



# Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

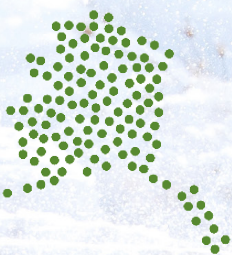
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## Offices & Contact Information

### Anchorage

1750 Abbott Rd.  
Education (907) 561-3313  
CCRA\* (907) 677-6789

### Fairbanks

565 University Ave., Ste. 2  
Education (907) 452-2277

### Mat-Su Valley

777 N. Crusey St., B101,  
Wasilla, AK  
Education (907) 746-3413  
CCRA\* (907) 746-3445

### Juneau

2354 Mendenhall Loop Rd.  
Education (907) 586-6044  
CCRA\* (907) 500-7456

### Copper River Basin

### Statewide

Toll Free within Alaska  
outside of Anchorage  
(800) 478-1080

\* Care Coordination  
Resource of Alaska

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# Save the Date!

Alaskans are ready to reconnect, and we will. Join us **May 7, 2022**, we are Amblin' in-person in Anchorage at O'Malley's On the Green, and virtually across Alaska, for our 18th Amblin' for Alzheimer's walk.

Amblin' is a friendly, non-competitive fundraising walk for all ages.

Look for details coming soon  
at [www.alzalaska.org/amblin](http://www.alzalaska.org/amblin).



MAYOR'S CHARITY BALL

## JOIN US OCTOBER 8, 2022

At The Dena'ina Civic Convention Center

Tickets can be purchased through [mayorscharity.org](http://mayorscharity.org).

The auction will be held virtually statewide.





Dear Friends,

Welcome to the New Year! Already our days are growing longer, and that alone brings smiles.

We're tremendously grateful for the generosity of our donors who helped make the 2021 Year End Campaign the most successful in recent years. Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska (ARA) surpassed its expectations in this drive. We had been planning to participate in the [Mayor's Charity Ball](#) in February as one of the selected charity beneficiaries. But the event organizers concluded that the gala event would be better postponed until the current COVID surge abates. The event is now rescheduled for October 8 and we'll be front and center. Before then, we'll be back outdoors for our springtime [Amblin' for Alzheimer's](#) walk. I'm looking forward to the chance to reconnect with so many of you in person, and to personally introduce you to Joanne Proefrock who is our new development director.



The Alaska Legislature has returned to Juneau to set about its work. Our primary [message](#) to legislators this year is to ask them to include a cost of living increase to Older Americans Act programs in the state. There haven't been adjustments in many, many years—while our costs as providers continue to climb. The result is fewer services even as our senior population grows. The programs are not only ones ARA provides, like the Family Caregiver and Senior In-Home (case management), but also congregate meals, home delivered meals, transportation services and adult day programs. If you speak to your own [legislators](#) this session, please share your thoughts with them on the matter.

Wishing you all the best as the sun gets higher in the sky,  
Sincerely,

Pamela Kelley  
Executive Director

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# Sharon's Story: Caring for Jerry

**“Dementia tends to strip away how we want to appear to others, with Jerry I now get to see the whole person and that is rare.”**

*By: ARA Editorial Team*

Years ago, when I was just starting my career as an intern principal in the Anchorage School District, I met a wonderful teacher, Rebecca “Becky” Ann Clement. Becky, along with her sister Beverly, were the founders of the Alzheimer’s Resource of Alaska. She would often share her daily experiences caring for her mother with Alzheimer’s with me. Little did I know, that one day in the future, I would also be a caregiver to my husband, Jerry, who is living with Alzheimer’s.

Jerry and I have been happily married for 33 years. We met in Delta Junction where Jerry was Assistant Superintendent at the district, and I was a single mother with three young children to support. Jerry helped me get a job at the school library and encouraged me to finish up my teaching degree. We became good friends, and after a few years, we fell in love and became official partners in marriage. Over the

years our friendship and love have only deepened.

