking, camping, cycling, canoeing, white water rafting and skiing. Retiring from NIH in 1998, Ed and Marilyn moved to Easton because of sailing. He kept a consultant relationship with the Illinois Institute of Technology at the University of Chicago.



Along the way Ed developed equipment to reproduce music rolls for antique player organs, player accordions and other roll-playing instruments. His oldest son designed a website to advertise the rolls, leading to worldwide sales. Selling the roll-punching equipment, he continued to restore these antique instruments.

Ed and Marilyn moved to Londonderry in 2012 when they were no longer able to maintain their Easton home. Ed generously presented programs featuring his large collection of various types of music boxes, many housed in beautifully carved wood. He adapted a brightly lit calliope to fit on the back of his son's pickup truck, and on occasions they drove the lanes of Londonderry serenading the residents with old

(continued on page 10)

**In Memoriam** (cont. from page 9)

fashioned merry-go-round pipe music. They thoughtfully included the neighboring Heartfields on their route.

Another talent Ed shared at Londonderry was the brewing of beer. He and a group of residents produced and bottled various beer varieties. As the beers were aged, bottled and capped, the end product was placed in the Tred Avon Tavern refrigerator for the enjoyment of all. The only stipulation was that the bottles were to be returned. About a year ago he turned his beer-making leadership role over to one of the participants.

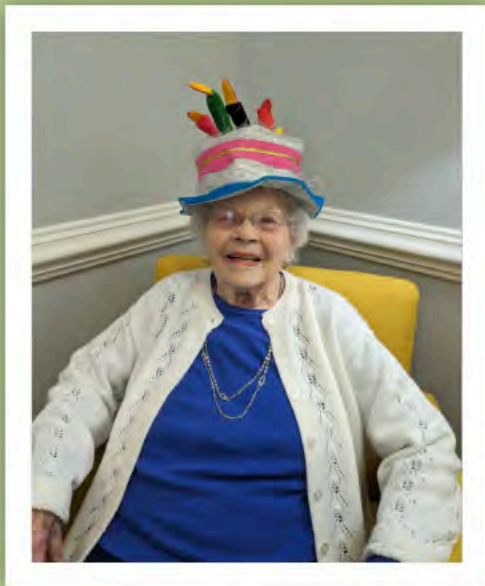
Ed was a loyal participant in the Strong and Steady exercise program, up to just two weeks before his passing on April 30. He frequently

entertained the group by wearing one of his extensive collection of unique hats.

At Ed's memorial service his sons fondly related that Ed reflected the saying "keep on keeping on." He taught patience. He had prepared his memorial service ten years ago. His presence at Londonderry will be fondly remembered.

Ed Schmidt was predeceased by his grandson Carl and his sister Carlene. He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Marilyn, his son John and wife Cindy of Milton, Delaware, son Paul and wife Kathy of Johnson City, Tennessee, and grandchildren Corinne and Jonathon. Ed's Londonderry friends and admirers join the family in mourning his passing. ♦

# BIRTHDAY MILESTONES



Margaret Bryan, 101

**A couple birthday milestones were celebrated in style last month!**



John Dalton, 95

“  
*They say with age comes wisdom;  
so we don't have wrinkles,  
we have wisecracks!*  
”

## Craig Caldwell

By Pat Bradley

The next time you run into Craig Caldwell around the campus somewhere call him Ko Ko and see if he responds. He might. He played that character, the Lord High Executioner in the Gilbert and Sullivan Operetta, *The Mikado*, when he was in high school. In those days Craig was taking voice lessons and was singing with various musical groups, often a featured soloist in churches and other venues. It is not surprising that music is still very important to him, and he spends part of each day in his second story room playing for his own pleasure. On the walls are hung a six-string guitar, a four-string tenor guitar, a four-string bass guitar, a banjo, and there is a second tenor guitar in an instrument stand, a key board against one wall. He says his music tastes are pretty eclectic, but he has a special fondness for '60s Rock. He accompanies the ukulele class and shares his gift with us at Londonderry Talent Shows.



