

# The Boulder Times



**January 2024**

## Happy New Year!

Hello everyone,

1. **We have been lucky so far. Please continue to be mindful when you come and visit. If you are sick stay home, if you have been around someone with illness it might be best to save your visit for another day or wear a mask.** With holiday gatherings we might see some illness.
2. **No Masks will continue for now.** We will watch the guidance given by the MN Dept of Health our county. If covid levels becomes high or we have covid in the building we will go back to wearing masks
3. **Activities Professionals Week is Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>.** Expect to see some fun ☺
4. **BC Staff Soup Cook-Off** will be January 25<sup>th</sup>. Taste Testers needed.
5. **If you have a new care plan to sign, please stop by Jan's office so we can take care of it.**
6. **You may have noticed more cameras around the building. These have been brought in to help us identify where and when unwitnessed falls may have taken place. Then with the information glean we hope to use it to mitigate the falls in the future. This will also help us out if a resident would elope.**
7. **New front door. Our main entrance will be undergoing some renovations. In the new year we will be replacing our old doors with new electronic motion sensing door (like Walmart). This will avoid catching in the wind all together. Our old door has cracked due to catching in the**

wind. The big wind storm in November sealed its fate. It has been replaced twice previously so we will be changing the entire framework. We are at the mercy of the construction, and the glass people, so we don't have an exact timeline. Jan will send out a message when under construction. During that time, please use the service entrance next to the garage. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause. I have been assured it should be done within a week if all goes well.

8. State of MN Dept of Health Surveyors will be here sometime in 2024. In the meantime, you will see Jan, Mary, HR, and the Charge Nurses working to make sure all the manuals are updated and everyone is ready.
9. **Reminder: Rent/meal plan increase is effective next month, February 1, 2024.**
10. Treats are always wonderful. **Please bring treats to share not to leave.** We are finding more crumbs on the floor than are hitting the residents mouths. (That means we are also finding ants! Yes, believe it or not, those normally dormant ants come out when those delicious treats are left out and about.)
11. **Next Support Group will be Jan. 16<sup>th</sup> at 6pm.** Our speaker will be Jaen Weilage. Family Council will be just prior at 5:30pm.
12. **Please check out the "BC Lending Library".** Several new titles have been added to our collection.
13. The Giving Tree is filling up. A count for items gathered will be given soon. Everything will be donated to United Community Action and the Marshall Area Food Shelf. The blessings are in the giving.
14. As always, my door is open. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.



*Whether you believe in New Year's resolutions or not...I challenge each and everyone of you to take the time to be a little kinder to yourselves and your neighbors.! This world, and our country needs a little more kindness. Let it start here! Let it start now!*

## Welcome Guest Speaker Jaen Weilage



Jaen Weilage will be our special speaker at January's Support Dementia Group... She has dedicated most of her adult life to helping raise dementia awareness. She is an educator and worked with the elderly for a long time. She helps support the community through A.C.E. and also through MADAN. She works tirelessly to bring educational opportunities and resources to the Marshall area. It's very interesting when Jaen talks about how the philosophy and treatment of dementia has changed through the years. Jaen was also a daughter of someone who suffered from dementia and lived at Boulder Creek. So, she knows first-hand the stressors of being a caregiver. Jaen is a wonderful resource and easy to talk to. It's going to be an honor and a privilege to have her. I can't wait.

**When: January 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Where: BC Community Room**

**Time: 6pm, Directly after Family Council at 5:30pm**

**New Year's Project for the BC Neighborhoods**

## “Create Safe Rummaging”

Rummaging is a normal part of the dementia journey. It also when done safely can decrease anxiety in our loved ones. So, I am asking everyone to look through your basements, attics, garages, and drawers.

We need your junk. We have dressers in each neighborhood and they are starting to empty. In those dresser drawers we have put old purses, wallets, billfolds, ladies scarves, men's hats, costume jewelry, belts, buckles, men's handkerchiefs and ladies hankies. Possibly old work gloves, ladies hats, aprons, and maybe those pretend credit cards we get in the mail. Yarn, crochet hooks, ribbons, quilt squares, other notions, combs, hair rollers, keys on a ring, old readers, paint brushes, old phone books, address books, old letters, greeting cards, valentines, and miss mated socks, baby clothes, and old deck of cards, etc. Before you throw something out or take it to the thrift store think about us.



Jan 8<sup>th</sup> – Elvis's Birthday

Jan 18<sup>th</sup>- Staff Fiesta Christmas Party in afternoon

Jan 18<sup>th</sup>- Maintenance Worker Appreciation Day

Jan 22-26<sup>th</sup>- Activity Professional Week. Let's Party....

Mon- T-shirt day, Tue- Crazy hair day, Wed- Karaoke day, Thur- Potluck, Fri- It's a surprise

# **Employment Opportunities:**

## **WANTED: Home Health Aides**

### **(CNA Licensure Preferred)**

**Currently hiring for: Evening, and Overnight Shifts for CNA's**

We are seeking staff to add to our team! The right person for this position must enjoy working with the elderly and have a compassionate understanding of their care needs. Position includes every other weekend and a holiday rotation.

