

**LEE ALTER, STAR COORDINATOR**  
**PO BOX 331**  
**HOT SPRINGS, SD 57747**  
**PHONE: 605-295-0542**  
**E-MAIL: lee@sdhda.org**  
 The Evans, Hot Springs  
 Gold Mountain, Lead  
 Grand Valley, Newell  
 Green Valley, Newell  
 Homestead Heights, Bison  
 Maplewood, Rapid City  
 Senechal, Philip

**JILL BALDWIN, STAR COORDINATOR**  
**PO BOX 57**  
**SIoux FALLS, SD 57103**  
**PHONE: 605-201-2108**  
**E-MAIL: jill@sdhda.org**  
 Beadle Plaza, Sioux Falls  
 Canterbury, Sioux Falls  
 Canyon Ridge, Yankton  
 Collins, Sioux Falls  
 Four Winds, Flandreau  
 Heritage Estates, Brookings  
 Olive Grove, Sioux Falls  
 Prairie View I & II, Madison  
 Lynlo, Armour

**LINDSAY BRUCKNER, STAR COORDINATOR**  
**PO BOX 1237**  
**PIERRE, SD 57501**  
**PHONE: 605-773-4522**  
**E-MAIL: lindsay@sdhda.org**  
 Bicentennial, Aberdeen  
 Pheasant Valley Courtyard, Milbank  
 5th Avenue, Aberdeen  
 Gateway I & II, Kadoka  
 River Ridge, Mobridge  
 Sherman, Aberdeen

**VONA JOHNSON, DIRECTOR of RENTAL HOUSING MANAGEMENT**  
**PO BOX 1237**  
**PIERRE, SD 57501**  
**PHONE: 605-773-3181**

*STAR Resident Newsletter* is provided by the South Dakota Housing Development Authority for your interest and enjoyment. If you need any assistance with services, referrals or have special questions, please contact your STAR Coordinator. Suggestions for future articles or news items can be directed to Lee, Jill, Lindsay, Vona or Tracy.

**TRACY LAQUA, EDITOR**  
**PO BOX 1237**  
**PIERRE, SD 57501**  
**E-MAIL: tracy@sdhda.org**



# RECIPES

## Buffalo Chicken Salad - Susan Hansen, Gold Mountain

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 chicken breast           | Salt and pepper to taste |
| 2 tablespoons olive oil    | 2 tablespoons butter     |
| ½ cup hot sauce            | Salad greens             |
| ½ cup blue cheese dressing | Blue cheese crumbles     |

Carefully slice the chicken breast in half from top to bottom. Heat olive oil and butter in a small skillet over medium-high heat. Salt and pepper both sides of the chicken breast pieces. Fry until they are done. Remove chicken from skillet and pour off any excess fat/oil, but don't clean the pan. Return the chicken to the skillet and add the hot sauce. Let the chicken sit in the sauce while you prepare the salad. Heat should not be on under the skillet.

Toss the lettuce in a large bowl with just enough salad dressing to lightly coat it. Thin the dressing with a little milk if it is too gloppy. Heap salad into two bowls. Slice the chicken into thin slices and arrange over the lettuce. Sprinkle crumbles over the top.

## My Favorite Meatloaf - Susan Hansen, Gold Mountain

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 cup whole milk         | 6 slices white bread  |
| 2 pounds ground beef     | 1 cup Parmesan cheese |
| ¼ teaspoon seasoned salt | ¾ teaspoon salt       |
| Black pepper             | ½ cup minced parsley  |
| 4 eggs, beaten           | 10 slices bacon       |

### Sauce:

- |                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 ½ cups ketchup       | ½ cup brown sugar |
| 1 teaspoon dry mustard | Tabasco to taste  |

Preheat oven to 350°. Pour milk over the bread slices. Allow to soak for several minutes. Place the ground beef, milk-soaked bread, Parmesan cheese, seasoned salt, salt, black pepper and parsley in a large mixing bowl. Pour in beaten eggs. With clean hands, mix the ingredients until well combined. Form the mixture into a loaf shape on a broiler pan. Line the bottom of the pan with foil to avoid a big mess! Lay bacon slices over the top, tucking them underneath the meatloaf. Mix the sauce ingredients together. Pour ½ of the sauce over the loaf. Bake for 45 minutes, then pour another ½ of the sauce over the top. Bake for another 15 minutes. Slice and serve with remaining sauce and mashed potatoes.

