

THE DUBIN CENTER

Where no one faces dementia alone.

CAREGIVER CONNECTION
MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2026

Caregiver Connection Newsletter

WELCOME

Each month, we come together to share support, resources, and encouragement for those on the caregiving journey. In this newsletter, you'll find not only helpful tips and uplifting stories, but also important updates and news from our community. Whether it's upcoming events, new programs, or highlights of the incredible work happening around us, we're here to keep you connected and informed.

FEATURES

Upcoming Education
Events
Community Spotlight
Joyful Corner
Caregiver Corner
Monthly Calendar



To stay up to date with our weekly schedule, be sure to follow us on social media!

EDUCATION AT THE DUBIN CENTER



Savvy Caregiver
Savvy Caregiver Advanced
Driving Crossroads



SAVVY CAREGIVER®

KNOWLEDGE. SKILLS. MASTERY.

The Savvy Caregiver Course is a free, evidence-based program designed to provide caregivers with practical skills, strategies, and confidence to navigate the challenges of caregiving. Over the course of several weeks, participants will learn about the disease process, effective communication techniques, and strategies for managing stress while enhancing their loved one's quality of life.

Registration is required (via our website or call us at (239) 437-3007).

Savvy Express: The Savvy Foundational course is taught in a 3-week format.

Savvy Advanced: For Savvy Express/Foundational graduates looking to expand their caregiving knowledge, most individuals in this course are caring for someone in the later stages of dementia.

Savvy Express | 3 Weeks | Zoom:

Tuesdays | February 10th, 17th, & 24th | 12:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Savvy Advanced* | 4 Weeks | In Person: *For Savvy graduates, caring for someone in later stages

Tuesdays | March 10th, 17th, 24th, & 31st | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Evening Savvy Express | 3 Weeks | Zoom:

Thursdays | March 12th, 19th, & 26th | 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

REGISTER HERE



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Highlighting the voices, achievements, and stories that matter most to our community. This section shares local updates, celebrates milestones, and features inspiring work happening around us, keeping everyone connected and informed.

Understanding Your Options: Dementia Care and Placement Services

We would like to highlight and thank Margaret Wilson for assisting us in our first Community Spotlight feature of 2026. As we share more about Margaret and Assisted Living Locators, we want to encourage and educate caregivers about placement, placement agencies, and the importance of planning for long-term care. If you would like to discuss this information further with a social worker, please call or email us at The Dublin Center. We are happy to help!

(239) 437-3007 | info@dubincenter.com

A Career Shaped by Experience and Compassion: Margaret Wilson has spent two decades working in Assisted Living and Memory Care communities in Lee and Collier County. Her career has given her a deep understanding of what families face when choosing care for a loved one. Her work is also personal; Margaret's own mother lived with memory loss, and her family walked the same difficult path many families experience. That blend of professional insight and personal empathy guides her approach to supporting others today.

Listening First: Creating Space for Families' Emotions: When families begin exploring dementia care, the process can feel overwhelming. Margaret's priority is to create a supportive space where families can talk openly about their fears, grief, and guilt. Feeling understood helps ease the isolation that often comes with caregiving and sets the foundation for clear, thoughtful decision-making.

Understanding the Individual Behind the Diagnosis: Every person with dementia, and every family, has unique needs. Margaret begins by meeting families in person and completing a holistic assessment. She looks at medical and cognitive status, emotional well-being, family dynamics, safety concerns, and financial considerations. This full picture helps identify environments that support dignity, comfort, and quality of life.

Supporting Families Through Uncertainty and Guilt: Considering placement can bring heavy emotions. Margaret walks alongside families without judgment, offering education and reassurance rather than telling them what to do. She helps families understand that there is no single "perfect" community; instead, she narrows options to several strong matches based on each person's needs. This reduces decision fatigue and helps families feel confident in their choices.

Making Sense of Finances Without Added Stress: Cost is one of the biggest concerns families face. Margaret approaches these conversations with openness and compassion, normalizing financial worry rather than letting it add shame or pressure. She explains care costs, payment sources, and potential additional fees in clear terms, helping families feel informed rather than overwhelmed. Bonus! Assisted Living Locators, as well as many placement agencies, work at no cost to families, helping ease financial worries.