**To Apply:** Stop in to one of our locations to pick up an application or apply online at [boulder-creek.org](http://boulder-creek.org) or [boulderestates.org](http://boulderestates.org)

Boulder Creek  
601 Village Drive  
Marshall, MN 56258

Boulder Estates  
604 Village Drive  
Marshall, MN 56258

Benefits include: Competitive Wages, Paid Time Off, Rewarding Work, On the Job Training, Education Reimbursement Programs, Continuing Education, Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Short Term Disability, and more!

\*If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer at 507-401-3606.





## **Family Council Agenda**

January 2024

Open the meeting with New Business

1. Masks are not required in January, and won't be until further notice.
  2. Current Census is 13 on North 3 men and 10 women with one pending move in, and 16 on South all women.
  3. We are looking for both full and part-time home health aides for evenings and overnights.
  4. Reminder Rent/meal increase will begin February 1<sup>st</sup>.
  5. January Support Group at 6pm today will feature Jaen Weilage.
  6. Mary will be hosting the support group in February. This is your time to come and "Ask A Nurse".
  7. Looking for new topics to explore for dementia support group.
  8. This is a survey year. Expect to see Jan and Mary working on Manuals and doing mock surveys and drills with the staff.
  9. Some new titles have been added to the lending library.
  10. We have another successful year with the Hat, Scarf, and Mitten tree.
  11. So pleased with our staff as they adopted a resident for Christmas.
  12. A big thank you to our Santa Claus this year who was our Senior Companion Yvonne Caron.
  13. Jan will be going to a training in the cities to get the latest legislative updates on Feb 7 & 8.
  14. Jan will be taking a vacation and be out of the office Feb 11-18. She is going to AZ for the first time.
  15. Celebrating Elvis's Birthday, Resident's Birthday's, Activity Professional's Week, and Maintenance Appreciation Day!
  16. Ask for any questions, new business
- Close the Meeting

# Welcome to Mary 's Corner

## BC's Nurse Supervisor/Case Manager

Happy New Year Boulder Creek families! 2024 is now upon us – my how time flies!

Our residents love having visitors and we encourage you to visit! Here are a couple recommendations when considering a visit with your loved one.

- 1. Less is more - time.** Individuals with dementia are oftentimes adversely affected by sensory overload. Residents who are overwhelmed can become anxious and exhibit behaviors like exit-seeking, irritability, agitation and increased confusion for hours after visitors leave. Keep visits to 1-2 visitors for 1-2 hours at a time. Our residents can tire easily and require breaks between visits to rest their brain.
- 2. Less is more – treats.** Snacks and treats are a fun and special way of creating a moment of joy with your loved one. Dementia effects the brain in ways that impact impulse control. For example, a plate of homemade cookies sounds delicious (and tastes good, too); however, our residents may not have the ability to stop eating those yummy treats once they get started! Also, they may soon forget that they just ate a cookie and finish whatever is left on the plate. What's more, too many sweets all at once may cause stomach ache, high blood sugar and/or diarrhea. If you would like to leave some behind for them to enjoy at a later time, provide treats and sweets in small portions in a re-sealable container. Food items are often left out or stashed away in drawers, closets, in the bed (even between the mattress and box spring), which attracts unwanted pests. Want the best outcome? – Bring just enough to enjoy together during your visit.
- 3. Less is more – activity.** Sometimes, striving for connection through conversation can be awkward. It may be difficult to pinpoint where they are in their journey throughout the day. They may seem too tired to visit or too busy to sit and converse. Take your cues from them. Whatever they are

experiencing is very real to them – especially their feelings. A calm, gentle and supportive approach is always the right move.

- 4. Less is more – illness.** If you feel ill or have symptoms such as fever, chills, sore throat, cough, congestion, nausea, diarrhea, please consider postponing your visit until you've fully recovered. Hand sanitizer and disposable masks are available in the lobby for your convenience.

As always, it is a joy and privilege to serve and care for your loved ones. Thank you for entrusting them to us!

Please feel free to contact me with any ideas, suggestions, questions or concerns. As a reminder, typically my schedule is Monday-Thursday from 7:30am-5:00pm.

Mary Mitzner, RN  
Nurse Supervisor/Case Manager  
Boulder Creek Assisted Living  
Phone: (507) 337-9536



## *Food for Thought!*

### *Why do I feel this, way?*

I've heard several family member talk about the guilt they feel because their loved one has dementia. They feel lost & unable to move on. They have also talked about feeling depressed, overwhelmed, anxious, and angry.

**Does this sound familiar? It's called Grief.** But they haven't passed away...how can I be grieving?

What does it mean if you feel the symptoms of grief—such as denial, depression, anger, panic and physical ailments—but no one has died? Could you still be grieving?



Yes, if you're caring for someone with a life-limiting illness such as dementia.