## No Fail Boiled Eggs - Susan Hansen, Gold Mountain

It does not matter how many eggs you cook. Place eggs in 3 to 6 cups of cold water. Add 2 teaspoons of salt. Boil for 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cover for 10 minutes. Place eggs in cold water and let sit before using.

## Invitation to all STAR Newsletter Readers:

My recipe file is empty! Please look through your recipe boxes, magazines and drawers for some tried-and-true or new recipes for us to try. Your STAR Coordinator can make copies for you. Thank You!

*Tracy Laqua, Editor*

SPRING  
2016



# STAR

A QUARTERLY  
PUBLICATION COURTESY  
OF THE SOUTH DAKOTA  
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY

## Resident Newsletter

# Why You Need a Will



Where there's a will, there's a way - to ensure that your assets are distributed according to your wishes upon your death.

If you think only millionaires or young parents with children need wills, think again. Without a will, the state in which you are domiciled may determine how much of what you own is dispersed. If you're unmarried when you die, that distribution could appear to be haphazard. A will can also help your estate avoid unnecessary administrative expenses.

Fewer than half of American adults have wills. Some people think they don't own enough property to warrant drafting a will. But virtually everyone has something worthy of distribution: a car, furniture, paintings, china, jewelry and electronics. Even if those items were sold at auction rather than distributed to family and friends, the proceeds could greatly benefit a charitable organization. What would happen to your pets if you die? If you possess anything you value, you can't afford not to have a will.

It's not only unwise to not lay out your last wishes in a will, it is also unfair to your heirs. You may have told a granddaughter repeatedly that you want her to have a particular piece of jewelry, but if you don't put that in writing she may not receive it. Leaving behind any property without a will leaves your heirs to sort out who gets what.

One reason you may avoid preparing a will is because of the discomfort associated with thinking about your own death. It is natural to want to avoid uncomfortable feelings, but there are emotional benefits from going through the process. Facing the fact that death is inevitable may actually help you appreciate your life more.

It's also normal to think you have plenty of time to prepare your will and that it can wait. But tragedy can strike at any age. Deciding to prepare your will is a sound, prudent choice.

You don't have to spend a fortune to prepare a will. You can make a legally valid will using various software programs.

Numerous books have been written about wills and estate planning. Check them out at your local library.

If your estate is sizable, if you own a business or if you have special needs, consult an estate-planning attorney. Proper estate planning can help your heirs save on estate taxes.

Once you have created a will you should review it every

few years and any time you experience major life changes with your family and friends, such as marriages, divorces, new family members or deaths of loved ones. It is important to keep your will updated so it reflects your current wishes.

Sign your will in front of at least two sound adults who will also sign

the document as witnesses. Keep your will in a safe place and tell your executor where it is. Preparing a will may seem tedious, time-consuming or complicated. If you've been putting it off it might help to know that once you've done it, you will likely feel good knowing that your affairs are in order.

*An executor is someone named in a will, or appointed by the court, who is given the legal responsibility to take care of a deceased person's remaining financial obligations. This means taking care of everything from disposing of property to paying bills and taxes.*

Source: MetLife



## Medical Identity Theft *keep*

personal information about you. Perhaps you left a piece of mail in the trash and a con-artist raids your garbage and finds an account number and your personal information. Or maybe a cyber-hacker finds a way to access personal information on your computer. Either way, these thieves now have your personal information and they aren't afraid to use it. Information about you and your insurance benefits may be kept and used by the hackers, or it may be sold to another person who will then use your identity and insurance to access medical benefits.

Medical identity theft is hazardous both physically and financially. Someone pretending to be you can seek care at your local healthcare facility or at another facility across the country. The problem is that this person is receiving care and every time they visit the doctor with their symptoms, your record is being altered. Perhaps this person visits the emergency room and requires penicillin to treat their illness. You happen to be severely allergic to penicillin and the next time you go to the doctor, he or she unwittingly prescribes you penicillin because your medical record now says you have no allergic reactions and have had the prescription before. If you are given penicillin and take the medication you could end up deathly ill in the emergency room. This is just one example of the problems that can arise from medical identity theft.

