

# CAREGIVER CHRONICLE

*Connections for Caregivers*

## Caring for the Elderly in Gainesville

By Rachel La Pointe

Caring for Gainesville's community of elderly and disabled adults is a need which often goes unnoticed amid the bustling atmosphere of a city which hosts over 52,000 college students. It's a service you don't know exists until you need it, something that the director of Al'z Place, Nancy Lewis, is acutely aware of.

Al'z Place is an adult daycare center that provides services for individuals with memory impairment. This includes Alzheimer's as well as dementias associated with Parkinsonism, head trauma and normal aging. At Al'z Place, members enjoy a light breakfast, lunch and snack followed by an afternoon of stimulating and engaging conversations, games and activities to improve their quality of life.

According to Lewis, there is a misconception in the community that Al'z Place has a long waitlist, because historically it has. Because of their new location, the waitlist no longer exists.

Lewis, who has a background teaching special education, is in charge of scheduling the activity curriculum for the members.

"When I design the activities, I'm thinking of gross motor movement, cognitive stimulation, socialization, and arts and wellness," said Lewis. "Those are the four domains I'm trying to target."

Some of the activities include an amped-up version of Bingo, with colorful cards designed to spark long-term memories, ball and balloon tosses, and games in which members are prompted to come up with similes or name four items in a given category.

The goal, according to Lewis, is to provide as many opportunities for success as possible, and to live in the moment.

"Everything is about making little moments special for them," said Lewis. "Especially with Alzheimer's, as the disease progresses, they're losing cognition, movement and coordination, but their emotionality is be-



ing heightened. It's almost like they've gained an extra sense after losing all these others."

Altrusa House of Gainesville provides similar services to a broader range of individuals. Altrusa House is open to anyone over 18 who may need supervised care during the day. According to director Lee Johnson, the program is licensed for 55 members and currently hosts about 30. Johnson, who took over as director in January, used the contacts she's made from 30 years of social work to nearly double their membership.

"I've had so many people in my office over the years that I would have loved to refer to Altrusa House," said Johnson. "It's

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a truly phenomenal program.”

Johnson takes pride in the level of independence many Altrusa House members enjoy. Many men and women have been coming to Altrusa House regularly for several years, and enjoy spending time with each other, reading, talking and playing horseshoe in the facility garden. There is a scheduled activity calendar, but according to Johnson, “supplies are always available if they want to do their own thing.”

Altrusa House allows time for visits from the members’ physical or speech therapists, outside educational groups like local museums, and volunteers from UF.

“The members love it when new young people come in,” said Johnson, “because they get to tell their stories all over again.”

Both of these facilities have been serving the Gainesville community for over 20 years. And while they share common ambitions such as quality, age-appropriate care, cognition stimulation, and motor movement enhancement, one goal stands out among both directors: to keep families intact. With

the help of programs like Al’z Place and Altrusa House, elderly citizens in need of care can live in their homes for as long as possible. If these services did not exist, many caregivers would have to relinquish their duties to nursing homes or other full-time elderly care services.

These programs provide caregivers with the respite they need to provide their loved one with the best possible care for as long as possible.

*To learn more about Al’z Place, go online to [www.eldercare.ufhealth.org/services/alz-place](http://www.eldercare.ufhealth.org/services/alz-place) or call (352)265-9200. For Altrusa House, go to [www.gainesville.altrusa.org/Who-We-Are/Welcome-Message.aspx](http://www.gainesville.altrusa.org/Who-We-Are/Welcome-Message.aspx), or call (352) 377-7708.*

### Community Coalition for Older Adults

Second Friday of the month, Senior Recreation Center, 5701 NW 34 St.

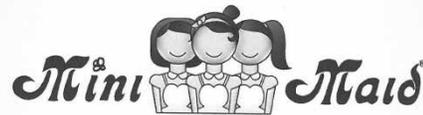
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## From the Desk of Sam W. Boone, Jr.:

### Estate Planning For Your Pet

By Sam W. Boone, Jr.