When I asked if I could interview him for the June issue of the Tred Avon Times, he invited me into his room where he keeps all “His stuff!” In addition to musical equipment, the room also holds his photography equipment, and copies of his printed pictures, and external drives where he stores thousands of pictures, and his computer where he puts some order to it, and the printer where he makes the note cards. (The room also holds the “two cats’ stuff” as well, a very large installment for scratching, climbing and perching which occupies its own corner.)

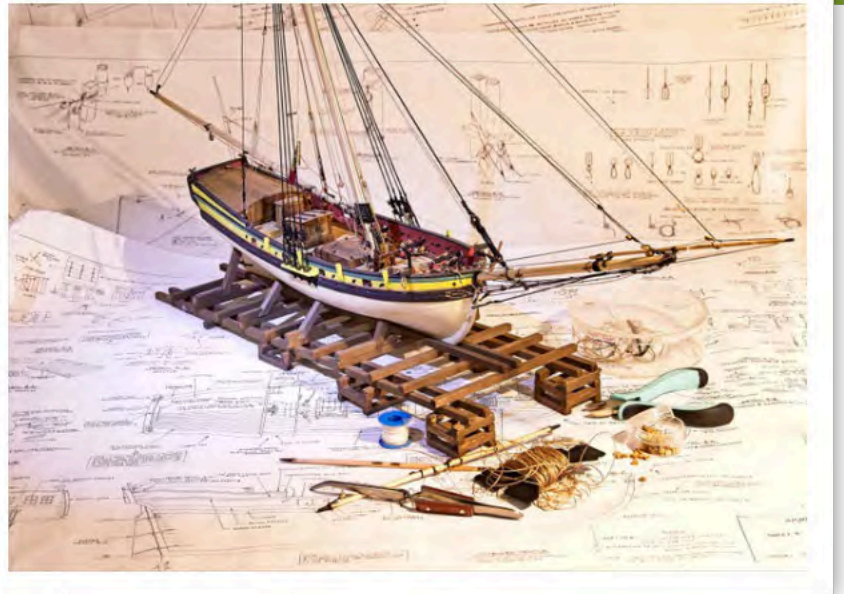
Photography is the talent for which Craig is most noted in the Londonderry community. His artistic photographs have adorned the walls, and his

(continued on page 12)

## Creative HeARTS (cont. from page 11)

Christmas cards have enhanced the holidays. It takes an artist's eye and an artist's sensibilities to create the pictures we see displayed. An artist thinks about light and shadow and proportion and angle and composition as well as color. Then, in addition, the photographer/artist must understand the workings of the camera and how it best serves his artistic purpose. Craig does all of this.

Craig has been taking pictures ever since he was a teenager with a Brownie camera and continued sporadically over the ensuing years, but he took it up seriously after



retirement: retirement first from the United States Navy in 1986, and then, after having a private practice in hematology and oncology and palliative care, and serving as a volunteer physician with Coastal Hospice, retiring again in 2005. Since then his days have also been filled with sailing, genealogy, model boat building, computer science, and book making. He has made books of photographs for family members and has a volume of essays he has written in memoir fashion, revealing an adventurous youth and some pretty humorous times.



I was treated to a preview of the next set of photographs ready to go on the wall, and they are stunning. It's hard to name a favorite among the amazing small animal shots and the misty, scenic landscapes. I asked Craig if he had a favorite, and he does: the Philosophical Squirrel. When the pictures finally go up on the wall, look for it! ♦

# The Mission behind C.A.R.T.

By Cathy Cooper

Londonderry's Satellite Rotary Club reached a milestone in its fundraising goals to support C.A.R.T., that is Coins for Alzheimer's Research Trust. This called for a celebration, and about 45 Londonderry residents and Rotary guests enjoyed cheering for the occasion. Bob Grill opened the meeting. Ken Sadler introduced the speaker Tiffany Ervin, CEO of CART.