Many spouses and adult children experience anticipatory grief after a loved one is diagnosed with dementia such as Alzheimer's disease, Lewy body dementia or vascular dementia. Anticipatory grief is real, and its symptoms can be a heavy burden while caring for a loved one. Ignoring or burying your feelings can lead to unnecessary confusion or guilt. However, learning to recognize the symptoms of grief can help you cope, prevent burnout and better care for your loved one. The right support system can mean all the difference.

*The instant a loved one is diagnosed with dementia; you start to grieve.*

### **What is anticipatory grief?**

Anticipatory grief describes the set of complex feelings experienced while anticipating an inevitable death ahead. You are grieving the loss of someone to illness, not to death, although the emotions can be just as intense.

The instant a loved one is diagnosed with dementia you start to grieve. *What will my life be like without this person?* is a common first thought and fear.

As your loved one changes before your eyes, each loss of ability can feel like a little death. You may grieve the losses of memory, awareness, personality and ability to communicate long before your loved one passes.

You could also mourn the loss of a relationship that brought you companionship, reassurance and a sense of self. For many people the spousal or parent-child relationship is core to one's identity. The daily grind of caregiving can also cause a loss of friendships with others, as well as lost income, privacy, space and time.



## What could I feel during anticipatory grief?

While caring for a loved one you might experience these feelings:

- **Personal sacrifice and burden.** It's common to feel angry, scared and on edge. The role of caregiver is a burden and sacrifice, and you might regret losing the life you once led.
- **Heartfelt sadness and longing.** You might grieve the loss of your old life and feel powerless to stop this new reality.
- **Worry and isolation.** You may lose connections with other family and friends if you can't socialize like before.

Given the hardships of caregiving, you might have feelings that make you feel guilty, like a wish for the illness to end or relief when your loved one ultimately passes. All of these feelings are okay.

Caregiving demands energy that you must replenish. Stopping to rest is a necessity, not a luxury.

## How can I cope with anticipatory grief?

Long, tiring days define the lives of many dementia caregivers. Here are things you can do to make it easier:

- **Understand that anticipatory grief is normal.** You are allowed to mourn before a death, so don't feel badly about it.
- **Take care of yourself.** Caregiving demands energy that you must replenish. Stopping to rest is a necessity, not a luxury.
- **Seek professional help.** Home care and hospice agencies offer a variety of support services for families dealing with dementia. You might qualify for [home health aides](#) to assist with your loved one's personal care, such as bathing, dressing, grooming and light housework. [Social workers](#) can connect you with community resources and personal counseling services.
- **Take a break.** If you qualify for respite care, a trained volunteer can stay with your loved one while you take time to nap, go shopping, attend a caregiver support group and do another self-care activity.
- **Go to a [caregiver support group](#).**



## What is a dementia caregiver support group?

A caregiver support group offers education, guidance and emotional support in a safe, non-judgmental space.

You can attend while caring for someone with any stage of dementia. Some group guests are at the beginning of their journey, while others have been at it for a while.

In a support group you'll find other dementia caregivers who understand the basic outline of your daily challenges. Finding people who “get it” is a pretty big deal.

Support group is a place to share joys and fears and to laugh and cry—but only if you want to. Just listen if that's your preference.

Knowledge is power for any caregiver. The more that you understand the illness, the better you can face reality and solve problems.

For example, say your loved one routinely gets tired and agitated in the afternoon, which is a phenomenon called sundowning. Sure, you could read a pamphlet or seek advice online, but do you have time for that? Do you even want to?

More helpful might be a real-life conversation about what did and did not work for others. Another example: A retired nurse in support group shared a problem she couldn't figure out. Over and over her husband would ask where his mother was, and she'd answer, “Oh, honey, your mother has been dead for forty years.” He would cry, and they'd both get upset.

Years of research tell us it's sometimes better to validate and redirect someone with dementia rather than reorient to them to a distressing truth. In group the woman learned to tell a “fiblest”—*Your mother went to get her hair done, but in the meantime let's go for a walk until she's back*—and the result was much less emotionally exhausting for

both of them. Of course, support group is also a place to share joys and fears and to laugh and cry—but only if you want to. Just listen if that's your preference. We love helping people find resources that make a difference in their caregiving experience. Nobody should suffer anticipatory grief alone. Expert, compassionate care is here if you reach for it.

Boulder Creek offers a support group the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month at 6pm. If this time or days doesn't work for you, please feel free to contact us. There are more support groups in our community.

Please also be aware of on-line groups. In some ways it can be a great way to connect with a group of people struggling with the same issues. The anonymous nature make it feel safe. Beware, that same anonymous nature make it ripe for those that are trying to exploit people. Who feed the site with negativity rather than helpfulness. Please measure your feelings. If you feel worse after being on a site steer clear of it in the future.

As always please know our staff is here to help you during this difficult time and can also recommend resources if you need a little more help than we are able to give.

God Bless you all and remember we are on this journey together. You are not alone. Together we are better.



**Santa Claus didn't just come to town; he came to Boulder Creek! Check out the Boulder Creek Facebook page to see all of the fun we have had over the past month and going forward.**

<https://www.facebook.com/BoulderCreekMemoryCare>

