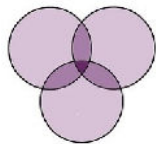


**NORTHLAND  
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MENTAL  
HEALTH**

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# Together We Care Caregiver Support December Newsletter



## Meaningful Reflections

As I sit here contemplating my experiences at Northland Shepherd's Center it seems like 2015 was so long ago. Although I had a healthcare and business background for the bulk of my professional career, I realized my passion was helping folks 60+ and those who help them by the age of 57. I even found that I enjoy

helping with Medicare and Medicaid enrollment and providing other financial and emotional resources. The evidence-based classes, like the Aging Mastery Program for Caregivers that Becky and I have co-facilitated, are full of practical knowledge and the expert speakers and class members have

never failed to teach me a thing or two at least. from each class. I remember distinctly when I got a call about the caregiver support group, when I asked my boss I found out that was also in my job description... And I'm so glad it was!

Becky and I met at a

*(Continued on pg 2 )*

## Who We Are

“Together We Care” is a support program offered to older adult caregivers. This program was formed out of a joint effort of two local organizations: **Northland Shepherd's Center (NSC) & Tri-County Mental Health Services (TCMHS)**. Both recognize a need to support and encourage those that are in a caregiver role.

**NSC** has been helping adults 60 and older remain independent at home for 30 years. **Of special interest to caregivers is BreakTime Club**, where your loved ones can go to have fun while you get a break! **Call 816-452-4536** for details about this and other services.

**TCMHS** provides emotional support to individuals living within Clay, Platte, and Ray Counties. The Older Adult Program is one area of support that is offered through community presentations, support groups, and individual therapy that is available either in an office setting or in-home. **Call (816) 468-0400 x330 for additional information.**



senior fair in 2015, we were discussing how caregiver participation is a challenge. We decided that “Together” we could “Care” better and offer more enhanced programming. December 2015 was the first issue of the Together We Care Caregiver Support Group newsletter. We have tried monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, weekly meetings during covid and although usually attendance is not stellar we are grateful to help with those who have time to join in. Zoom has been a beneficial side effect of covid for many busy caregivers.

We started the Caring Café in June of 2021 and it has had some success that we would like to build on. With mailchimp we have been able to more easily send monthly information and the newsletter. I am always grateful to talk to anxious caregivers if I can offer some ideas that inspire hope in their situation. If I were a young person (chronologically), I would pursue a career in gerontology where the sky would be the limit. But there is so much to do and I realize that I am not as spry as a younger counterpart may be.

The prospect of retirement is a dream I never thought would come true. When my 5 children were younger I thought I would have to work forever. I also thought that they would take care of me since I took such good care of them – ha! Now I realize that time may come and I don’t really want to be a burden to them. They have their careers and busy lives - you know I have heard that from more than one person these 7

years! As I leave the stress of working behind, I look forward to all of the things I will now have time to do – like unpack from our move that has been 4 years ago now... And declutter, read, travel, see more of my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. We are going to get a sheltie puppy so that my husband and I will both have a “best friend” to spoil and have fun with. As I see my life transforming I hope that this Together We Care Group will also expand and grow with a fresh partnership between Tri-County Mental Health Services and Northland Shepherd’s Center.

I will always hold this group in my heart and prayers, and I promise to support the Alzheimer’s Walk as long as I can walk! I even joined an Alzheimer’s long term (I hope) study. Mostly, I would like to thank all of you for the memories, they have left a lasting imprint in my heart and life. My hope is that I have positively touched your life as well. Dianna



## Thankful!

This word doesn't even begin to describe how I feel about my colleague and friend, Dianna. Although I am so glad that she is able to retire and enjoy a well-deserved season of relaxation, her presence will be missed in many ways.

I am so thankful for the ways our paths were woven together through Together We Care. I have learned much from watching her interact with others. I know she has touched countless lives with her knowledge, expertise and care.

We are so very thankful for you Dianna and wish you all the best!

