

BRAIN Waves

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Inside This Issue ...

Events/ Activities

Leah's Notes

Memory Minute

MM Calendar

Success Corner

Summertime ...

Contact us ...

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Quote of The Month ...

*"What lies behind you and
what lies in front of you,
pales in comparison to
what lies inside of you."*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Leah's Notes ...



**Leah
Zehel,**
Director

Familiar music can engage those with Alzheimer's when almost nothing else can, researchers have shown. It also appears that books can often have a similar effect. Research shows that having the opportunity to read aloud does much to improve the quality of life for persons with memory loss despite the fact that so often the information read is not retained. The meaning of written sentences can be understood, and prompt an appropriate response from even those who have difficulty handling verbal exchanges. Caregivers may be surprised to

learn that reading ability is not always destroyed by Alzheimer's. "All my research demonstrates that people who were literate maintain their ability to read until the end stages of dementia," said Michelle Bourgeois, a professor of speech and hearing science at Ohio State University.

Here at The Gathering Place we have been experiencing the benefits of reading and really have been surprised by the abilities of our participants to be able to read with great expression and even performing. Recently we have started a "Reading Club" where we have a small group of participants sit together in a quiet area and take turns reading interactive, relatable, stories. Something else we have found to be very beneficial is having small groups, read through, re-

hearse, and even perform skits! The small group will get together and read through their lines in the skit, often times several weeks in a row, to prepare themselves for their performance. Our groups have had a lot of fun with this, whether performing just in front of each other, or the whole group, and even performing out skits for our preschool friends. We have done, "Pinocchio", and "Charlotte's Web," for the children and it was hard to say who had more fun! Listening in and watching our participants read and perform has been eye opening and so enjoyable for everyone involved. Anything that helps make it easier for people to interact produces benefits in both directions. Reading is just another way to give the person with memory loss a chance to interact! ■



PERSON of The Month



Last month we were fortunate to have **Bernice U.** be our person of the month and share with us a great PowerPoint presentation. She and her late husband Willard raised their children on their dairy farm just west of Sheboygan Falls. Many times when we go on outings we pass her farm, which her son runs now. She is still very proud of their great dairy cattle. It was fun to see the pictures of Bernice and her family over the years. Bernice always loves to dance, especially a polka, even at 92! So it was fitting that we finished her presentation by all singing the Beer Barrel Polka. We can all only hope to have as much energy and positive attitude as Bernice as we age! ■





Memory Minute ~ Memory Basics

By Leah Zehel

This past month in *Memory Matters*, we went back to basics. To improve memory you need to understand how memory works! These are the three basic stages of memory: sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory.

According to Richard C. Mohs in his article, "How Human Memory Works," the more we know about memory, the better we will understand how to improve it. Memory is a brain-wide process. Encoding is the first step in creating memory. It begins with perception and is a biological phenomenon rooted in the senses. The perception is encoded and stored using electricity and chemicals. This is called sensory memory. Once the memory is created, the sensation is stored in short-term memory. It can hold about seven items for a very short time. Repetition can keep resetting the short-term memory clock (a great

memory technique). Information is gradually transferred from short-term memory into long-term memory. Sensory memory and short-term memory are limited, but long-term memory can store unlimited amounts of information indefinitely.

An example we used was the Rose memory- When you first see a rose, your visual system registers all the physical features, such as color, shape, and texture. Your olfactory system notices the scent. You may even feel the softness of the petals. Each of these sensations travels to your hippocampus, which combines these perceptions into the single experience that is specific to you. Several parts of the brain (including the frontal cortex) decided whether the sensory inputs are worth remembering. If they are, then your short-term memory of the rose may become part of the long-term memory! ■



Memory Matters Calendar

August 3 ~ Brain Tour

How does the Brain Change.

August 10 ~ Outing, Please Arrive by 9:15.

*Elkhart Lake Pontoon Boat Tour,
and Picnic Lunch*

August 17 ~ Types of Memory

Guest Exercise Instructor Margo

August 24 ~ Regular Exercise can Change your Brain

Guest Yoga Instructor Sarah Guttman

August 31 ~ Dance Class, with Sue Alby

Summertime, Summertime, Summertime ... Fun, Fun, Fun!

Can you believe we have been to all these great places already this Summer!

- EAA Air Museum
- Sheboygan County Airport
- Kings Park
- Kohler Design Center
- Three Sheep's Brewery
- Stefanie Weil Center
- LeClaire Farms

And we still have all these outings to look forward to!

- Men's Convertible Ride
- South Pier
- Henning's Cheese
- Christopher Gardens
- Elkhart Lake Pontoon Tour
- Packer Stadium
- and we will end summer with a Picnic at Lynn's house! ■



TGP Special Events & Activities

- August 8:** *Visit with YMCA Kids*
- August 9:** *Trip to Henning's Cheese and Abler Glass*
- August 10:** *Pontoon Ride on Elkhart Lake*
- August 14:** *Christopher Gardens*
- August 17:** *Child Care visit*
- August 17:** *Person of the Month Martha B*
- August 22:** *Stadium Tour for Lambeau*
- August 24:** *Visit with YMCA Kids*
- August 28:** *Child Care visit*

