

## Alzheimer's May Have A 'Rural' Connection

BY DR. MIKE ROSMANN

One of my friends in North Dakota told me several months ago, "You know what real love is when you take care of someone who has Alzheimer's." He and his wife cared for his father, who suffered from this form of dementia, for seven years.

My friend first became suspicious that his widower father might be experiencing Alzheimer's disease when at 76 years old his dad began to have trouble remembering names and events that were retrievable just a few months earlier. Within two years his father could not be trusted to live alone because he periodically left his stove turned on after heating food and began to receive bills for unnecessary items he had purchased unwittingly from telephone solicitors and scammers.

My friend and his wife moved "Joe" into their home and took over the management of his business and healthcare affairs, as Joe had specified previously in his Advance Health Care Directives and Power of Attorney forms. They promised they would take care of Joe, who insisted he never wanted to go to an "old folks' home."

There were embarrassing times, such as when Joe blurted out inappropriate proposals to women who visited their house or entered the living room unclothed while visitors were present. Joe couldn't be permitted to leave the house unescorted because he would be unable to find his way back.

My North Dakota friends opted to accept North Dakota Medicaid Waiver funds to allow themselves to be partially reimbursed for providing care for Joe. This arrangement, along with occasional Respite Care paid through the Medicaid Waiver program, enabled them to keep their promise to Joe.

Joe had few financial resources because he farmed rented ground all his life and spent most of what he and his wife had saved paying for his wife's cancer treatments until she died at age 63. Joe passed away last December.

Alzheimer's disease is more a symptom complex than a disease with a causal agent, like a bacterium or virus. Contributing factors are not fully understood.

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and cognitive thinking skills. In President Ronald Reagan's case, the first signs of dementia were apparent to him and his close associates in 1984 while he participated in a campaign debate that fall.

President Reagan uncharacteristically fumbled his words and notes; he seemed tired and bewildered. This was ten years before President Reagan gave his dignified acknowledgement of having Alzheimer's disease in a "farewell" address to Americans in 1994, and another ten years before he died in 2004.

Biological changes in the brain were first detected in 1906 by a German physi-

cian, Dr. Alois Alzheimer. He examined the brain of a patient who exhibited progressive dementia, after her death.

Alzheimer observed plaques (clumps of brain tissue), tangles (abnormal bundles of nerves) and shrunken brain tissue in his deceased patient. Later, changes in brain chemistry, resulting in loss of connections among brain cells, were observed as well.

As the brain slowly deteriorates, thinking capacity and basic life regulations governed by the brain gradually diminish until a usually peaceful death occurs. Some medications that replace brain signal transmitters being lost, can slow down the disease process for a while, but there is no known cure or prevention.

There might be a connection to farming and rural livelihoods. Although the causes of Alzheimer's have not been fully determined, there is scientific evidence that growing up in a rural area may double the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

A meta-analysis of how growing up in rural and urban areas affects the development of Alzheimer's, published by University of Edinburgh and London researchers in the International Journal of Epidemiology in 2012, indicated nonurban people had twice the chance of incurring Alzheimer's later in life. The researchers theorized that access to healthcare, socioeconomic well-being and exposure to unknown substances could be contributing factors.

A review of 2.6 million death certificates by Dr. Robert Park of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, and published in 2005 in the American Journal of Occupational Safety and Health, indicated a greater risk for degenerative brain diseases, especially Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, among farmers and persons in several other occupations where chemical exposures were likely to occur.

Other studies of farmers in particular have suggested exposures to commonly used agricultural insecticides in the organophosphate and chlorinated pesticide families and certain fumigants are well known to contribute to onset of Parkinson's disease, and may be precipitants to Alzheimer's disease. Not enough research in the U.S. has been conducted to adequately sort out the relationships, but a body of confirmatory research findings is developing that includes both foreign and domestic investigations.

Alzheimer's disease affects 5.1 million Americans, and is the cause of nearly four percent of all deaths in the U.S. We need to understand the disorder better and what we can do to prevent it.

Farm people should stay tuned.

*Dr. Rosmann is a Harlan, IA farmer and psychologist, available at: [www.agbehavioralhealth.com](http://www.agbehavioralhealth.com).*

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Dr. Mike  
**ROSMANN**

### Visiting Hours

# Volunteer For The Opportunity To Touch The Lives of Patients

BY CARLA HUMMEL

CAVS Director of Volunteer Services

Is it more to be inspired by others, or to do inspiring things? Although we are inspired every day by people volunteering their time, sharing their talents and providing compassion, doing things that may inspire others also has benefits. More often than not, you receive much more than you give.