*Editor's Note: This is part of a series of columns that will be presented in this newsletter by Sam W. Boone, Jr., a local attorney whose primary practice areas include elder law, estate planning, probate and trust administration. It is hoped that the information will be valuable for caregivers and family members dealing with issues related to elder law.*

For many people, the love they have for their pets is as great as the love for their human family. And, depending on the family, they may love their pets more.

So when you take the time and effort to create estate plans that protect your family members, why wouldn't you consider what will happen to your furry loved ones when you can no longer take care of them or after you pass away?

In our work with families that are being proactive about estate planning, we are seeing an increasing number of clients who want to take steps to see that their pets are properly provided for in their planning. For anyone who has concerns about how your pets will be treated after you pass away, we can help you make proper arrangements in estate plans to deal with these concerns.

On the one hand, we would all like to believe we will outlive our pets and always be there to care for them. But on the other hand, what would happen if we become incapacitated or we pass before them. And even more common is the possibility you would have to leave your home for assisted living, and you can't take your pet with you. We don't want to think about what might happen in those situations.

I recently attended a seminar called *Creating Estate Plans That Work for Pets and Their People*. The presenter was my friend and colleague Peggy Hoyt who practices law in Central Florida. She is board certified in wills, trusts and estates elder law. Like me, her practice areas include estate planning, elder law and special needs planning.

Peggy comes by this desire and interest to include consideration of pets in your estate planning honestly. She has three horses, seven dogs and three cats she calls her "kids in fur

coats." She is the author of two books: *All My Children Wear Fur Coats – How to Leave a Legacy for Your Pet* and *The Pet Lover's Guide to Mediation*.

During the seminar, Peggy reminded us that there are a variety of estate planning options for you and your pets.

In order to avoid a crisis if your living situation were to change, Peggy suggests identifying at least two people – pet caregivers – who can and are willing to serve as pet caregivers. They should agree to be responsible for your pet if something happens to you. This could be a short-term solution if that's what's called for or it could become long term or permanent, if necessary.



The rest of the planning can be taken care of by including your pets in your durable powers of attorney, wills, trusts and other appropriate documents. So if you do have furry loved ones, it's important to take the time and effort to include them in all your estate planning.

Switching gears briefly, we could not let this issue of the *Caregiver Chronicle* go by without mention of two significant milestones. May is both National Elder Law Month and Older Americans Month. It is fitting that both are celebrated in May.

Annually in May for Elder Law Month, elder law attorneys around the country make a concerted effort to educate seniors about all their legal options. As far as Older American Month goes, the theme this year is *Age Out Loud*, with a goal for giving our seniors a voice that reflects the opinions and desires of older Americans.

*Sam W. Boone, Jr. is a Gainesville-based attorney practicing elder law and estate planning. He is past-president of the Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys and is accredited by the Veterans Administration. To learn more about elder-law issues, go online to [www. http://boonelaw.com](http://boonelaw.com), or call (352)-374-8308.*

## Savvy Caregiver Training

Savvy Caregiver Training is a multi-session training dedicated to people who care for family members and friends with dementias (like Alzheimer's). Our goal is to reduce caregiver stress by offering easy-to-understand information about progressive dementias, related medicines, and diagnostic tools. In the program we help caregivers build skills on relating to persons of dementia when they behave in ways that baffle, embarrass or irritate you and others.

Here is an introduction to our spring/early summer schedule. In 2017, all Savvy Trainings will be 7 weeks in length. Choose whichever series works for your schedule and call Tom Rinkoski at (352) 692-5226 to register. Or e-mail him at [rinkoskit@agingresources.org](mailto:rinkoskit@agingresources.org).