Preparing for the Right Time: For families not yet ready for placement, Margaret encourages proactive planning. She facilitates conversations about the person's values, comfort, and vision for quality of life while they can still express their wishes. She also helps families watch for signs that more support may be needed, such as increased confusion, safety risks, caregiver burnout, or frequent medical issues. Recognizing patterns over time allows families to make decisions confidently, rather than in crisis.

Grace Beyond Guilt Support Group: We here at The Dublin Center want to support families who have pursued placement. Our monthly Grace Beyond Guilt Support group provides a judgment-free space to ease caregiver guilt and connect with others in a similar phase of caregiving.

This group will be held at the center on Thursday, January 8th, 2026, from 10 to 11 am.

This support group regularly meets at the center on the 1st Thursday of every month (10-11 am)- resuming the regular schedule in February.



THE JOYFUL CORNER

Riddles, jokes, and activity ideas.



THE CAREGIVER CORNER

Caregiver Tips and Support Group Topic of the Month.



Monthly Moment of Care

In this new section of *Caregiver Connection*, we'll shine a light on an important theme that emerged from one of the 35 support groups we host each month. Our goal is to share meaningful (and always confidential) insights from these conversations, so even if you're not part of a group, you can still feel connected, supported, and reminded that you are not alone on this journey.

Topic: Meaningful Engagement

Meaningful engagement is essential for people living with dementia. As memory and reasoning change, **long-held roles, routines, and identities often remain**. Activities that reflect who a person has been can reduce anxiety, increase confidence, and support emotional well-being.

Engagement supports more than passing time; it helps maintain identity, reduces behavioral distress, and strengthens relationships between caregivers and individuals living with dementia. When activities align with who a person is, they foster moments of calm, pride, and connection that benefit everyone involved.

Key Factors of Meaningful Engagement:

Honor past roles and preferences- Engagement is most successful when it reflects what the person valued or enjoyed earlier in life.

Focus on the process, not the outcome- How an activity feels matters more than whether it is completed "correctly."

Provide a sense of contribution- Feeling helpful supports self-esteem and reduces restlessness.

Use familiarity and routine- Tasks rooted in muscle memory often remain accessible even as cognition changes.

Allow repetition- Doing the same activity multiple times can be soothing and reassuring.

Caregiver Tips of the Month

Our caregiver Tip of the Month expands on the idea of meaningful engagement. Keep in mind, effective engagement is not about productivity or correctness. It is about **connection, dignity, and purpose**. Familiar actions drawn from everyday life are often more successful than games or tasks that feel artificial. Repetition is not a failure; it can be comforting and grounding.

Use invitations rather than instructions: ("Could you help me with this?" rather than "Do this.")

Avoid correcting or redirecting unnecessarily: Validation is more important than accuracy.

Simplify the environment: Fewer choices and minimal distractions support success.

Ensure safety without drawing attention to limitations: Adapt materials quietly so the person can engage confidently.

Offer genuine praise and appreciation: Acknowledge effort and participation, not results.

Watch for signs of fatigue or frustration: Engagement should feel calming, not demanding.

Career / Role Based Engagement Ideas

Homemaker / Household Manager

- Folding towels or napkins
- Sorting household items by type or color
- Setting or clearing a table
- "Tidying" already-clean surfaces

Cook / Baker / Kitchen Worker

- Stirring ingredients (empty or dry bowls)
- Sorting measuring cups or utensils
- Reading or looking through recipe cards
- Rolling dough or shaping modeling clay

Teacher / Educator

- Reading aloud short passages
- Reviewing flashcards or picture cards
- "Grading" papers with stamps or checkmarks
- Organizing books or worksheets

Nurse / Healthcare Worker

- Organizing medical supplies (bandages, gloves)
- "Caring" for a doll or stuffed animal
- Making reminder lists
- Folding linens or towels

Office Worker / Administrator

- Sorting papers or folders
- Filing envelopes
- Using a calculator
- Writing names or copying simple lists

Tradesperson (Carpenter, Mechanic, Electrician)