Tiffany made it very clear that all the blue bucket money goes to the CART trust, all of it, 100 percent. And that means that all the money we collect in the blue buckets goes to support Alzheimer's research. The CART program provides "seed" money for the research work. Typically, grants are \$200,000–\$300,000 and run for two years. Applicants use the support in the early stages of their research to collect data and to carefully define their work. This seed money work enables the researcher to qualify to apply for a major grant, such as one that a large teaching hospital, or National Institutes of Health, or other government agencies could productively undertake.

CART started in typical Rotary fashion—One person had a "crazy idea" when a member of his family was touched by Alzheimer's. He saw the need for research for Alzheimer's/dementia and related afflictions. For years the Rotary around the country collected pocket change in blue buckets where they gathered for lunch. Tiffany and others saw the different ways that their staff could reach out to donors and potential donors. For instance, they



developed an online presence through regular videos presented via Zoom and YouTube. Adding these different approaches to fundraising has boosted CART receipts. The program continues. An early recipient of a grant is now the chairman of the committee to select recipients for new grants.

Rotary is an international organization. The CART fund is an independent, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in the U.S. CART was founded by Rotary and has continuing support from Rotary, but they stress that ALL the money raised specifically for CART goes to the research grants. They've raised \$13 million in seed money for grants.

At the end of the program, Calvin Yowell, Rotary club treasurer, presented Tiffany with a check for \$2,000 for the CART trust. The

(continued on page 14)



## **CART** (cont. from page 13)

money came from residents and guests making full use of the blue buckets on the Londonderry dining room tables.

Tiffany Ervin, long associated with CART, was our speaker. And what a speaker she is! She's a pro in using a microphone—we heard every word. And we admired her high heel spangled shoes! But mostly, we enjoyed and appreciated learning more about Rotary and CART. ♦



## **A Day In Denton**

By Patricia Bradley

Seven happy travelers, along with our super reliable driver Demetri Jenkins, just returned from a very pleasant Day in Denton, arranged by Erica Hardeo who enjoyed it as did the rest of us. The trip was very relaxed. It was close by, so the bus ride was not long. There was not a lot of walking, so it really wasn't tiring. And we discovered a couple of treasures we might want to return to someday.

The first treasure was on Rte. 404 a bit west of town and called Dusty Finds, but it was misnamed as no dust was actually spotted there—unusual for a second-hand store. It was bright and colorful; the fulsome inventory was cleverly and appropriately arranged. It could be a great place to shop if you're



looking for a gift. There was something of interest everywhere you turned, and in that sense it was entertaining. You felt enriched and rewarded for being there, whether you bought anything or not. That being said, we bought things. Gina Amy found a charming wreath for her door. Edna Blakely came away

(continued on page 15)

**Denton** (cont. from page 14)

wearing a lovely piece of antique jewelry. Evelyn Wiblin was ecstatic, “I found my teapot there!” I myself fell for a tiny brass frog relaxing on top of a turtle, and I have no idea what I’m going to do with it. Rose Ertz bought things too. She found the place “very nostalgic; it brought back memories.” Queenie Swaren felt the same way. Edna gave it a “top drawer” rating. She went so far as to call it enchanting. “It has a mystique about it.” Edna has a way with words. Erica resisted buying. She lives near-by and can visit any time.

Amanda, a former veterinarian technician, is the owner, and her husband Rob was there as well. Both were extremely pleasant and accommodating. She has been collecting for years, but opened her store only a year and a half ago in a building that has sold antiques for years. Amanda has given it new life. The people of Denton have voted it one of the best new businesses in town. If you go there, know that the hours are 10 to 6, closed on Tuesdays.

The next stop was to drive down Rte. 404 just east of town to the fairly new shopping area where the Denton Diner is located. Mostly the food was good, including, but not limited to Paninis, Buffalo Chicken Quesadillas, Chicken Tahita Wraps, Crab Cakes, Cream of Crab Soup. Our server was Bobbi Jo whom the Men’s Breakfast Group is acquainted with as well. Service was good. Queenie disappeared for a brief time. She was in the liquor store

next door, buying a brand of beer she thought they would carry. They did.