- Starting 05/02/2017; Tuesdays; 1:00 – 3:00 pm; Cross City Rehab, Cross City
- Starting 05/16/2017; Tuesdays; 2:00 – 4:00 pm; Santa Fe Davis Center, Archer
- Starting 6/01/2017; Thursdays; 2:00 - 4:00 pm; Marion Oaks Community Center, Ocala
- Starting 07/03/2017; Thursdays; 2:00 - 4:00 pm; Cone Park Library; Gainesville
- Starting 07/10/2017; Mondays; 1:00 – 3:00 pm; Hospice of Citrus & The Nature Coast; Chiefland
- Starting 07/11/2017; Tuesdays; 2:00 – 4:00 pm; Marion Senior Services, Ocala
- Starting 09/13/2017; Wednesdays; 1:30 – 3:30 pm; Bradford County Senior Center, Starke

*More dates of upcoming Savvy Caregiver Trainings can be found at our Web Page (<http://www.agingresources.org/savvy-caregiver-for-families>). Or, go to our Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/SavvyCaregiverNorthCentralFlorida>) for other information, tips and techniques about caregiving and dementia.*



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## Alzheimer's Clinical Trials

By David Huckabee

I am sure it comes as no surprise to anyone reading this newsletter that Alzheimer's disease and related dementias are a growing problem locally, nationally and globally. The numbers are staggering. It is estimated that nearly 5.5 million Americans are currently living with Alzheimer's disease. Without a cure, this number could triple by 2050. The costs to individuals, families, and the nation are almost inconceivable.

Many people want to do something to help in the fight against Alzheimer's disease but do not know how they can make a difference in such an enormous battle. Knowing about clinical trials and participating in those trials when appropriate is one way each of us can contribute a vital piece to the puzzle of dementia. As all those pieces come together, we will have a solution to this seemingly insurmountable problem.

There are currently over 250 clinical trials underway across the United States. Many of these trials are actively seeking participants. Navigating your way through the selection criteria for that many trials probably sounds like an impossible task. Fortunately, much of the work has been done for you.

The Alzheimer's Association has entered all the relevant information from these trials into a database known as TrialMatch©. By answering a few confidential questions, you can receive a list of trials that you may be eligible for as well as their contact information. The registration process takes less than 5 minutes and is completely confidential.

Your contact information is not released to any of the researchers in the database. Whether or not you choose to participate in any of the trials is entirely your decision.

An important thing to note is that anyone 18 years of age or older might qualify for a clinical trial in the TrialMatch© database. There are trials underway for persons with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, persons with a family history of the disease, caregivers, and healthy adults. Also, some people think clinical trials only involve medications. While those certainly form an important part of the TrialMatch© database, there are behavioral and cognitive trials as well that involve no new medications.

Even if you are not sure if you want to participate in a trial, you may still want to complete a profile just to learn what types of trials are happening around the country...and in your own backyard. If you are interested in completing a TrialMatch© profile, please contact the Alzheimer's Association Helpline at (800) 272-3900 or visit [alz.org/trial-match](http://alz.org/trial-match). If you choose to call the Helpline, you can have a TrialMatch© specialist walk you through the registration process.

*If you would like more information about the work of the Alzheimer's Association Central and North Florida, please call (800) 272-3900 or contact David Huckabee at [dhuckabee@alz.org](mailto:dhuckabee@alz.org).*

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## Air Travel with Oxygen

As we approach the summer months, more people may be planning air travel. If you use oxygen, there are some specific rules from the Federal Aviation Administration that are enforced by the TSA.

You must arrange with the airline for supplemental oxygen on board the plane when you make your reservation with the airline.

Ask about the airline's policies on the use of supplemental O<sup>2</sup> onboard. Federal regulations prohibit airlines from allowing passengers to bring their own oxygen canisters aboard to use during the flight. Passengers who use oxygen canisters must purchase canisters from the airline for use during the flight. However, some airlines do permit passengers to bring aboard oxygen concentrators, which do not contain oxygen, and use them during the flight. Policies vary from carrier to carrier, so be sure to check with your airline well in advance.

