



815 Forest Avenue  
Northfield, Minnesota 55057

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## Elderly Caring: Choices, Challenges and Rewards

As the census shows, the number of American citizens 65 years and older will quadruple in the next 30 years. With this expected population growth many of us in the coming years will be faced with primary or secondary caregiving of a loved one. Research studies show that family members provide nearly 82 percent of the care for an elder family member. The primary caregiver is most frequently the elder's children or spouse. As well there may be a secondary group of individuals offering support to the elder and the primary caregiver including extended family and friends. These caregivers must often provide care under complex circumstances, often balancing family, careers and their responsibility of caregiving. This care is often defined as providing unpaid assistance for the physical and emotion needs of another person ranging from partial assistance to round-the-clock 24 hour care. This responsibility accompanied by life's other challenges can become an overwhelming and daunting task. Thus all things considered, one can imagine the importance of the caregivers being attuned to taking care of themselves. All too frequently caregivers are unwilling, perhaps ashamed to ask for help because they perceive this to be a sign they are not doing a good job or even failing at the task. Caretakers cannot be expected to do it all and it is imperative to set limits. To provide effective care to a loved one, one needs to maintain one's own health. Neglecting your own care may have long-term consequences, not only for you, but also for the person that needs your care. The following are often neglected by caregivers:

- Adequate amount of sleep
- Exercise and nutritious meals
- Taking regular and longer-term breaks from providing care
- Allowing others and or agencies to take over for you
- A good awareness of knowing when you need a break

As our elderly population rapidly increases and a larger numbers of us become caregivers at some point, potentially stressful experiences may occur. However, caring for an elderly individual can be very rewarding. It may strengthen relationships among family members and create numerous opportunities to work together. It also is an opportunity to express the love and appreciation for the support that your elder loved one has given you over the years. So take good care of your elderly loved one as well as yourself and take pride in your circle of family and friends.

## Caregiver Support Group

Three Links Care Center has long been the host of a support group for caregiver's of people with memory loss or dementia. The group is affiliated with the Alzheimer's Association. The facilitators are Tana Kelly, a licensed social worker and Paula Plank the nurse manager of our Pathways special care unit. The group meets at the Vital Link Adult Day Care site on the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00pm. Members of the group are able to provide support to one another by sharing their experiences and feelings. Some of the people who attend the group are taking care of a husband or wife with memory loss at home. Other people have gone through the difficult experience of placing their loved one in a skilled nursing facility or other dementia-care setting. Members are able to share invaluable information about community resources as well as ways of planning for the future.

For more information call:  
507-664-8821.

## Upcoming Events for our Residents in Aug :

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|------|--|
| 11th | Dakota Co. Fair Trip                       |
| 15th | Music w/ Cowboy Jim                        |
| 18th | River Walk & Ice Cream Outing              |
| 19th | Country Dinner: Fried Chicken & Sweet Corn |
| 25th | Homemade Ice Cream Social                  |
| 27th | Red Hat Society Mtg.                       |

## Reflections ~ Care Suites / Respite Care at Reflections

*Reflections Care Suites* with hospice services opened in September 2008. Staffed with those who are dedicated to end of life care, each suite consists of a large sitting area that can accommodate family members that wish to stay with their loved for an indefinite period of time. Families are encouraged to be with their loved ones as much as possible and they are invited to partake in cares as they feel comfortable. Reflections also has a gracious common area where families can gather and a family dining room where home cooked meals can be served and shared. An adjoining conservatory brings the outside in and the soothing wall of water brings comfort at a sad and stressful time. Reflections has been the last home for many over the past months. The first client came from California to be near her siblings during her final journey. This last home gave her the support, care and love, to plan her funeral to be held at Reflections and feel peace with her decisions. Reflections and its team of compassionate professionals understand the feelings and emotions associated with the end of life journey. This special place provides the responsive medical, emotional and spiritual support needed during these times. For more information please call Edie Hoeppner, Care Manager at 507-664-8867.

### *Respite Care at Reflections*

Respite care is now offered by Reflections for families who would like to have a loved one cared for while they are away for a weekend or a whole week. Your loved one will have 24 hour care by a nurse in his/her own private furnished room with a private bath.

The cost includes all home-cooked meals and snacks, a phone and cable TV in each room, and linens and towels. This means that families can leave town for a while knowing their loved one is in good hands in lovely surroundings.

For more information please call Edie Hoeppner, Care Manager at 507-664-8867.

## Millstream Commons Assisted Living



I'm Kathy Olson, the Executive Director of Millstream Commons Assisted Living affiliated with Three Links. Millstream, located in the heart of downtown Northfield, opened in 2005 and offers the comforts of home that blends independence with supportive services. Tenants enjoy private apartments with large windows that bring the outside in and where they can be surrounded by their special things. Nutritious and attractive meals are served in the pleasant dining room and tenants can be found enjoying the many and varied activities including exercise class and a book club.

Respite care is also available at Millstream. The one bedroom furnished apartment is a home away from home when a family needs a break from caregiving. While visiting our respite apartment, your loved one will have a 24-hour on-site awake staff, three meals a day in our dining room, weekly housekeeping, phone and cable TV. You can be rest assured that your loved one will be well taken care of during your absence. Having been associated with Three Links since 2000, I have a deep commitment to providing excellent care to the senior population in Northfield. One of my favorite things about working at Millstream Commons are the conversations I have with our tenants and families and the opportunity to hear their life story. Come for a visit, you will be glad you did. Please call me at 507-650-0141.