Then back on Rte. 404 just west of town and across the highway from Dusty Finds to Clayton Farms to find beautiful produce and



nursery plants and flowers galore. I was prepared for that having lived in Denton before moving to Londonderry, but I was not prepared for how much the farm stand had expanded. You could always get a jar of honey or jam or tomato sauce, etc., in addition to wonderful produce and flowers, but now you can get so much more, including dairy products, prime cuts of meat and even Duck Fat Spray, whatever that is. They even sell crabs and ice cream cones. Coffee, my favorite. We posed for a picture and then headed for home.

Thanks to Erica for making this enjoyable trip happen. She has plans for another day out in Denton in the summer that will feature sites in town including a treasure of a small museum there. I’ll be looking forward to it. ♦

# Cognitive Health and Older Adults

Cognitive health—the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember—is an important component of performing everyday activities.

Cognitive health is just one aspect of overall brain health.

## What Is Brain Health?

Brain health refers to how well a person’s brain functions across several areas. Aspects of brain health include:

- Cognitive health—how well you think, learn, and remember
- Motor function—how well you make and control movements, including balance
- Emotional function—how well you interpret and respond to emotions (both pleasant and unpleasant)
- Tactile function—how well you feel and respond to sensations of touch—including pressure, pain, and temperature

Brain health can be affected by age-related changes in the brain, injuries such as stroke or traumatic brain injury, mood disorders such as depression, substance use disorder or addiction, and diseases such as Alzheimer’s disease. While some factors affecting brain health cannot be changed, there are many lifestyle changes that might make a difference.

A growing body of scientific research suggests that the following steps are linked to cognitive health. Small changes may really add up.

Making these part of your routine could help you function better:

- Take Care of Your Physical Health
- Manage High Blood Pressure
- Eat Healthy Foods
- Be Physically Active
- Keep Your Mind Active
- Stay Connected with Social Activities
- Manage Stress
- Reduce Risks to Cognitive Health

Research shows that a combination of these healthy lifestyle behaviors may also reduce the risk for Alzheimer’s disease.

## Take Care of Your Physical Health

Taking care of your physical health may help your cognitive health. You can:

- Get recommended health screenings.
- Manage chronic health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, and high cholesterol.

(continued on page 17)



## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 16)

- Consult with your health care provider about the medicines you take and possible side effects on memory, sleep, and brain function.
- Reduce risk for brain injuries due to falls and other accidents.
- Limit use of alcohol (some medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol).
- Quit smoking, if you currently smoke. Also avoid other nicotine products such as chewing tobacco.
- Get enough sleep, generally seven to eight hours each night.

## **Manage High Blood Pressure**

Preventing or controlling high blood pressure, not only helps your heart, but may help your brain too. Decades of observational studies have shown that having high blood pressure in midlife—the 40s to early 60s—increases the risk of cognitive decline later in life. In addition, the SPRINT-MIND study, a nationwide clinical trial, showed that intensive lowering of blood pressure (even below the previous standard target of 140 for systolic blood pressure) lowers the risk for mild cognitive impairment, which is a risk factor for dementia.

High blood pressure often does not cause signs of illness that you can see or feel. Routine visits to your doctor will help pick up changes in your blood pressure, even though you might feel fine. To control or lower high

blood pressure, your doctor may suggest exercise, changes in your diet, and if needed—medications. These steps can help protect your brain and your heart.

## **Eat Healthy Foods**

A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases such as heart disease or diabetes. It may also help keep your brain healthy.

In general, a healthy diet consists of fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lean meats, fish, and poultry; and low-fat or nonfat dairy products. You should also limit solid fats, sugar, and salt. Be sure to control portion sizes and drink enough water and other fluids.

Researchers are looking at whether a healthy diet can help preserve cognitive function or reduce the risk of Alzheimer's. For example, there is some evidence that people who eat a Mediterranean diet have a lower risk of developing dementia.

While scientists aren't sure yet why the Mediterranean diet might help the brain, its effect on improving cardiovascular health might in turn reduce dementia risk. In contrast, the typical Western diet often increases cardiovascular disease risk, possibly contributing to faster brain aging.