During the early years of our marriage, Jerry was always my biggest supporter. While I worked, he helped take care of the home front so I could pursue my career as a teacher. He was a steady and loving presence for the family, attending games and activities, packing lunches and keeping things on an even keel. Jerry always loved serving as an educator throughout Alaska – from the North Slope, Barrow, Point Hope, and many other rural places in-between. He always loved the people he met and worked with, and they felt the same about him. These are some of the special memories that spark joy and bring back highlights of his life before dementia.



*Husband Jerry and caregiver Sharon Story —  
Photo provided by Sharon Story*

Later, we moved to Wasilla and I made the daily commute to Anchorage as a school principal – a job I loved. In 2003, Jerry had two transient ischemic attacks (TIA’s), or in other words a brief stroke-like attack that happens suddenly. I started noticing some cognitive decline but didn’t pay much attention to the symptoms at first. After his last TIA, he received a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s and

*(Cont. on next page)*



vascular dementia, which is also referred to as mixed dementia. This is when I started noticing a real decline in his thinking abilities.

About eight years ago, I gave up my career so I could devote more time to Jerry's care. This is a decision I do not regret because it has taught me so much about myself and my husband. I've learned so many lessons about life. The biggest lesson is the importance of patience and humility, and the gift of helping someone with kindness and love. I've learned so much from my husband - his ability to meet the challenges of Alzheimer's with such grace and calmness. Dementia tends to strip away some of our learned behaviors or how we want to appear to others, with Jerry I now get to see the whole person and that is rare. He can still make me laugh and his manners are still intact. He is still the

gentleman he was the day I married him and, to this day, he insists on walking along the right side of me.

About six years ago we sold our family home and relocated to Raven Landing, an independent living community in Fairbanks. For the three years, we lived there; it provided Jerry friendship, activities, social events, and ways to be active in the community - all in a safe environment. Not too long ago, I had to make the difficult decision to place

*(Cont. on next page)*



*Jerry and Sharon with granddaughter  
— Photo provided by Sharon Story*



## Mind Aerobics™



**For Alaskans worried about Memory Loss who want to keep their mind fit and engaged.**

Mind Aerobics™ are a unique series of brain exercises based on the principles of neuroplasticity: our brains are capable of constantly rewiring and building stronger neural networks that enhance cognitive abilities.

**Mind Sharpener™** is for people who don't have any observable symptoms of dementia, but might be worried.

**Mind Works™** is targeted to people who have mild memory loss, may have consulted a medical provider about it, and may even have gotten a diagnosis.

To register, or for more info, contact: Ken Helander at [khelander@alzalaska.org](mailto:khelander@alzalaska.org) or 907-561-3313



Learn More →

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*(Cont. from previous page)*

my husband in an assisted living home. I did what I thought was the best for him. I wouldn't be telling the truth if I said it hasn't been lonely for me. Perhaps the hardest part was second-guessing my own decision. Since then, I've learned that I can't judge others' situations in comparison to our own. Each journey is, indeed, unique.

I am so grateful for my family and my amazing women friends. They really help support and hold me up when I need it the most. The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska has also supported Jerry and I with engaging classes, informative educational opportunities, and much needed socialization. All of these supports have helped me be the best caregiver I can

be. I believe they will work for you too.

I hope my story will encourage others in their caregiving journey to celebrate your special times together, the memories you hold dear to your heart, and the real gift of meeting someone living with dementia where they are in their journey. ★

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## Physical activity associated with slower cognitive decline in people with high levels of tau protein

October 14, 2021 — [NIH.com National Institute on Aging](#)

Engaging in high or medium levels of physical activity was associated with slower rates of cognitive decline in people with high or low levels of tau, compared to those with little physical activity. Led by researchers from the Rush University Medical Center, the findings were published in JAMA Network Open on Aug. 11. The researchers noted that measuring levels of tau, a protein that is a hallmark of Alzheimer's disease, in the blood could help identify



people who might benefit from early intervention to slow cognitive decline.

