

# PRIME TIMES

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# Holiday Respite Care: A Gift for Caregivers

by Jennifer Ennis

DayBreak at Elder Care is offering short-term respite care during the holiday season, available Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Caregivers have the flexibility to bring their loved ones for a single day or as many days as needed, allowing them to take care of their own needs during this busy time of year.

Respite care provides a much-needed “short break” for caregivers who dedicate their time and energy to caring for family members, often in their own homes. While caregiving can be incredibly rewarding, it can also be physically and emotionally demanding. Taking regular breaks helps caregivers recharge, maintain their own well-being, and continue providing quality care.

The holiday season, in particular, can be overwhelming for caregivers, with added responsibilities like shopping, preparing meals, and attending gatherings. Respite care at DayBreak offers the perfect solution, giving caregivers the opportunity to manage holiday errands, schedule their own appointments, or simply take some personal time to relax and rejuvenate.

The importance of respite care during the holidays cannot be overstated. This time of year can amplify the pressures of caregiving, making it crucial for caregivers to have moments of relief. Respite allows them to step back, reducing stress and preventing burnout, so they can fully enjoy the holiday season with their families. It also gives

them peace of mind knowing that their loved ones are in a safe, supportive environment.

While the focus of short-term respite care is often on the caregiver’s well-being, the participants at DayBreak also benefit greatly from this service. They enjoy a day filled with nutritious meals, social interaction, group activities, therapeutic art, and opportunities for exercise, all in a nurturing and engaging environment.

For more information on costs and arrangements for short-term respite care at DayBreak, please call Elder Care at 918-336-8500.



# The Psalmery Bakes

by Abigayl Peterson

Several years ago, I became inspired by the Great British Baking Show. As a



lover of baked goods of all kinds, I was tired of sub-par store-bought goods, especially after tasting delicious croissants and baguettes during trips to Europe; but, I couldn't afford regular treats from a professional bakery. Encouraged by memories of my grandma's homemade cookies and pies and armed with the Cook's Illustrated Baking Book, I began baking in January 2020.

Eventually, I decided to expand my skill set to sourdough. Months of trial and error and nerdy research finally paid off in the form of delicious artisan loaves. There was one problem though... we couldn't eat them as fast as I was addicted to making them!

I had been documenting my bakes for two years on social media, and I constantly had family and friends making comments about buying goodies from me. With a strong conviction that the gift of flavor was part of a very literal invitation to "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8), I launched a small home bakery called The Psalmery Bakes in the fall of 2022.

At The Psalmery, I post bakes for pre-order and run a variety of subscriptions. Sourdough is offered regularly, along with a rotating menu of

bagels, muffins, cinnamon rolls, scones, and the occasional croissant or dessert. I often take whatever I'm planning on making for my own family and multiply the recipe, which helps maximize my time. While my current stage of life means that I'm keeping this venture small, it has been a fun and rewarding way to develop a hobby with a meaningful outlet!

## QCD Your Way into the New Year!

by Michael Thompson

As the year draws to a close, many people reflect not only on their financial well-being but also on the ways they can give back to their community. If you are 70½ or older, the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) offers a fantastic way to give back, especially during the holiday season. This method not only supports meaningful causes but also offers valuable tax benefits.

### What Are QCDs?

A Qualified Charitable Distribution allows you to donate up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to eligible charitable organizations without paying federal income tax on that amount. "IRAs, or Individual Retirement Accounts, are commonly used by retirees to manage their savings, and QCDs provide a way to utilize those funds for charitable purposes. This is particularly beneficial during the holiday season when many charities seek contributions to meet their annual budgets. In short,

# QCD Your Way into the New Year!

*Continued*

a QCD will benefit you and your favorite non-profit!

## **Tax Benefits**

One of the key advantages of QCDs is their tax efficiency. Typically, when you withdraw money from your IRA, it counts as taxable income. However, with a QCD, the amount donated is excluded from your taxable income. This can lower your overall adjusted gross income (AGI), which is particularly helpful for you if you are a senior citizen, especially if you have a higher income. By keeping your income lower, you may also avoid losing valuable tax credits and deductions.

## **Simplified Charitable Giving**

Making a QCD reduces the hassle of dealing with tax implications on withdrawals, making it not just charitable but also practical. Instead of withdrawing funds and then writing a check to a charity, you can instruct your IRA custodian to transfer the donation directly. This streamlines record-keeping and ensures that the organizations of your choice receive your support promptly, which is essential as the year wraps up.