It's the little acts of kindness that often touch the hearts of so many. The opening of a door when someone's hands are full. The smile that helps brighten a day of someone having a tough time. Or the willingness to do a little something extra that takes the pressure off someone else on a really busy day.

Avera Sacred Heart has a great list of volunteer opportunities to inspire:

At Avera Yankton Care Center and Majestic Bluffs, there is always an activity that could use a couple extra hands. Many residents are in a wheel chair and appreciate assistance getting to their destination. Sometimes just a ride with a little conversation can make a world of difference.

If you like Bingo, it is available at either location three days a week. Bingo

is usually followed by coffee time and fellowship with the residents - and time they cherish. Bingo not your game? Checkers, cards and other board games are available. You could help turn any evening into a fun-filled, memorable game night.

At the hospital, we have a couple places that are getting particularly hit by the "vacation" bug. We need some volunteers in the TEAM office and at the Information Desk. TEAM is a group of volunteers who answer calls from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. for various requests throughout the hospital and adjoining buildings. The TEAM members escort patients out of the hospital after discharge, bring some meal trays from the kitchen to patients, deliver mail or packages, and much more. The Information Desk volunteers give directions and welcome people to Avera Sacred Heart Hospital, the Professional Office Pavilion and the Benedictine Center.

The Gift Shop in the hospital is also in need of some volunteers. Completely staffed by volunteers, this cute little shop is a great place for finding a gift for a loved one, grabbing a pop and candy bar or just passing a little time while a loved one is having something done. The volunteers in this area help

people with an eye toward healing in a different way.

Another hospital opportunity is the Patient Liaison program. This volunteer interviews patients helping us to make sure pain is being managed, food is good and the patients know what to do when they are discharged.

At Majestic Bluffs, there is a new assignment called Dining Assistant. This volunteer helps some of the residents who may be challenged when it comes to feeding themselves. This assignment does require a little training but is guaranteed to be rewarding.

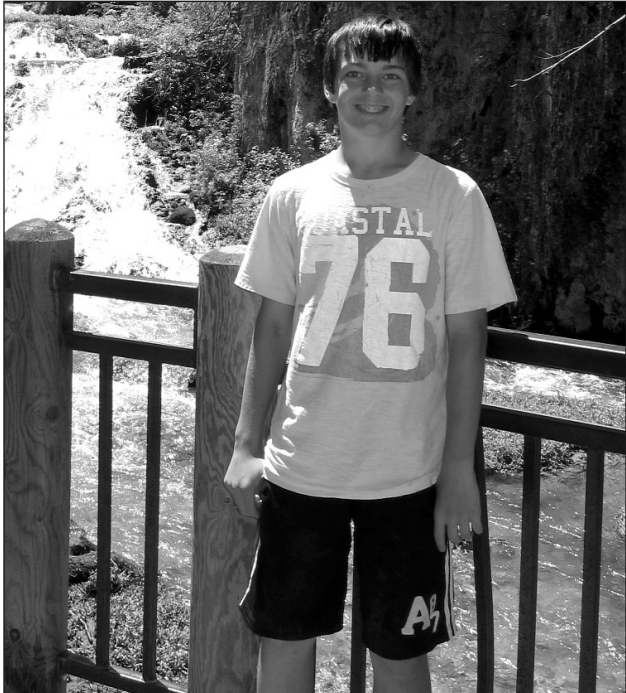
Thank you for your inspirational little acts of kindness!

If inspiration was as aromatic as a cup of coffee, we would drink it.

If inspiration was as flavorful as a cookie, we would eat it.

If Bingo spelled Inspiration, we would surely yell it. Let's all find our inspiration and put it into action.

*To check into these opportunities to inspire, contact Carla Hummel at Avera Sacred Heart. Email: [chummel@avera.org](mailto:chummel@avera.org), phone: 605-668-8104, or stop by and ask for her at 501 Summit. Thank you for your consideration.*



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Ben Rust during his time in the Black Hills.

## Yankton Student Attends Geology Field Camp

RAPID CITY — Yankton high school student Ben Rust got a chance to get out of the classroom and explore opportunities that can come from a degree in geology this summer.

Rust attended the Geology Rocks! Youth Field Camp in the Black Hills at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology June 9-14 in Rapid City, SD.

Geology Rocks! Youth Field Camp in the Black Hills is designed and taught by Dr. Kurt Katzenstein, assistant professor of geology and geological engineering at the School of Mines.

