

Memory loss seminars support caregivers

By Shannon Geisen

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Calvary Lutheran Church, in cooperation with Living at Home of the Park Rapids Area (LAH) and Headwaters Adult Day Care, will host seminars about caring for a loved one with memory loss.

The free, one-hour presentations will be held at 9:15 a.m. Sundays, noon Mondays and 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the church from Jan. 6-28.

Pastor Steve Norby said the seminars will cover the role of

caregiving with all of its complexities, such as feelings of frustration, guilt or denial.

The collaboration came about because Norby's mother-in-law has memory loss.

"It's just amazing how many people are going through this, and so, we just thought, let's make this a month-long emphasis. People can come and go as they are able. We want to provide a space for conversation," he said.

Caring for someone who doesn't remember your name is

"an emotional journey," Norby said. "You're dealing with their losses and yours."

Portions of a video, which features experts, will be shared. Mary Ellen Geist is author of "Measure of the Heart: A Father's Alzheimer's, a Daughter's Return." Dr. Kenneth Doka is senior consultant for Hospice Foundation of America. Joanne Koenig Coste is author of "Learning to Speak Alzheimer's: A Groundbreaking Approach for Everyone Dealing with the Disease."

The seminar format will be about 20 minutes of the video with 30 to 40 minutes of discussion, Norby said, adding that the video is "from a faith perspective, but it's just under the healing ministries."

LAH Executive Director Connie Carmichael describes the video as "very insightful."

"I am really looking forward to the community discussions," she said. "We know we have many, many caregivers who are going it alone. This seminar reinforces that taking care

of themselves as caregivers is equally important. And, yes, that means getting away with friends and laughing, tending to everyday business, like haircuts and eye care. It is OK to ask for and accept help when caregiving and not feel guilty about your feelings. The video also touches on finding humor and joy. But what I appreciate most about the video is that it gives great starting points for discussion."

Norby hopes the seminars "will give hope, insight and coping skills."

LaFleur named new Nemeth Art Center director

By Shannon Geisen

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Nicolle LaFleur is the new executive director for the Nemeth Art Center.

Michael Dagen, who served as director for four years, resigned in September for other pursuits.

LaFleur, her husband and two daughters returned to live on LaFleur's family homestead, north of Snellman, in November. In December, she was hired at the Nemeth.

LaFleur's professional background is in nonprofit management.

"It was focused initially on

humanitarian aid. I was doing work with UNICEF, International Red Cross and other child welfare agencies. I was going wherever there were crises," she said of the decade spent overseas and living in Beijing, China.

For the past four-and-a-half years, LaFleur worked at a regional museum and cultural center in Washington.

"Moving back to the Great White North is really fun for me

because it connects me to my family heritage," LaFleur said. "I grew up coming to the lake and the woods here. I spent a lot of my summers, my holidays and my weekends trekking in the woods and swimming the lakes."

At the Nemeth, she said she's excited about engaging the community, engaging the mind and engaging the senses. "Getting people excited about not only what their local connection is, but seeing way beyond that. Because I'm a globetrotter, for me, being able to ties these things in a regional and

local level is really exciting," she said.

The Nemeth is "a real asset" to the community, LaFleur said.

"What I love about the Nemeth is being able to, first of all, come back home and be immersed in the beautiful wilderness, but being able to also tie in exposure to high art, and really dive into something that is esthetic and stimulating," she said.

LaFleur plans to continue the 2nd Saturday Happenings, a live event featuring local artists, writers and musicians.

Interacting with schools and youth is another goal, involving

local artists teaching hands-on art exploration to kids and centered around exhibits.

The Nemeth opens May 1.

The first exhibit, "Why Treaties Matter: Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations," is a nationally recognized, award-winning, traveling exhibit made in partnership with the Minnesota Humanities Center, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian.

"So we're hoping to have involvement with the schools on that," LaFleur said.