- Sorting tools or hardware (nuts, bolts)
- Handling safe tools (screwdrivers, wrenches)
- Wiping tools with a cloth
- Matching parts or shapes

Retail Worker / Store Clerk

- Organizing shelves
- Folding clothing or towels
- Sorting items by color or size
- "Checking out" items with play money

Seamstress / Tailor / Textile Worker

- Folding fabric
- Sorting buttons or spools
- Threading large needles
- Feeling and matching textures

Artist / Craftsperson

- Painting or coloring
- Working with clay or putty
- Arranging materials
- Selecting colors or patterns

Manager / Supervisor

- Making simple checklists
- "Assigning" tasks verbally
- Reviewing schedules
- Organizing supplies



RIDDLE ME THIS | JOKES ON YOU | FINISH THE PHRASE | LET'S REMINICSE

People try me in January with hopes held high. I'm a promise, a goal or a

Why don't mountains catch colds in January?

New year, new **(beginnings)**

Cold hands, warm **(heart)**

How did you celebrate the new year when you were younger?

personal try. What am I?

I bring the first sunrise of the year, full of hope and cheer. What am I?

I'm slippery, cold and cover the street. Walk on me wrong, and you'll lose your feet! What am I?

Why did the mitten apply for a job?

Why do snowmen love winter parties?

What is a snowman's favorite game?

Why was the mitten so popular?

Snow on the ground, peace all (**around**)

Every day is a new (**chance**)

Snow falls, but hope (**rises**)

The best is yet to (**come**)

Did you drink hot cocoa, tea or soup on cold days?

What did you do for fun outside on a snowy day?

Did someone in your family knit scarves, hats, or mittens?

UPCOMING EVENTS



Support Group Schedule
Out & About
Fundraisers
Community Events

Support Group Schedule for 2026

General Dementia Caregiver Support Groups:

In Person: Every Tuesday (10:00am - 11:00am)

In Person: Every Thursday (1:00pm - 2:00pm)

Bonita Springs Senior Center: 4th Monday (10:30am - 11:30am)*

*Activities & supervision for those living with dementia available during group.

Arden Courts: 2nd Tuesday (11:00am - 12:00pm)

Babcock Ranch: 4th Friday (11:00am - 12:00pm)

Savvy Caregiver Support Group

In Person: Every Wednesday (12:00pm - 1:00pm)

Men's Group

Zoom: 3rd Wednesday (10:00am - 11:00am)

In Person: 2nd & 4th Wednesday (10:00am-11:00am)

Grace Beyond Guilt

In Person: 1st Thursday (10:00am - 11:00am)

*A support group for those whose loved one lives in a facility.

Grief Support Group

In Person: 1st Wednesday (10:00am - 11:00am)

Early Stage Support Group (+)

In Person: 2nd & 4th Wednesday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

*A social work consultation is required prior to joining

Memory Catchers (+)

In Person: 1st & 3rd Wednesday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

In Person: 2nd & 4th Friday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

Virtual Caregiver Support Groups:

Zoom: Every Monday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

Evening Zoom:

1st & 3rd Monday (6:30pm - 7:30pm)

See full calendar and
Zoom links on our
website:
www.DubinCenter.com

(+) RSVP Required

Social Group Schedule for 2026

Out & About (+)

Scheduled throughout the month. Be sure to sign up to our newsletter or follow us on social media to stay up to date on our upcoming outings.

Among Friends (+)

A social group for former, current, or friends of caregivers.

In Person: 3rd Friday (11:30am - 12:30pm)

Memory Catchers (+)

A safe, fun, and engaging social group for individuals living with dementia.

*Caregivers must attend the coinciding support group.

In Person: 1st & 3rd Wednesday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

In Person: 2nd & 4th Friday (2:00pm - 3:00pm)

Brain Boosters

An engaging program offering games and activities designed to strengthen brain health, build social connections, and enhance overall well-being.

Participation may require a senior center membership.