## **Supporting Non-Profit Organizations**

At Elder Care, we rely on generous contributions to continue providing vital services to the community, including medical equipment loans, scholarships for DayBreak participants, and more. The end of the year is a crucial time for us, as we seek donations to maintain and expand these essential programs. By making a QCD to Elder Care, you can ensure that seniors in our community receive the resources, care, and support they need. And because you won't pay taxes on the distribution, you might feel more comfortable

making a larger donation, amplifying the impact of your support.

## **How to Make a QCD**

Getting started with a QCD is easy. Here's a simple guide:

- 1. Confirm Your Age:** Make sure you are at least 70½ years old.
- 2. Choose a Charity:** Select an eligible charitable organization. You can check its status by contacting the charity directly or on the IRS website.
- 3. Contact Your IRA Custodian:** Reach out to the financial institution that manages your IRA for assistance with the QCD process.
- 4. Provide Information:** Give your custodian the charity's name, address, and tax identification number.
- 5. Keep Records:** Retain documentation of the QCD for tax purposes. The charity will provide you with a receipt.

Qualified Charitable Distributions offer a smart, tax-efficient way to give back while supporting organizations that matter most to you. This year, consider how a QCD to Elder Care can help enhance your charitable contributions while providing essential services to our community. By taking advantage of this opportunity, you can make a lasting impact and ensure that we continue their important work in 2025 and beyond. If you're interested in making a QCD, talk to your banker or trust specialist for more information.



# A Dementia Friendly Approach to Christmas

by Shelia Tucker

Christmas is a wonderful time of year to bring people together to celebrate. For people living with dementia the holiday season can be difficult to cope with. Christmas can be a sensory overload which can make it difficult to follow conversation and process information for a person dealing with dementia. Noise levels of gatherings and the brightness of decorative lights may cause a person with dementia to become withdrawn, anxious, and overwhelmed. The change in routines can be confusing and disorienting for those dealing with dementia.

For a caregiver, Christmas often brings the additional responsibilities of buying gifts, preparing special meals, and decorating. Adding these tasks to that of being a caregiver may turn the festive season into a season filled with high levels of stress, pressure, and worry.

Find ways to simplify the holiday season for your loved one and yourself.

Put decorations up gradually over a few days. This can help minimize change in the normal environment. Small things like Christmas lights can be disorienting to someone with dementia.

Keep activities simple and familiar. Plan activities that are engaging and stimulate memories. Singing familiar songs or looking through family picture albums can be calming and reassuring. Activities should be short in length, possibly 20-30 minutes. Allow time for breaks in between activities.

Children are a great source of enjoyment, but you may need to monitor the amount of time a person with dementia spends with



young children. Watch for signs they are becoming tired or that noise levels are too much for them to process. A quiet space where your loved one can relax without loud noise and extra stimulation will help keep anxiety and agitation down. For yourself as a caregiver, be flexible. Do not get caught up in holiday traditions or expectations of perfection. Be prepared to accept that holidays might have to look different than they used to as dementia progresses.

An important part of being a caregiver is the ability to ask for help. Be willing to delegate shopping, cooking, and cleaning tasks. Do not look at asking for assistance as neglecting your duties. Look at it as giving everyone the opportunity to get involved.

At the end of the holiday season, if you and your loved ones have created an experience, no matter how small, that brought a smile and a time of togetherness you have had a successful holiday celebration.

# Reimagining Tradition

Dee Evans, Guest Contributor

Through the years, holidays can feel different, and sometimes cherished traditions no longer work. But traditions don't need to look the same each year to bring pleasure, warmth, and connection. By building new traditions, senior adults – even those of us with physical or logistical limitations – can still honor personal memories, nurture community spirit, and find joy in simplicity. Creating new traditions that reflect where we are in life can keep the holidays festive, uplifting, and rich with purpose.

Here are a few ideas to start traditions that may make the season feel special, no matter what stage of life we're in:

## Host a Heritage Baking Day

Food-centered traditions are at the heart of any holiday, but cooking elaborate meals may feel overwhelming. A “Heritage Baking Day” creates the warmth of sharing food while keeping things relaxed. Choose a favorite recipe – cookie, pie, holiday cake – and bake it together with friends or family. Make it even easier with a “Holiday Snack Swap,” where everyone brings a treat to share.

## Build a Gratitude Tree

The Gratitude Tree is a simple way to celebrate togetherness and thanksgiving without a large event. Invite family, friends, or neighbors to meet and decorate a small tabletop tree with notes or handmade paper ornaments, each one expressing gratitude. As the tree grows, it becomes a visible reminder of all the blessings in our lives.