Identity theft can also affect your insurance. Perhaps you decide to switch insurance companies. You receive notice that you are denied coverage due to a heart problem that you don't even have. You call the insurance company to explain you have never been diagnosed with a heart condition and they tell you it is listed in your medical records and there is nothing that they can do to help you. As a result of someone else using your identity, you are now without healthcare coverage.

Unfortunately, most victims of identity theft do not find out that they have been victimized until they receive a medical bill for services they didn't have, they receive a collection call on a bill that is not theirs, or a denial of services from their insurance company for a condition they don't have.

Imagine this situation: You check your mail one day to find several bills from a hospital that are addressed to you, but when you open the bills and review them, you realize that they are for procedures that you never had done. Confused, you call the number of the health care facility listed on the bill and are then told that you received services on several dates and now owe the facility. Puzzled, you inform the facility that you have never been to their facility, but they insist that your medical records indicate that you were one of their patients. A few days later, you begin to receive collection calls on medical bills that you know nothing about. You try to explain this, but the collector isn't listening. Even more upset, you request a copy of your medical records and when they arrive, you realize that someone pretending to be you has been receiving medical care under your name and billing these procedures to your insurance. You have become a victim of medical identity theft.

Medical identity theft has become an increasingly large problem for consumers, insurance agencies and health care facilities. Current statistics indicate that an estimated 1.5 million Americans were a victim of medical identity theft last year. The average cost billed to each medical identity theft victim was \$20,663. Clearly, this is a huge problem, but how does this kind of thing happen?

Hackers and other professional con-artists are becoming increasingly savvy about stealing very

## Celebrating Older Americans

Older adults are a growing and increasingly vital part of our country. The contributions they make to our communities are varied, deeply rooted, and include influential roles in the nation's economy, politics, and the arts. From 69-year-old NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, Jr. to 84-year-old actress Rita Moreno to 83-year-old Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who took her seat as a Supreme Court Justice at age 60, older adults are blazing trails in all aspects of American life.

In 1963, we began to acknowledge the contributions of older people by using the month of May to celebrate Older Americans Month (OAM). Led by the Administration for Community Living, the annual observance offers the opportunity to learn about, support and celebrate our nation's older citizens. This year's theme, "Blaze a Trail," emphasizes the ways older adults are reinventing themselves through new work and new passions, engaging their communities and blazing a trail of positive impact on the lives of people of all ages. Many older Americans are finding new inspiration in second careers, helping others, discovering new interests and pursuing dreams.

Beyond helping the people around you, being involved in your community also benefits you in several ways by keeping your mind active, maintaining physical health, providing structure and routine, connecting you with the community, promoting social activities, preventing isolation and in some cases, providing an income. Look for opportunities in your community to blaze your own trail!

Source: [www.acl.gov](http://www.acl.gov)

A new study shows that more Americans are hitting their 100th birthday than ever before. In a January 2016 report published by the Centers for Disease Control, there were 72,197 Centenarians, which is up quite a bit from the 50,281 people who were over 100 in the year 2000 and from 32,194 people in 1980.

Women are still living longer than men and they account for 80 percent of the Centenarians. It seems that people are living longer due to major improvements in medicine, public health sanitation efforts, vaccines and antibiotics.

Researchers are looking forward to studying future generations, especially the Baby Boomers, to determine if subsequent generations will enjoy the same longevity that the Centenarians now enjoy.

Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



## Celebrating Inventions

Many things have been invented over the years that most people could not live without today. Below is a list of noteworthy inventions and the years they were introduced. Happy Searching!

B C R A D I O T E C W T E Y D O G B E E O Y U J K O C T R U T H U V R U E N U E R Z E E O P T B A C O Z E Q T C O C X L U E C S V A W R B T I P T E K P R N E A N O U J L M J O A A O E O F P C Y S D E T K R E T P O C I L E H R O Z A R C I R T C E L E H S	1912 Lifesavers Candy	1930 Jet Engine
E N R I Y R V Z P Y H C Z N L E E S K E S I A D A A I E V N M N K R P R N I R P O N O I A E P W A R R P T E I K L E T O E C D A E R V D E S P S L L S R D R I A V D P S A I B R Y I J C W T E Y D O G B E E O Y K O C T R U T H U V R U E R Z E E O P T B A C O Z T C O C X L U E C S V A W I P T E K P R N E A N O L M J O A A O E O F P C Y D E T K R E T P O C I L E H Z A R C I R T C E L E H S	1913 Zipper	1931 Electric Razor
	1915 Pyrex	1934 Zippo Lighter
	1916 Radio Tuner	1939 Helicopter
	1919 Pop-up Toaster	1943 Slinky
	1920 Hair Dryer	1953 TV Dinner
	1922 Electric Kettle	1954 Microwave Oven
	1924 Loudspeaker	1957 Bubblewrap
	1929 Car Radio	1968 Smoke Detector