Bonita Springs Senior Center Brain Boosters: 2nd Thursday (10:30am - 11:30am)

*Senior Center membership required

Sunshine Villas Brain Boosters: 4th Wednesday (11:15am - 12:15pm)

Open to the public: 1291 Broad St W Lehigh Acres

Lehigh Acres Senior Center Brain Boosters: 4th Wednesday (2:30pm - 3:30pm)

*Senior Center membership required

See full calendar on our website: www.DubinCenter.com | (+) **RSVP Required**



OUT & ABOUT

TOP GOLF

JANUARY 12, 2026

Come enjoy a fun and social afternoon at Topgolf! Practice your golf swing, cheer on friends, and enjoy this interactive driving range designed for all skill levels. Whether you're a seasoned golfer or just want to try something new, there's something for everyone.

Please RSVP to reserve your spot. We look forward to seeing you there!

 MONDAY, JANUARY 12TH, 2026

 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM

 2021 TOP GOLF WY, FORT MYERS, FL 33913

 RSVP (239) 437-3007



A Light to Remember

Sponsored by Ellie Fox

Join us for this year's **A Light to Remember** event, featured as a float in the **Edison Festival of Lights Grand Parade!**

Honor Someone Special

Purchase a luminary for \$25 to honor, remember, or support someone affected by dementia. The names of all honorees will be displayed on luminaries on the float, on a commemorative T-Shirt, and our online gallery.

Participate in the Parade

Luminary purchasers are invited to: Walk the 2-mile parade route with us. Or ride on the float (limited space available).

****Luminaires must be purchased before Feb 1st to be included on t-shirts & float**

Event Details

Date: Saturday, February 21st

Time: 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Location: Downtown Fort Myers River District

Reserve your luminary today and join us in lighting the way for those impacted by dementia.



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DubinCenter.Com | Info@DubinCenter.com | 239-437-3007





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JANUARY 2026: SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULE

M-F 9:00 - 4:00 | 239-437-3007 | info@dubincenter.com | 12685 New Brittany Blvd Fort Myers, FL 33907

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
29 AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 9:00 - 4:00 239-437-3007 2:00 Zoom General Support Group	30 Office Open 9:00 - 11:00 10:00 General Support Group AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 11:00 - 4:00 239-437-3007	31 Office Open 9:00 - 1:00 12:00 Savvy Support Group OFFICE CLOSES @ 1:30	1  OFFICE CLOSED	2 AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 239-437-3007
5 2:00 Zoom General Support Group 6:30 Zoom General Support Group	6 10:00 General Support Group	7 10:00 Grief Group 12:00 Savvy Support Group 2:00 Memory Catchers RSVP Required	8 10:00 Zoom by FTD Support Group 10:00 Grace Beyond Guilt 1:00 General Support Group	9 2:00 Memory Catchers RSVP Required
12 2:00 Zoom General Support Group	13 10:00 General Support Group	14 10:00 Men's Support Group 12:00 Savvy Support Group 2:00 Early Stage Support Group - Invitation Only	15 1:00 General Support Group	16
19 2:00 Zoom General Support Group 6:30 Zoom General Support Group	20 10:00 General Support Group 11:00 Arden Courts - General Support Group 	21 10:00 Zoom Men's Support Group 12:00 Savvy Support Group 2:00 Memory Catchers RSVP Required	22 10:30 Zoom FTD Support Group 1:00 General Support Group	23 2:00 Memory Catchers RSVP Required
26 10:30 General Support Group @ Hope Lutheran Church-Bonita Springs  2:00 Zoom General Support Group	27 10:00 General Support Group	28 10:00 Men's Support Group 12:00 Savvy Support Group 2:00 Early Stage Support Group - Invitation Only	29 1:00 General Support Group	30 Walk-Ins Welcome

PLEASE SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR THE EDUCATIONAL & SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCIES: 911

SUICID/CRISIS: 988

MOBILE CRISIS RESPONSE: 844-395-4432

BASIC NEEDS: 211

DISPATCH HEALTH: 239-322-3434

REUNITE: 239-433-7583 (must be registered)



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JANUARY 2026: EDUCATION & SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

M-F 9:00 - 4:00 | 239-437-3007 | info@dubincenter.com | 12685 New Brittany Blvd Fort Myers, FL 33907