Keep in mind that not all airlines offer supplemental oxygen service, or may not offer it aboard all their aircraft. Inquire whether: 1) the airline provides oxygen service, 2) it is available on the flights you wish to take, and 3) you must provide a doctor's letter, or permit them to contact your doctor directly to verify your medical need.

Allow extra time to pass through security check points. You will be able to travel through

security with your Portable Oxygen Concentrator; however, an airport security employee may need to inspect the unit. You may need to demonstrate to the airline security personnel that you know how to operate your POC and can hear any alarms should they sound.

If you are bringing a portable oxygen carrier but not using it during the flight, you must still bring it as a carry on. You cannot put it in your checked luggage.

### ***This is Your Newsletter***

**It only works with your contributions**

**Poetry**

**Stories**

**Recipes for Comfort Food**

**Information About Meetings or Workshops**

**Whatever Helps You Make It**

**Through the Day**

**Send your contributions to**

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**We will publish every other month around the**

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ALF# PENDING

## When to Look for Help

By Tom Rinkoski,  
Caregiver Coach at Elder Options

The common wisdom is not to shop when you are hungry. Likewise it pays to not shop for caregiver help and assistance when you are stressed and need someone to come within the hour. Sorting your way through the growing myriad of help available is not always a simple task. There is a lot to consider beyond just whether we can afford it or not. The more time you take to examine the resources available, the better prepared you will be to make a good decision to offer the highest quality of care for your person. Here are some tips you might consider as you shop for help and assistance, whether that means employing agency help in your own home or bringing your person to an Adult Day Care Center.

1. **Goals.** What is it you really want to happen? What are your expectations? Are they realistic? Are you seeking outside stimulation for your person? Do you just need someone to watch him carefully so you can get a once a week break (this is really a valid reason). Will your person need meds given during the time he is there? Does he/she have special medical conditions that need to be addressed? If your person is a wanderer, that calls for special awareness as well. Are you going to be unhappy if your person is not happy after staying there after the first or second visit? All these factors should influence who and/or what type of care you choose.

2. **Ask other caregivers.** Starting by expressing your emotions and feelings about needing help at your Support Group Meeting. Ask what other have done and have they found it effective. Which agencies or services have they used? It is always important to listen to the wisdom that comes from experience. These are the folks who are walking a path closest your own.

3. **Read the Contract.** If you are choosing assistance through an agency or are taking your person to an Adult Day Care Center, take home a copy of their service contract – before ever signing it – and read it carefully! Be clear about what they say they can offer, and what they won't do, and what is available at an extra fee. Make sure you understand all the fees clearly. What records will they want from you? Learn ahead who they will want to talk to and why?

4. **Level of Staff Training.** Dementia care requires more than just a good attitude and patience. You should check the levels of dementia training of the person you are hiring and the staff at the center. When was the last course they took on dementia

care? Do they have a license in dementia training? Are the personnel trained to do behavioral interventions among persons with dementia who are at different stages? Do they understand that different types of dementia require varying responses? Is the "Activity Director" capable of doing a broad scope of activities that can appeal to many different types of people at different stages of the diseases?

5. **Check References.** If it is a state licensed facility check out their ACHA file (in the State of Florida we have Open Records laws). If the staff is licensed, you can see their records as well. Call the Ombudsman Office and ask them about any records for this facility or service. Ask the person, the agency, the facility for names of people you can call to ask for opinions. Nowadays there are also an abundance of services that make room for online comments from other users.

This list is by no means exhaustive and I haven't even begun with the checklist for a personal visit. But, it is a place to start. Send me your thoughts on what you've done.

### Veteran Benefits

If you are a veteran or widow of a veteran please note that you may be eligible for benefits under the Veteran's Administration. These benefits may be able to help with the cost of additional care in the home or assisted living facility. There are income and asset eligibility criteria to be met. However rules of financial benefits can change at any time so it is important to speak with a Veteran Service Officer. It helps to have discharge papers available. Locally, the Alachua County Veteran Service office holds free workshops for those interested in applying. On Tuesdays there is a Pension Workshop and a Compensation Workshop on Wednesdays. On Thursdays there is a General Informational Workshop. For more details about these, please contact the Alachua County Veteran Service Office at **264-6740**.