Researchers have developed and are testing another diet, called MIND, a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diets. According to observational studies of more than 900 dementia-free older adults, closely

(continued on page 18)

## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 17)

following the MIND diet was associated with a reduced risk of Alzheimer's and a slower rate of cognitive decline.

### **Be Physically Active**

Being physically active—through regular exercise, household chores, or other activities—has many benefits. It can help you:

- Keep and improve your strength
- Have more energy
- Improve your balance
- Prevent or delay heart disease, diabetes, and other concerns
- Perk up your mood and reduce depression

Studies link ongoing physical activity with benefits for the brain and cognition as well, although a strong link between physical activity and Alzheimer's disease prevention has not yet been documented.

In one study, exercise stimulated the human brain's ability to maintain old network connections and make new ones that are vital to cognitive health. Other studies have shown that exercise increases the size of a brain structure important to memory and learning, resulting in better spatial memory. Aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, is thought to be more beneficial to cognitive health than nonaerobic stretching and toning exercise. One study found that the more time spent doing a moderate levels of physical activity, the greater the increase in brain glucose

metabolism—or how quickly the brain turns glucose into fuel—which may reduce the risk for developing Alzheimer's disease.

Federal guidelines recommend that all adults get at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of physical activity each week. Walking is a good start. You can also join programs that teach you to move safely and prevent falls, which can lead to brain and other injuries. Check with your health care provider if you haven't been active and want to start a vigorous exercise program.

### **Clinical Trials on Exercise for Cognitive Health**

Volunteers are needed for clinical trials that are testing different forms of exercise for cognitive health. By joining one of these studies, you may learn new ways to be physically active and also contribute useful information to help other older adults in the future! To learn more, visit the [Alzheimers.gov](https://www.alzheimers.gov) Clinical Trials Finder to search for a trial in your area.

### **Keep Your Mind Active**

Being intellectually engaged may benefit the brain. People who engage in personally meaningful activities, such as volunteering or hobbies, say they feel happier and healthier. Learning new skills may improve your thinking ability, too. For example, one study found that older adults who learned quilting or digital photography had more memory improvement than those who only socialized or did less cognitively demanding activities. Some of the research on engagement in activities such as music, theater, dance, and

(continued on page 19)

## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 18)

creative writing has shown promise for improving quality of life and well-being in older adults, from better memory and self-esteem to reduced stress and increased social interaction.

However, a recent, comprehensive report reviewing the design and findings of these and other studies did not find strong evidence that these types of activities have a lasting, beneficial effect on cognition. Additional research is needed, and in large numbers of diverse older adults, to be able to say definitively whether these activities may help reduce decline or maintain healthy cognition.

Lots of activities can keep your mind active. For example, read books and magazines. Play games. Take or teach a class. Learn a new skill or hobby. Work or volunteer. These types of mentally stimulating activities have not been proven to prevent serious cognitive impairment or Alzheimer's disease, but they can be fun! Plus, findings from observational studies suggest that some informal mentally stimulating activities, such as reading or playing games, may lower the risk of Alzheimer's-related cognitive impairment and dementia.

Some scientists have argued that such activities may protect the brain by establishing "cognitive reserve." They may help the brain become more adaptable in some mental functions so it can compensate for age-related brain changes and health conditions that affect the brain.

Some types of cognitive training conducted in a research setting also seem to have benefits. For the Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly (ACTIVE) trial, healthy adults 65 and older participated in 10 sessions of memory training, reasoning training, or processing-speed training. The sessions improved participants' mental skills in the area in which they were trained with evidence suggesting these benefits persisted for two years.

Be wary of claims that playing certain computer and online games can improve your memory and other types of thinking as evidence to back up such claims is evolving. There is currently not enough evidence available to suggest that computer-based brain training applications offered commercially have the same impact on cognitive abilities as the ACTIVE study training. NIA and other organizations are supporting research to determine whether different types of cognitive training have lasting effects.