## Share a Night of Storytelling

Storytelling can create a connection to the past while building new memories. Gather friends and family together to share favorite holiday moments. Add a special touch by encouraging everyone to bring a meaningful holiday object – a cherished ornament, a recipe card, or a photo – and share the story behind it.

## Volunteer to Spread Holiday Cheer

This year, start or continue the tradition of spreading holiday cheer, but modify the activity to match your skills and abilities. Follow the lead of tennis great Arthur Ashe, “Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” If volunteering out of the house is a challenge, organize an at-home activity like creating holiday cards for children in hospitals or military members stationed abroad. Every little bit of kindness makes a difference.

Creating new holiday traditions helps us adapt to changes while keeping the season meaningful. When we let go of what no longer works and embrace new ways to celebrate, the holidays remain a time for connection, warmth, and lasting joy. Whether it's through sharing stories, gathering in simple ways, or giving back, traditions remind us that the heart of the season lives in the moments we create together.



## Prime Times

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# Holiday Cheer and Connection

This December, Elder Care invites everyone to join Blitzen Bingo: A Family Fundraiser, a festive and heartwarming event with a mission to uplift and connect. On Sunday, December 8th, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, the familiar voices of KYFM 100.1 will guide listeners through rounds of Music Bingo—a delightful twist on traditional bingo, where instead of calling numbers, song clips are played, and players mark the titles on their cards.



Blitzen Bingo isn't just about the game; it's an opportunity to build connection and joy during a season that, while magical, can be lonely for some. Holidays are a time to come together, to feel part of something greater, and to remind one another that nobody is truly alone. Events like Blitzen Bingo create a space where people can gather, laugh, and feel a sense of shared celebration—even from different homes.

Whether you join from your living room, a cozy group at your church, or with co-workers in a festive office gathering, Blitzen Bingo offers a way to celebrate togetherness. This event is perfect for inviting your neighbor, connecting with family members, or getting friends together to share in holiday fun. Music Bingo helps set the tone, with holiday classics and well-loved tunes bringing everyone together and sparking conversations and memories.

The act of connection is powerful. Spending time with others brings not only joy but a sense of purpose and inclusion. It has been shown time and again that gathering together, sharing laughter, and creating positive memories with others during the holidays contributes significantly to one's well-being and happiness. The warmth of a shared experience, especially when many are separated by distance or circumstance, can turn a moment into a treasured holiday memory.

Blitzen Bingo is Elder Care's way of creating a night of joy and connection, while supporting its programs for aging adults and caregivers. All proceeds will go directly to Elder Care, ensuring that seniors and caregivers in the community can continue to access valuable support and resources throughout the year.

Tickets and sponsorships are now available. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit [www.abouteldercare.org/blitzen-bingo](http://www.abouteldercare.org/blitzen-bingo).



# This Month's Donors

In appreciation of contributions to Elder Care in October 2024

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Ralph and Lois Bergstad  
Chapman Foundations  
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Darrell Coe  
Disciples Christina Church  
Steve and Tana Grogan  
Ignite Medical Resorts  
Albert Laws  
The Lyon Foundation  
Debbie Martinson  
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Gary and Patricia Parrish  
Donald Peters  
Guy and Brenda Sutherland  
Steve and Cheryl Van Aken

*We sincerely apologize for any unintended error or omission. Due to publication deadlines, acknowledgment of gifts may take up to 60 days in Prime Times Publication.*

## Memorials

Linda Hall  
David Hardgrave  
Sara Hess  
Frank and Louise Inda  
Kay Sowers  
Valorie and Rick Steinhart  
Mary Warden  
*In memory of Bill Middleton*

## November and December Events

### Alzheimer's Association - Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia During the Holidays

Thursday, November 14 | 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm | FREE

Alzheimer's is not normal aging. It's a disease of the brain that affects memory, thinking, and behavior. During the holidays, these challenges can intensify for both individuals and caregivers. Join us to learn about the impact of Alzheimer's, especially during this season, and understand the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, stages and risk factors, and current research and treatment options. You'll also discover Alzheimer's Association resources to help families navigate these difficulties during the holidays.

### Community Connect Social – “Holiday Floral Arranging & Charcuterie Mash Up” \$55 per person

November 19 | 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm

Hosted by Betsy Faust of Honey's Flowers & The Eatery. Create your own spring floral arrangement and enjoy a pre-made charcuterie board. Take the flowers home and enjoy your charcuterie board at the party. The cost of the event covers materials. RSVP by November 5 for materials to arrive in time.

**RSVP to Elder Care by calling (918) 336-8500.**