## Caregiver Support Groups

### Alz Place

3rd Thursday of the month at 9am  
Open to all caregivers  
1610 NW 23rd Ave., Gainesville  
Contact Nancy at 352-265-9200

### Alterra Clare Bridge

3rd Thursday of the month- 6pm  
4607 NW 53rd Ave, Gainesville, FL 32653  
Contact Gail at 376-5151

### Cancer Center at NFRMC

Breast Cancer Support Group  
2nd Tuesday of the month - 6pm - 7:30 pm  
Call Susie at 353-213-5890

### Community Cancer Center

Living With Cancer Supports  
[www.ccnf.com](http://www.ccnf.com) for more information

### Community Cancer Center

Lake City Support Group  
2nd Wednesday every month 11am - 1pm  
4520 W.US Hwy. 90, Lake City, FL 32055 For more  
information call 386-755-0601

### Haven Hospice

Bereavement Supports  
Call 692-5123 for more information

### Hospice of Marion County

Transitions Caregiver Support Group  
Usually the 2nd Tuesday of each month 11am - 1 pm  
The Elliott Center, 3231 SW 34th Ave. Ocala  
Call for information 352-854-5200

### Hospice of the Nature Coast

Wings Community Education Center  
Grief Support Group- High Springs  
Call 386-454-1338 for more information

### Lake Area Caregiver Support Group

4th Tuesday of the month from 1-2:00pm  
Trinity Episcopal Church  
204 SR 26, Melrose, FL 32666  
Call 352-475-3792 for more information

### Park Meadows Health and Rehab Center

3250 SW 41 Pl, GV  
Call the Alz Helpline at 1-800-272-3900 for more  
information

### Senior Healthcare Center at Springhill

3rd Tuesday of the month- 2:30-4:00pm  
3720 NW 83rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32606  
Contact Flory at 336-3050

### NF Mind Matters Stroke Support Group

4th Thursday of the month from 1-2 pm  
South Tower, 4th floor Conference Room-NFRMC  
Call 1-800-611-6913 for more information

### The Village

(for Village residents only)  
2nd Thursday of the month from 1:30-3 pm  
8000 NW 27th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32606  
Call 872-5332 for more information

### United Church of Gainesville

1624 NW 5th Ave, GV  
3rd Tuesday of the month from 7-8pm  
Open to caregivers of persons with dementia  
Contact Lynda at 352-219-3023

### VA Caregiver Support

Mon-Fri- 8am- 11pm, Sat. 10:30-6pm  
Call 1-855-260-3274

## Useful Resources

Seniors vs. Crime: [www.seniorsvscrime.com](http://www.seniorsvscrime.com)

Alzheimer's Association – [www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp](http://www.alz.org/cnfl/index.asp)

Doggie Styles: Mobile Pet Grooming – [www.doggiestyles.org](http://www.doggiestyles.org)

Elder Affairs – [www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php](http://www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us/index.php)

Elder Helpline – 1-800-963-5337, [options@agingresources.org](mailto:options@agingresources.org)

Elder Options – Savvy Caregiver Classes – [www.agingresources.org](http://www.agingresources.org)

Florida Silver Alert – [www.floridasilveralert.com](http://www.floridasilveralert.com)

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) [www.floridashine.org](http://www.floridashine.org)

Driving – [www.independencedrive.phhp.ufl.edu](http://www.independencedrive.phhp.ufl.edu)

Medicare – [www.medicare.org](http://www.medicare.org)

State of Florida – [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com)

National Institute on Aging (free publications) – [www.nig.nih.gov](http://www.nig.nih.gov)

United Way – Alachua, Bradford & Putnam counties – [www.unitedwaycnfl.org](http://www.unitedwaycnfl.org)

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Management – [www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)