### **Stay Connected with Social Activities**

Connecting with other people through social activities and community programs can keep your brain active and help you feel less isolated and more engaged with the world around you. Participating in social activities may lower the risk for some health problems and improve well-being.

People who engage in personally meaningful and productive activities with others tend to live longer, boost their mood, and have a

(continued on page 20)

## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 19)

sense of purpose. Studies show that these activities seem to help maintain their well-being and may improve their cognitive function.

So, visit with family and friends. Consider volunteering for a local organization or join a group focused on a hobby you enjoy. Join a walking group with other older adults. Check out programs available through your Area Agency on Aging, senior center, or other community organizations. Increasingly, there are groups that meet online too, providing a way to connect from home with others who share your interests or to get support.

We don't know for sure yet if any of these actions can prevent or delay Alzheimer's and age-related cognitive decline. Still, some of these have been associated with reduced risk of cognitive impairment and dementia.

### **Manage Stress**

Stress is a natural part of life. Short-term stress can even focus our thoughts and motivate us to take action. However, over time, chronic stress can change the brain, affect memory, and increase the risk for Alzheimer's and related dementias. To help manage stress and build the ability to bounce back from stressful situations, there are many things you can do:

- Exercise regularly. Practicing tai chi or going for a walk, especially in nature, can restore a sense of well-being.

- Write in a journal. Putting your thoughts or worries on paper can help you let go of an issue or see a new solution.
- Try relaxation techniques. Practices such as mindfulness—which involves focusing awareness on the present moment without judgment—or breathing exercises can help your body relax. These can help lower blood pressure, lessen muscle tension, and reduce stress.
- Stay positive. Release grudges or things beyond your control, practice gratitude, or pause to enjoy the simple things, like the comfort of a cup of tea or the beauty of a sunrise.

### **Reduce Risks to Cognitive Health**

Genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors are all thought to influence cognitive health. Some of these factors may contribute to a decline in thinking skills and the ability to perform everyday tasks such as driving, paying bills, taking medicine, and cooking.

Genetic factors are passed down (inherited) from a parent to child and cannot be controlled. But many environmental and lifestyle factors can be changed or managed to reduce your risk. These factors include:

- Some physical and mental health problems, such as high blood pressure or depression
- Brain injuries, such as those due to falls or accidents
- Some medicines, or improper use of medicines

(continued on page 21)

## Cognitive Health (cont. from page 20)

- Lack of physical activity
- Poor diet
- Smoking
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Sleep problems
- Social isolation and loneliness



### What Is Dementia?

It's normal to be a little more forgetful as we age. However, some difficulties with cognitive function, such as dementia and mild cognitive impairment (MCI) are more serious.

Dementia is the loss of cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, and reasoning—and behavioral abilities to such an extent that it interferes with daily life and activities. Symptoms may include problems with language skills, visual perception, or paying attention. Some people have personality changes. There are different forms of dementia including Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal disorders, and Lewy body dementia.

MCI is a condition in which people have more memory or thinking problems than other people their age but can still do their normal daily activities. People with MCI are more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease than those without. However, not everyone with MCI will develop Alzheimer's disease.

## Physical and Mental Health Problems

Many health conditions affect the brain and pose risks to cognitive function. These conditions include:

- Heart disease and high blood pressure—can lead to stroke and changes in blood vessels in the brain that can lead to dementia
- Diabetes—damages blood vessels throughout the body, including in the brain; increases risk for stroke and heart attack; increases risk for Alzheimer's
- Alzheimer's disease and related dementias—cause a buildup of harmful proteins and other changes in the brain that lead to memory loss and other thinking problems
- Stroke—can damage blood vessels in the brain and increase risk for vascular dementia
- Depression—can lead to confusion or attention problems and has been linked to dementia
- Delirium—shows up as an acute state of confusion, often during a hospital stay, and is associated with subsequent cognitive decline

It's important to prevent or seek treatment for these health problems. They affect your brain as well as your body and receiving treatment for other conditions may help prevent or delay cognitive decline or thinking problems.