"This camp provides high school students the opportunity to learn about potential careers in the geosciences," Katzenstein said. "Campers observe the world-renowned Black Hills geology and the role it plays in surface and ground-water quality, geologic hazards, mineral resources, and paleontology and paleontological resource management."

The camp was made possible by the generous sponsorship of Continental Resources,

a petroleum producer and the largest leaseholder in the Bakken Oilfields. Glen Brown, the Vice President of Geology at Continental Resources, spoke with the campers about opportunities and careers available to geosciences degree holders.

The camp included field trips to public and private employers of geoscientists, including the Rapid City Water Treatment Facility, the Black Hills Institute of Paleontology, The Sanford Underground Lab and Pacer Minerals, a producer of commercial mica and feldspar in Custer.

"Experiences like these will hopefully inspire students to complete degrees so they can fill important jobs in the minerals industry, a staple in the Black Hills for over 125 years," Katzenstein said.

For more information on this and other School of Mines camps in 2014, interested students, parents, and counselors may call (605) 394-2693. Updated information will be posted at [sdsmt.edu/learn](http://sdsmt.edu/learn) as it becomes available.

## Yankton Area Retired Teachers To Meet Sept. 5

The Yankton Area Retired Teachers Association will begin its fall meeting schedule on Thursday, Sept. 5. The meetings begin at 11:30 a.m. at JoDean's Steak House.

Subsequent meetings will be held on the first Thursday of October, November, March, April and May.

Any retired school personnel is welcome to join, and retired teachers from all area schools are welcome.

The speaker for the first meeting will be Dr. Wayne Kiddle, superintendent of the Yankton Public School District.

### Labor Day Deadlines

The Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan will be closed Monday, September 2, for the Labor Day holiday.

The following deadlines will apply:

Out On The Town..... Noon, Wednesday, August 28  
Tuesday, September 3 newspaper..... 5 p.m., Wednesday, August 28  
Wednesday, September 4 newspaper..... 5 p.m., Thursday, August 29  
Thursday, September 5 newspaper..... 5 p.m., Friday, August 30

There will be no newspaper on Monday, September 2, 2013

YANKTON DAILY  
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### Labor Day Celebration In Newcastle

Newcastle will host its Labor Day Celebration on Monday, Sept. 2.

Events include an 11 a.m. parade, with parade registration and line-up beginning at 9 a.m.

There will be activities such as a kid's pedal pull, foot races and a Sand Pile Dig at Pfister Park. Food stands will be located at the Pfister Park Shelter House and on the Thresher's Grounds.

There will also be numerous threshing and equipment demonstrations on the Thresher's Grounds.

There will be a watermelon feed at Pfister Park at 2:30 p.m.

Also, the Wayne State rugby team will play a match at the football field at 1 p.m.

There will also be a tractor pull at 11 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 31, at the Thresher's Grounds.

This event is sponsored by: Lyle's Bar, Northeast Nebraska Pullers Association; Newcastle Thresher's Association; Newcastle Community Club and various volunteers.

### SAC Labor Day Hours Released

The Summit Activities Center's adjusted hours for Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2, will be noon-5 p.m. All regularly scheduled fitness classes on Monday, Sept. 2, are cancelled.

Fall hours at the SAC will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 3, and will be the following:

- Monday – Friday — 5 a.m.–10 p.m.
- Saturday — 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
- Sunday — 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

The SAC fall and winter swim hours will be as follows:

- Monday and Wednesday — 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Friday — 6:30-9:30 p.m.
- Weekends — 1-6 p.m.

For further information, call 668-5234 or stop by the Summit Activities Center at 1801 Summit Street. Remember to follow the Yankton Parks and Recreation Department on Facebook.

### Library Announces Fall/Winter Hours

The Yankton Community Library, 515 Walnut, will be closed on Monday, Sept. 2, for Labor Day.

Beginning on Tuesday, Sept. 3, fall/winter hours will be in effect, with the following being the library's hours of operation:

- Monday through Thursday — 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
- Friday and Saturday — 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Sunday — 1-5 p.m.

For further information, call the library at 605-668-5275.

### Park Advisory Board To Meet Sept. 3

City of Yankton Parks Advisory Board will meet at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 3, at the Technical Education Center, 1200 West 21st St. This is an open meeting.

## St. George Fall Supper Sept. 7

SCOTLAND — St. George Catholic Church of Scotland will hold its annual fall supper on Sunday, Sept. 8, with meals served from 4-7 p.m.

The menu will include broasted chicken, baked ham, cheesy potatoes, green beans, salads, homemade buns, a variety of pies and beverages.

There will also be raffle tickets available for many prizes.

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**1** Wednesday to Monday

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