In people living with

Alzheimer's, abnormal accumulation of tau builds up into tangles in the brain.

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## Physical activity associated with slower cognitive decline in people with high levels of tau protein

(Cont. from page 6)

Higher levels of tau are associated with cognitive decline and an increase in memory and thinking problems. Research has shown that physical activity may help slow cognitive decline, but it was unknown if physical activity rates were associated with slow cognitive decline in people who have high levels of tau.

A team of researchers used data from 1,159 older adults who took part in a large study called the Chicago Health and Aging Project (CHAP) between 1993 and 2012. CHAP researchers assessed cognitive function using various tests, asked participants about their physical activity, and collected blood samples from the participants, who did not have Alzheimer's at the start of the study. In 2019, researchers measured tau concentrations in the blood samples, which had been frozen, and compared rates of cognitive decline among people with high and low tau concentrations and high,

medium, and low physical activity levels.

The researchers found that, among participants with high tau concentrations, those who had reported medium levels of physical activity had a 58% slower rate of cognitive decline than participants with



low physical activity levels. Those who reported high physical activity levels had a 41% slower rate of cognitive decline than those with low self-reported physical activity levels. For participants with low tau concentrations, those with high physical activity levels had significantly slower cognitive decline than those with medium or low physical activity levels.

The study had some limitations. It included only white and African American

participants, and it measured the duration but not the intensity of physical activity. The researchers also note that the rate of cognitive decline was sometimes lower among participants with medium physical activity levels than among those with high physical activity levels; the reasons for this variation warrant further study.

The findings suggest that measuring proteins — such as tau — in the blood could help identify people who would benefit from increased physical activity or other behavior changes that could help slow cognitive decline. Measuring such proteins could also help future studies measure the benefits of behavior changes in people who are at higher risk of Alzheimer's. ★

*Reference: Desai P, et al. Longitudinal association of total tau concentrations and physical activity with cognitive decline in a population sample. JAMA Network Open. 2021;4(8): e2120398. doi: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.20398.*

## Pick.Click.Give.

Pick.Click.Give. allows Alaskans to easily share part or all of their Permanent Fund Divident with non-profit organizations they care about. When you apply (Jan. 1–March 31, please consider making a gift to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska.

**Support us**   
**when you shop**  


Sign up to the Fred Meyer Community Rewards Program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska at:

[www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards)



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[alzalaska.org/amazon-smile](https://alzalaska.org/amazon-smile) for details

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You shop. Amazon gives.

## Voices of the Last Frontier



2019 Voices of the Last Frontier concert - photography by David LaBelle

Music evokes emotion in people living with even the most advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease. Neurologist Oliver Sacks says that, "emotion can bring with it memory... it brings back the feeling of life when nothing else can." By pairing music with every day activities, people can develop a rhythm that helps them to recall the memory of that activity, improving cognitive ability over time.

[Voices of the Last Frontier](#) is a chorus program for those living with dementia, their care partners and community volunteers. Join us weekly for an engaging hour of singing, group activities and sharing our stories on Zoom.

Our winter session begins January 7, meeting every

Friday for one hour sessions through February 25. [Join us](#) for one session or attend all eight.

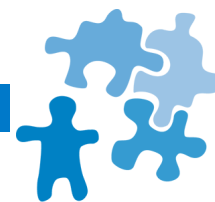
We are so grateful for our community volunteers who have participated and contributed to the chorus this this past year:

Kyle Lindsey & his South  
High School music class  
Mary Schallert and her summer  
camp music students  
Miriah Phelps  
Anna Cometa  
Lena Gonzalez  
Zach Akins  
John & Barb Angaiak  
9th Army Band  
Linda Shepard  
Ken Helander  
Scott Taylor  
Carrie Gruhn  
His Hands Aglow musical  
sign-language group