(continued on page 22)

## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 21)

### **Brain Injuries**

Older adults are at higher risk of falls, car accidents, and other accidents that can cause brain injury. Alcohol and certain medicines can affect a person's ability to drive safely and also increase the risk for accidents and brain injury. Learn about risks for falls and participate in fall prevention programs. Wear helmets and seat belts to help prevent head injuries as well. But don't let a fear of falling keep you from being active. Overcoming this fear can help you stay active, maintain your physical health, and prevent future falls.

### **Medicines**

Some drugs and combinations of medicines can affect a person's thinking and the way the brain works. For example, certain ones can cause confusion, memory loss, hallucinations, and delusions in older adults.

Medicines can also interact with food, dietary supplements, alcohol, and other substances. Some of these interactions can affect how your brain functions. Drugs that can harm older adults' cognition include:

- Antihistamines for allergy relief
- Medicines for anxiety and depression
- Sleep aids
- Antipsychotics
- Muscle relaxants

- Some drugs that treat urinary incontinence
- Medications for relief of cramps in the stomach, intestines, and bladder

Talk with your doctor if you're concerned that your medications may be causing cognitive problems. Do not stop taking any medications you've been prescribed without first talking with your health care provider.

### **Lack of Physical Activity**

Lack of exercise and other physical activity may increase your risk of diabetes, heart disease, depression, and stroke—all of which can harm the brain. In some studies, physical activity has been linked to improved cognitive performance and reduced risk for Alzheimer's disease. In general, staying active is known to lower the risk of high blood pressure, stroke, and symptoms of depression, all of which in turn can improve cognitive health.

### **Poor Diet**

A number of studies link eating certain foods with keeping the brain healthy and suggest that other foods can increase health risk. For example, high-fat and high-sodium foods can lead to health problems, such as heart disease and diabetes, that can harm the brain.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is harmful to your body and your brain. It raises the risk of heart attack, stroke, and lung disease. Quitting smoking at any age can improve your health.

(continued on page 23)

## **Cognitive Health** (cont. from page 22)

### **Alcohol**

Drinking too much alcohol affects the brain by slowing or impairing communication among brain cells. This can lead to slurred speech, fuzzy memory, drowsiness, and dizziness. Long-term effects may include changes in balance, memory, emotions, coordination, and body temperature. Staying away from alcohol can reverse some of these changes.

As people age, they may become more sensitive to alcohol's effects. The same amount of alcohol can have a greater effect on an older person than on someone who is younger. Also, some medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

### **Sleep Problems**

At any age, getting a good night's sleep supports brain health. Sleep problems—not getting enough sleep, sleeping poorly, and sleep disorders—can lead to trouble with memory, concentration, and other cognitive functions.

### **Social Isolation and Loneliness**

Social isolation and feeling lonely may be bad for brain health. Loneliness has been linked to higher risk for dementia, and less social activity has been linked to poorer cognitive function.

By taking steps now to reduce your risks for cognitive decline, you'll help to maintain your cognitive health for the future.

## **For More Information About Cognitive Health**

NIA Alzheimer's and related Dementias Education and Referral (ADEAR) Center  
800-438-4380 (toll-free)  
adear@nia.nih.gov  
www.nia.nih.gov/alzheimers

The NIA ADEAR Center offers information and free print publications about Alzheimer's and related dementias for families, caregivers, and health professionals. ADEAR Center staff answer telephone, email, and written requests and make referrals to local and national resources.

Mcknight Brain Research Foundation  
407-237-4485  
<https://mcknightbrain.org/>

Alzheimer's Association  
800-272-3900 (toll-free)  
866-403-3073 (TTY/toll-free)  
info@alz.org  
www.alz.org

Alzheimer's Foundation of America  
866-232-8484 (toll-free)  
info@alzfdn.org  
www.alzfdn.org

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# Welcome

## New Residents

Kathleen McArdle #128  
and  
George & Gracie's  
goslings



### Newsletter Committee

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# Parting Shots



Londonderry Rotary plants **Flags for Heroes** to honor our fallen veterans on Memorial Day