Becky



Give us the pleasure of your attendance  
**A Time of Hellos & Goodbyes**

Join us as we say "Hello" to  
Todd Hess, our new Executive Director

And "Goodbye" to:

Terry Tipton, Interim Executive Director & Program Director  
Dianna Englander, MPH, Community Aging Specialist  
Dale Hill, Administrative Assistant  
Tammy Miller, Learning & Laughter Coordinator  
& Terry Jean "TJ" Cain, Receptionist

RSVP [www.Northlandsc.org](http://www.Northlandsc.org) or 816-452-4536

5601 NE Antioch Rd, Ste 12 Gladstone MO 64119

## Coping During the Holidays:

Increased stress during the holidays is common. In fact, the Mayo Clinic shares this insight:

"According to the American Psychological Association, 38% of people surveyed said their stress increased during the holiday season, which can lead to physical illness, depression, anxiety, and substance misuse. The reasons given: lack of time, financial pressure, gift-giving, and family gatherings."

## What You Can Do About It

- Recognize that you don't need to force yourself to be happy and that it's good to acknowledge feelings that aren't joyful; remember that you are not alone in feeling this way
- Avoid numbing or avoiding feelings by using alcohol or other substances, which worsen anxiety and depression
- If possible, surround yourself with people who feel similarly; celebrate your traditions or create new ones.

<https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/mcleans-guide-managing-mental-health-around-holidays>

## Together We Care Support Group Information

We are continuing to offer monthly meetings for caregivers:

- A caregiver support group the first Thursday of each month from 10—11:30 am. December 1st is our next meeting. Tri-County is continuing to provide a hot drink from the coffee shop.
- This group will meet in a hybrid format, either at Woodneath Mid-Continent Library in Liberty or virtually by Zoom. Email [Dianna@northlandsc.org](mailto:Dianna@northlandsc.org) for link.
- There is a Caring Café meeting on Wed, December 21st from 2-4 pm at NSC. This is a fabulous opportunity for caregivers (past and present) to gather together. You are welcome to bring your loved one too — This will be a holiday party with Christmas music led by several of our caregivers.

Please RSVP to either

[Dianna@northlandsc.org](mailto:Dianna@northlandsc.org)

[beckyf@tri-countymhs.org](mailto:beckyf@tri-countymhs.org)



### Share Your Story

Have an essay, creative writing or even poetry about your caregiving experiences you'd like to share? AARP is collaborating with Bellevue Literary Review on a special issue of BLR's literary magazine titled "Taking Care". We are seeking submissions about all aspects of caring for others, be it family, friends, neighbors or our extended communities. Selected Work will be published in BLR's print journal and on its website in fall 2023.

Details and submission guidelines are available at [blreview.org/takingcare](http://blreview.org/takingcare).

Taken from the latest AARP newspaper.

We know that there are so many wonderful stories that could be shared. By sharing your story you get an opportunity to inspire other caregivers who are struggling.



### Caring Café for December:

Wednesday December 21 from 2-4 there will be a holiday gathering at Northland Shepherd's Center.

We would love to have everyone come and share some holiday cheer—bring your loved ones too!

Please contact Dianna Englander at 816-256-8096 to RSVP so we have enough refreshments.

Come to the only senior focused food pantry in the area at Northland Shepherd's Center.

**PLATE OF HOPE** is now open and ready to take donations or provide provisions to seniors in need. **Check it out!**

### Resources

Alzheimer's Association:  
[www.alz.org/kansascity](http://www.alz.org/kansascity)  
Call 913-831-3888. for Information

American Association for Retired Persons:  
[AARP.org/caregiving](http://AARP.org/caregiving)

National Council on Aging:  
[NCOA.org/caregiving](http://NCOA.org/caregiving)

Clay County Senior Services  
<http://claycoseniors.org/community-resources>  
816-455-4800

Platte County Senior Services  
<http://platteseniors.org>