# Volunteer & In-Kind Supporters

between October 1 - December 31, 2021



Absolutely Miller Events	Cathy Brenner	Keebler Family	J. Scott
AK Bark	John & Jackie Brunton*	Kayhi Class of 1977	Rhonda Scott
Alaska Big Bites	Bush Family	Barb Kehrberg	Seattle Kraken
Guide Service	Caffé D'arte	Kincaid Grill	Mark &
Alaska Blooms	Michelle Cassano	Krav Maga	Mae Ann Smith
Peony Farm	Chena Hot Springs	Sharon Lake	Linda Spencer
Alaska Raceway Park	Copper River Fleece	Majestic View	Spoonline Bistro
Alaska Sealife Center	David Jensen Photography	Bed and Breakfast	Connie & Steve Sumida
Alyeska Resort	Denali Zipline Tours	Penaki Pottery	June Takagi
Anchorage Log	Tom & Ann Farris	Premier Alaska Tours	Talkeetna Inn
Cabin Quilters	Gayla Designs	Ruth Quinlan	The Alaska Club
Anchorage Wine House	Glacier Jet Ski Adventures	George Rhyneer &	UAF Museum
Anchorage Yoga & Cycle	Harbor 360 Hotel	Marilyn McKay	of the North
Arctic Pups	Walter Hays	Sal's New York Grill &	Rori A. Van Nortwick*
Aurora Limousine LLC.	& JoAnn Shore	Catering,	
Bellreese Photography	J-Rod's Guide Service	Sal & Nicki Addonisio	

[Donate](#)

## In Honor & Memory of

**Carolyn Ward**  
JoAnn & Tim Bantz

**Bonnie**  
Robert J. Bohnert

**Delbert Cederberg**  
Davis Constructors

**Dorothy Magette**  
John & Jackie Brunton\*

**Phyllis Brown Burke**  
Eric & Joanna Croft

**Quentin McCubrey**  
Dimond High Faculty Fund

**Delbert Cederberg**  
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Janice A. Ford

**Delbert Cederberg**  
Kathleen Grace

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Wayne Holmes &  
Jonell M Snook-Holmes\*

**Irvin "Skip" Joy**  
Jack & Annette

**Ronald A. Jackson**  
Peggy A. Jackson

**Irvin "Skip" Joy**  
Georgann Joy

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**Audrey Roberts**  
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**Layne**  
Carolyn Ratcliffe

**Irvin "Skip" Joy**  
Katherine & Mark Schmeling

**Patricia Versnick**  
Rhonda Scott

**Maria Elena Walsh**  
Michael Walsh

**John Wilson**  
Elizabeth M. Wilson

**Rebecca Ann Clement**












JoAnn & Tim Bantz  
Dr. Perry D. & Susan G. Melvin  
John & Susan Donohue  
John & Eleanor Kelley  
Howard Mizushima

\* Denotes current or former ARA board member.

Other donors are noted in our Annual Report.

# Caregiver Support Groups throughout Alaska

Groups are free to join. Registration required. ARA logo ★ indicates an ARA facilitator.