Created by Discovery Puzzle Maker

## Did You Know?.....

The brain is one of the most amazing organs in our bodies. Though the brain is only about two percent of our body weight, it is the most active organ that we have and uses 20 percent of the body's oxygen supply and 25 percent of the body's energy. The brain is also one of the most complex structures known to man. It contains over 100 billion brain cells and is nearly limitless in its capability and power to learn new things.

When a brain is learning and growing, it is gaining new cellular connections called synapses. The changing of these synapses is called brain plasticity. When we use our mental functions to challenge ourselves and learn new things, our brain capacity and overall positive plasticity improves. New connections and pathways are being created and are engaging quieter parts of the brain, whereas if we do not engage in new activities and stimulate our brains, negative plasticity occurs. This results when we are not exercising the parts of the brain we once used regularly. Perhaps you used to play the piano and then quit several years ago. The result is that the pathway that the brain created to allow you to learn the piano begins to deteriorate and eventually stops working. The brain has an amazing ability to "prune" itself and get rid of old, unused pathways to make way for new information and pathways to be formed. The more often a skill is used and strengthened, the longer it takes for it to diminish. The good news is that the brain is designed to expand, learn and create new pathways for information throughout our entire lifespan so there is always an opportunity to keep your brain healthy! Incorporate these simple tips which promote brain health into your day:

- Take good care of your health. Both a healthy body and healthy mind are important.
- Eat a healthy diet free of too much fat, cholesterol and sugar. Eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables and also include plenty of good fats like Omega 3 fatty acids that come from fish and seafood.
- If your diet is lacking in nutrition, consider taking vitamin supplements such as Magnesium, Vitamin D, Omega 3, and a comprehensive multivitamin.
- Get 30 minutes of exercise each day.
- Try new things and learn new skills to challenge yourself and stimulate your brain's pathways.
- Keep your stress levels low.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Source: ProActive Aging's Brain Health Fact Sheet



## your information safe

So how can you correct the problem once you discover that you've been victimized? Start by calling the police and making a formal report of identity theft. You will need a formal report in order to verify that a crime occurred. Next call the hospital, clinic or other healthcare facility that sent you the bills and where you usually receive medical services and inform them of the problem. Request any and all recent medical records and take the time to carefully examine everything. During this process, keep a detailed record of any phone calls, emails or correspondence that you have with the medical facilities and your insurance company. When you find information that does not belong to you, send a letter to the healthcare facility explaining the situation, why the records are incorrect and asking them to correct your records. You will most likely have to include a copy of your identity theft police report. Send the letter via certified mail so that you have a receipt showing you are attempting to get your records corrected. You will also have to send a similar letter to your health insurance provider informing them of the situation. It may take some time, but you can get the errors corrected.

You can help prevent medical identity theft by following the tips below:

- Do not provide your health insurance id number or anything about your insurance company over the phone unless you initiated the call to your company. Scammers may call and pretend to be a representative from your insurance company to lure you into sharing account information.
- If you receive explanation of benefits, medical bills or anything personal about your medical records, keep them in a safe place in your home.
- If you want to discard medical documents, shred them before throwing them away.
- Take the time to review your insurance explanation of benefits and check for inaccuracies.

Source: [www.consumer.ftc.gov](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov)

## Social Security Reminder

A new memo from the Social Security Administration says that if you have changes in your life situation, it is your responsibility to report them to the Social Security Administration as soon as possible. Many beneficiaries experience changes in their life situations such as getting a job, quitting a job, becoming disabled, retiring from their job, getting married, adding a child to their household, experiencing the death of a spouse or even moving to a new address. While many people do report these changes, others do not and it can negatively impact their benefits.

According to Social Security Administration (SSA), anyone who receives benefits such as SSI, SSDI or retirement income from the SSA has the legal obligation to report any changes immediately or at the latest, no later than ten days after the end of the month in which the change occurred.