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
29 AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 239-437-3007 15 For You! - Phone Call with Social Worker - Schedule on DubinCenter.Com	30 Office Open 9:00 - 11:00 AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 11:00 - 4:00 239-437-3007	31 Office Open 9:00 - 1:00 OFFICE CLOSES @ 1:30	1 <i>Happy New Year</i> OFFICE CLOSED	2 AVAILABLE ONLY BY PHONE 239-437-3007
5 15 For You! - Phone Call with Social Worker - Schedule on DubinCenter.Com 10:30 Out & About* : Top Golf 2021 Top Golf Wy, Fort Myers, FL 33913 	6	7 2:00 Memory Catchers* RSVP Required	8 10:30 Bonita Springs Brain Boosters -  Bonita Springs Senior Center	9 2:00 Memory Catchers* RSVP Required
12 15 For You! - Phone Call with Social Worker - Schedule on DubinCenter.Com	13 12:30 - 3:30 Savvy Express* #1 	14	15	16 11:30- Among Friends Social Hour*
19 15 For You! - Phone Call with Social Worker - Schedule on DubinCenter.Com	20 12:30 - 3:30 Savvy Express* #2 	21 2:00 Memory Catchers* RSVP Required	22	23 2:00 Memory Catchers* RSVP Required
26 15 For You! - Phone Call with Social Worker - Schedule on DubinCenter.Com	27 12:30 - 3:30 Savvy Express* #3 	28 11:15 Sunshine Villas Brain Boosters 2:30 Lehigh Senior Center Brain Boosters 	29	30 Walk-Ins Welcomed

***RSVP REQUIRED FOR ALL EDUCATION CLASSES, SOCIAL GATHERINGS & OUTINGS**
Brain Boosters does not require RSVP

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH SOMEONE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

- Use short, simple sentences, speak slowly
- Give them adequate time to process & respond
- Avoid arguing and over-explaining
- Limit complicated choices
- Encourage them to speak for themselves
- Encourage them to join in the conversation

A Light to Remember

DATE: February 21, 2026
TIME: 7 PM to 10 PM
WHERE: Edison Festival of Light Parade

Click [HERE](#) to view our highlights from our 2025 fundraisers!

Backyard
GAMEDAY

DATE: March 8, 2026
TIME: 4 PM to 7 PM
WHERE: Bay Street Yard



This podcast was produced by one of our Men's Caregiver Support Group members. It provides guidance and expert knowledge on all things Alzheimer's and caregiver related.

[**GUTPUNCHED Podcast**](#)

Thank you to our Sponsors!

Champion



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Arden Courts

MEMORY CARE IS ALL WE DO.

Memory Care Is All We Do!

Staffed by specially trained caregivers, Arden Courts cares for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

📞 (239) 428-0951

🌐 arden-courts.org



CYPRESS COVE

Cypress Cove provides a secure, engaging environment where residents can enjoy an active lifestyle while having peace of mind about their future care.

📞 (239) 323-5969

🌐 cypresscovelliving.org



Affordable apartment homes for adults aged 55 and up. Enjoy an affordable and comfortable style of life, filled with amenities and only moments away from Lehigh Acres' vibrant shopping and dining centers.

📞 (239) 471-4023

🌐 liveatheronpond.com

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Advocate



GULF COAST memory care

Gulf Coast Memory Care-redefining Memory Care
Here, you will discover a friendly Respite Care, Memory Care, Alzheimer's Care, and community where every day is celebrated in an inviting atmosphere that feels like a family get-together.

📞 (239) 221-6120

🌐 gulfcoastmemorycare.com



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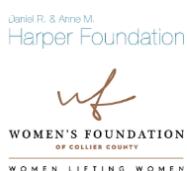
🌐 healthparkseniorliving.com

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Boost your visibility, reach new audiences, and support our community!

Thank you to our funders!



United Way of Lee County



DONATE HERE



(239) 437-3007



12685 New Brittany Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33907



info@dubincenter.com

Our Contact Information

{{Organization Name}}

{{Organization Address}}

{{Organization Phone}}

{{Organization Website}}





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[The Joyful Corner Answers](#)

Riddle - A Resolution, New Year's Day, Ice

Jokes - Because they wear snowcaps, To get a grip on its future, Because they know how to chill, Freeze tag,
Because it was always handy!

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