<b>Statewide Telephone Support Group</b> Dial in using: Code 927989# No registration required	 Every 1st Saturday, 1–2:00 pm For additional info, contact ★ Gay Wellman, <a href="tel:822-5620">822-5620</a> or <a href="tel:800-478-1080">800-478-1080</a>
	 Every 3rd Wednesday, 1–2:00 pm For additional info, contact ★ Debbie Chulick, <a href="tel:561-3313">561-3313</a> or <a href="tel:800-478-1080">800-478-1080</a>
<b>Statewide Care Partner Support</b>	 Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 1-2:30 pm Every 2nd & 4th Saturday 10:30am-12 pm CONTACT: ★ Gay Wellman, <a href="mailto:gwellman@alzalaska.org">gwellman@alzalaska.org</a> <a href="tel:822-5620">822-5620</a> or <a href="tel:800-478-1080">800-478-1080</a>
	 CONTACT: ★ Gay Wellman, <a href="mailto:gwellman@alzalaska.org">gwellman@alzalaska.org</a> <a href="tel:822-5620">822-5620</a> or <a href="tel:800-478-1080">800-478-1080</a>
<b>Grieving Caregiver Support</b>	 Every 1st & 3rd Thursday, 1-2:30 pm CONTACT: ★ Gay Wellman, <a href="mailto:gwellman@alzalaska.org">gwellman@alzalaska.org</a> <a href="tel:822-5620">822-5620</a> or <a href="tel:800-478-1080">800-478-1080</a>
<b>Anchorage</b>	 Every 4th Thursday, 5:30–7 pm CONTACT: ★ Debbie Chulick, <a href="tel:561-3313">561-3313</a>
<b>Eagle River</b>	 Every 2nd Thursday, 5:30–7 pm CONTACT: ★ Debbie Chulick, <a href="tel:561-3313">561-3313</a>
<b>Fairbanks</b>	 Every 2nd Tuesday, 4:30–6 pm Every 3rd Tuesday, 1:00–2:30 pm CONTACT: ★ Joan Adams, <a href="tel:452-2277">452-2277</a>
<b>Homer</b>	Call for current schedule CONTACT: Pam Hooker, <a href="tel:235-7655">235-7655</a>
<b>Juneau / Southeast AK</b>	Call for current schedule CONTACT: Aimee <a href="tel:463-6177">463-6177</a>
<b>Ketchikan</b>	Call for current schedule. CONTACT: Bernice, <a href="tel:255-8080">255-8080</a>
<b>Kodiak</b>	Every 4th Thursday, 12:30–1:30 pm CONTACT: <a href="tel:486-6181">486-6181</a>
<b>Mat-Su Valley</b>	 Every 2nd Tuesday, 1:30–3 pm CONTACT: ★ Janice Downing <a href="tel:746-3413">746-3413</a>
<b>Seward</b>	Every 4th Thursday, 1–2 pm CONTACT: <a href="tel:244-5604">244-5604</a>
<b>Sitka</b>	Call for current schedule CONTACT: <a href="tel:747-4600">747-4600</a>
<b>Soldotna</b>	Every 2nd and Last Tuesday, 1–3 pm Every 1st Tuesday, 1–2 pm CONTACT: Dani Kebschull, <a href="tel:262-1280">262-1280</a>
<b>Sutton, Palmer, Chickaloon, Glacier View</b>	 Every 1st Friday, 10–11:30 am CONTACT: ★ Kim Jung, <a href="tel:746-3413">746-3413</a>
<b>Talkeetna, Willow, Trapper Creek</b>	 Every 1st Monday, 10–11:30 am CONTACT: ★ Kim Jung, <a href="tel:746-3413">746-3413</a>



Support groups provide a way for people with a common experience to help and learn from each other. They can be an important source of social and emotional support, as well as a great way to see what works for others and learn about local services.

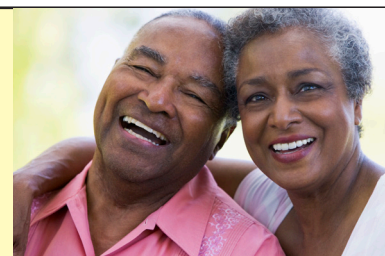
Most groups are currently available statewide over the ☎ phone or via 🖥 Zoom. For this reason most people find it helpful to identify groups with days and times that work best with your schedule regardless of location.



You might also be interested in joining our Facebook Caregiver Support Group. This is a closed group and you will need to request access.

## Mind Matters

is an education and support program for individuals with early memory loss.



This program goes beyond the confines of a traditional support group and offers participants a chance to share experiences while engaging in a variety of meaningful activities including volunteering, gardening, writing and listening to guest speakers.





**Alzheimer's  
Resource  
of Alaska**

# Classes & Events around the State

Classes and events are available statewide, online via Zoom.  
All classes listed below require registration.