Changes to your situation can mean that you may be due additional payments, or perhaps in some cases, you may have been overpaid benefits and have to repay SSA for the overpayment. For individuals who do not report changes in a timely manner, it can mean receiving penalties that will reduce your benefits. If you wait a very long time to make the changes, this can be perceived by SSA that an individual is making a false statement about their living and income situation, which can mean that SSA may stop that individuals SSI, SSDI or retirement benefits. In some cases where individuals did not report in a timely manner, SSA imposed sanctions on them and suspended their benefits for 6, 12 or 24 months. SSA likes to remind beneficiaries that it is better to remember to report any changes right away to reduce the chance of having problems with your payments later on.

There are several ways to report changes in your life situation. You can report the changes on-line at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or by calling toll-free at 1-800-772-1213. You can also mail a letter of change to your local SSA office or visit the office in person and notify them of the changes.

Source: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

## Energy Assistance Program

The Energy Assistance Program helps qualifying individuals pay for home heating costs. Keep in mind, energy assistance may not pay all of your heating bills.

Eligibility and assistance amounts are based on the number of people in your home, the income of everyone in your home, the type and cost of heating and where you live. The income guidelines have not been published for the 2016-2017 heating season. Your STAR Coordinator will provide the income limits when they are available.

If you received energy assistance last season, the Office of Energy Assistance will send you a preprinted application. When you receive your application, or if you are filling out an application for the first time, you will be asked to provide proof of your household's last three months of income. Please have this information available for your STAR Coordinator if you would like assistance completing the application.

Energy Assistance funds are distributed on a first come, first served basis. The heating season runs from October to May. If you have questions about the Energy Assistance Program and how it works, please visit with your STAR Coordinator or contact the Office of Energy Assistance at 1-800-233-8503.

Source: <https://dss.sd.gov>

## Sales-Tax Refund

The Sales Tax Refund Program offers eligible senior citizens and people with disabilities a once-a-year refund of sales taxes. The program is funded through an annual appropriation from the South Dakota Legislature. To be eligible you:

- Must be at least 65 years old on or before January of 2015 **or** disabled during any part of 2015,
- Must have been a South Dakota resident during all of 2015, and
- Must meet the annual income requirements.

The income guidelines for a one person household is under \$11,800. The multiple member household's combined income limit is under \$16,020. If you received a refund check last year, the Department of Revenue will send an application to you the first week in May. For those who have not applied before, applications will be available in early May. Applications are accepted from May 1 through July 1. Refund checks will be issued at the end of August.

If you have questions about the Sales Tax Refund Program please ask your STAR Coordinator.

Source: <https://dor.sd.gov>

# Understanding Dementia

As people age, they may start to forget things from time to time. Some people chalk this up to a normal part of the aging process, but others may be concerned that it could be something more serious. Dementia is a pattern of mental decline that is caused by different diseases. Dementia occurs when brain nerve cells called neurons die, interrupting the connections between the neurons.

When people hear the word dementia they associate it with Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease does cause about 40-45 percent of all dementias. Dementia can also develop as the result of a stroke, which accounts for about 20 percent of dementia cases. Lewy body disease, which causes neurons in the brain to degenerate, is the cause of another 20 percent of dementia cases. There are a multitude of other conditions that can cause dementia including traumatic brain injury, AIDS, alcohol abuse or Multiple Sclerosis.

Research suggests that at least 15 percent of people over the age of 65 have dementia. In the majority of cases, dementia does not happen quickly. Symptoms of dementia emerge very slowly and continue to progress over time. The first and most noticeable symptom of dementia is memory loss. Everyone, including perfectly healthy individuals, experience memory loss from time to time. This is normal. However, a person with dementia will have memory loss and will also begin to lose their ability to function. A person with dementia may forget where they put their keys, but they may also forget how to actually use the key when they find it.

Memory loss can be extremely frustrating because people with dementia may have trouble completing complex mental tasks. Simple things such as remembering what day it is, being able to drive and how to tie their shoes may become impossible tasks. They may also show signs of inattentiveness and may begin to have difficulty speaking full, coherent sentences. There may also be changes in mood or behavior. In some cases, a person may also experience hallucinations or delusions and become agitated.

If a person or their loved ones begin to notice some of the symptoms listed above, it may be

time to see a doctor. A doctor will ask when the symptoms started and may order testing such as an MRI or a PET scan of the brain. Both imaging tests have shown to be useful with detecting problems with the brain such as stroke, blood clots or tumors that can cause problems that mimic dementia. The test can also show if there is healthy blood flow to all areas of the brain and will detect if there is any damage or shrinking of the brain. If a doctor rules out all other medical issues causing the memory loss, a Mini Mental State Exam can be administered. The exam consists of eleven short assessment questions about what day or year it is or counting backwards from 100 in various increments. If the patient has difficulty completing the assessment, dementia is then considered as a possible diagnosis.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for dementia; however, there are several medications available that can slow the progression of the disease. It can be helpful for people with dementia to be surrounded by familiar people and to follow their normal routines. Often times, once a dementia diagnosis is given, it can be difficult for the person to go back to their normal lives. By being amongst familiar people and things can help stop some of the confusion. It is also important to ensure that the person is in a safe environment. When the disease progresses, it can cause a person to become disoriented to place and time and they may attempt to wander outside away from their home and into high traffic areas.

Though some risk factors for dementia such as age and genetics aren't changeable, the good news is that there are some things you can do to reduce your risk of getting dementia. Keeping your body healthy by maintaining a proper weight, not smoking and keeping your blood sugars, cholesterol and blood pressure within the healthy guidelines are all important. Getting regular physical exercise is also crucial because exercising increases the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain. It is also important to eat a diet that includes fruits and vegetables, fish, nuts and other healthy sources of fat. For additional information about dementia, please visit with your primary care physician.

<i>Normal Age-Related Memory Loss</i>	<i>Symptoms of Dementia</i>
Forgetting names or appointments, but being able to remember them later on.	Memory loss that disrupts daily life such as forgetting important dates, appointments or recently learned information. Having to ask for the same information over and over again.
Making occasional errors when balancing a check book.	Challenges in planning and solving problems: This includes changes in ability to develop and follow a plan such as following a recipe or keeping track of monthly bills. This can also include difficulty concentrating and taking longer than before to complete normal daily tasks.
Needing occasional assistance to record a TV show or use settings on the microwave.	Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, work or leisure: This includes having difficulty driving to a particular location, or trouble remembering the rules to a favorite game.
Getting confused as to what day of the week it is, but figuring it out later.	Confusion with time or place: This includes losing track of dates, seasons and passing time. Occasional forgetfulness of where you are or what you were doing.
Vision changes due to cataracts.	Having trouble reading, judging distance or determining color or contrast.
Sometimes having trouble finding the right word to use.	Developing new problems with words or speaking: This includes having difficulty joining a conversation or stopping in the middle of a conversation and suddenly being unsure of what to say.
Misplacing things, but being able to retrace your steps to find them.	Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps: This includes putting normal items in odd places and being unable to retrace the steps to find the items. This may include accusing people of stealing things when the item is just misplaced.
Making a bad decision once in a while.	Decreased or poor judgment such as being unable to manage money or spending less time on grooming or personal cares.
Occasionally feeling tired from participating in work or social activities, but not stopping them altogether.	Withdrawal from work or social activities: This may include removing themselves from beloved hobbies, work or social groups. Social isolation may occur due to feeling embarrassed about the changes occurring.
Developing and sticking to a routine and becoming irritable when a routine is interrupted.	Changes in mood and personality may include becoming increasingly confused, suspicious, depressed, fearful or anxious and becoming easily upset at home, work or with friends.

Memory loss may be related to illness, depression, medication(s), emotional and physical trauma, stroke, stress and sleep deprivation. Early diagnosis helps to rule out a progressive memory disorder. When you see your primary care physician, he or she will evaluate your overall health and identify any conditions that could impact how your mind is working. Your doctor may refer you to a specialist to help further your care. The specialists that may work with dementia patients include:

- **A Neurologist:** This doctor specializes in treating diseases of the brain and nervous system.
- **A Psychiatrist:** This doctor specializes in disorders that affect mood or the way the mind works.
- **A Psychologist:** This doctor specializes in testing memory and other mental functions.
- **A Geriatrician:** This doctor specializes in caring for older adults.

Sources: Alzheimer's Association and Countryside Hospice Support and Memory Center