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## CAREGIVING 101

For more information or registration assistance contact:  
[907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313) from Anchorage, or [1-800-478-1080](tel:1-800-478-1080)

### Vascular Dementia

Tue, 1/25, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### How occupational therapy can help people living with dementia with everyday activities

Mon, 2/7, 12pm-1:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Bathing Without The Battle

Wed, 2/9, 11am-12:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Legal Issues for Family Caregivers P1

Sat, 2/19, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Understanding Supported Decision Making Agreements for Seniors

Mon, 2/21, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### The Driving Dilemma: Knowing When to Brake

Fri, 2/25, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Next Steps After a Diagnosis of Dementia

Wed, 3/9, 11am-12:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Legal Issues for Family Caregivers P2

Sat, 3/19, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### What are the Medicaid Waiver and Senior In-Home Programs?

Mon, 3/21, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Activity Box Ideas for People Living with Dementia

Tue, 3/22, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Downsizing and Decluttering

Fri, 3/25, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Home & Community Safety

Tue, 3/29, 1pm-2:30pm

**REGISTER HERE**

## SAVVY CAREGIVER

Provides caregivers skills and knowledge needed to provide the highest level of care for loved ones, and themselves.

*Screening & Pre-registration required*

To register contact:  
Ann Farris at  
[907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313) or email:  
[afarris@alzalaska.org](mailto:afarris@alzalaska.org)

Tuesdays, 1/11-2/15  
3:00pm-5:00pm

## Voices of the Last Frontier

Chorus program to support people with dementia and their care-partners

To register contact:  
Ann Farris at  
[907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313) or email:  
[afarris@alzalaska.org](mailto:afarris@alzalaska.org)

## Mind Aerobics™ 12-week course meeting twice per week

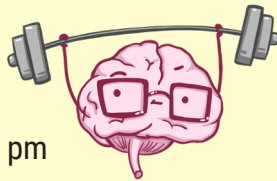
For Alaskans worried about Memory Loss who want to keep their mind fit and engaged.

### Mind Sharpener™

Tue & Thur, 1/4-3/31, 10-11am

### Mind Works™

Mon & Wed, 1/17-4/11, 1 pm - 2 pm



Questions or registration, contact:

Ken Helander: [907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313)  
or [khelander@alzalaska.org](mailto:khelander@alzalaska.org)

## Professional Webinars

Questions or registration assistance, contact:  
Amber Smith: [586-6044](tel:586-6044) or [asmith@alzalaska.org](mailto:asmith@alzalaska.org)

### Person-Centered Care

Tuesday, 1/18, 12 pm - 1:00pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### The GEMS®: Using Skills That Make a Difference

Tuesday, 2/15, 12 pm - 1:00pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Communication Tips: Beyond the Basics

Tuesday 3/15, 12 pm - 1:00pm

**REGISTER HERE**

### Mind Matters

*Screening & Pre-registration required*

For more info contact:  
Debbie Chulick at  
[907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313) or email:  
[dchulick@alzalaska.org](mailto:dchulick@alzalaska.org)

## Comfort Pets

Reduce social isolation for your Alaskan elder at no-cost  
**The benefits of a pet**  
without the responsibility and risks  
Learn More →

### Memory Café

To register contact  
Ann Farris at  
[561-3313](tel:561-3313) or email:  
[afarris@alzalaska.org](mailto:afarris@alzalaska.org)

Thursday, 1/13, 1pm  
Thursday, 2/10, 1pm  
Thursday, 3/10, 1pm



### Art Links 1-1:45pm

To register contact:  
Janice Downing at  
[746-3413](tel:746-3413) or email:  
[jdowning@alzalaska.org](mailto:jdowning@alzalaska.org)

Thursday, 1/6 & 1/20  
Thursday, 2/3 & 2/17  
Thursday, 3/3 & 3/17



## Statewide Caregiver Support Groups