FIRE

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Shuttling water from Spirit Lake and the City of Menahga was a challenge. "We had to haul everything in," Kicker said. "We had 15 tenders hauling water at one time."

There were two fire pumper trucks. Firefighters were on the scene for eight and a half hours. The fire rekindled late Wednesday night, Kicker said, but was fully extinguished around 12:30 a.m.

Gawkers were also problematic. The fire was actively burning at 7:30 p.m. and onlookers didn't leave until around 8 p.m., Kicker said.

"That's our biggest problem on any call," he said. "It gets hard. We're trying to do our job, and you've got 50 cars parked out on the road. You've got to zig-zag, with trucks coming from both directions, and it gets to be a safety issue."

The building is a complete loss.

Foul play is not suspected, according to the sheriff's office. The news release said, around

2:45 p.m., an employee filled an enclosed fireplace, which was located in the basement, with wood. Propane was the building's main heating source and the wood stove provided supplemental heating.

The main fire was at the back of the building, near the kitchen, Kicker said.

A state fire marshal arrived Thursday morning to investigate the origin and cause of the fire.

The 18-hole golf course was untouched by the fire, but all of the equipment was lost. Employees say 60 golf carts were stored in the basement of the lodge.

An avid golfer, Gary Eidem regularly played the course when it first opened, then began working at Blueberry Pines.

"Damn near brought me to tears," he said

Smoke from the fire at Blueberry Pines Golf Course lodge and restaurant could be seen for miles Wednesday afternoon.

Shannon Geisen/
Enterprise



of the sight Thursday morning.

"It attracted a lot of golfers," he added.

Building superintendent Jeff Yungbauer said the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency was arriving Thursday morning to inspect damage caused by battery acid leaking from melted golf carts.

"That all boiled right up through the sewer system and all the way down on County 16," he said. "They're going to test it and see how bad it is."

Yungbauer helped build the lodge, which was constructed in 1991 and opened for business in 1993.

"Twenty-seven years ago, I helped put that up in the winter," he said.

There were no injuries. No employees were in the building at the time of the

fire, and no firefighters were hurt.

"I didn't have anybody trip or fall, with all that ice," Kicker said, crediting the Minnesota Department of Transportation for salting Hwy. 71 and the parking lot three times.

Also assisting on scene was the Minnesota State Patrol, Menahga Police Department, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Wadena County Highway Department, Tri-County Ambulance, North Memorial Ambulance and the Menahga First Responders.

Hot Stuff provided pizza and The Cottage House cooked burgers for the firefighters. "They made probably 200 burgers," Kicker said.

It's was all hands on deck for the Park Rapids Fire Department, with 25 out of 26 firefighters helping at Wednesday's fire. It's typical for 16 to 20 to answer the call, according to newly nominated Park Rapids Fire Chief Terry Long.

"I would say that it's one of the larger fires that we've tackled for a while. It was a major structure, there," Long said.

Assistant Fire Chief Ben Cumber agreed, saying, "It was probably the most gallons of water that we've used as a group, that I remember. I think we used over 300,000 gallons."

In the nighttime, Cumber noted that they can roll a truck out of the fire hall in five minutes.

During the day, "it averages about four minutes and we're rolling a truck, which is phenomenal for a volunteer department," Long said.

Kicker said, "It's probably one of the biggest fires that I've been on. It's the most

hose we've pulled off the truck for a fire." He noted that it was also the first time they needed a fuel truck to refuel the pumpers in order to keep pumping water.

Kicker advises property owners to clear snow away from hydrants. It helps a lot, he said.

CARING FOR A LOVED ONE WITH MEMORY LOSS



This class offers hope and understanding for anyone who cares for a loved one with memory loss including:

- **Caring for a loved one who doesn't remember your name.**
- **How to handle frustration.**
- **Times when laughter, singing and foolishness are entirely appropriate.**
- **Plus many other topics**

Sun. Jan. 6 through Mon. Jan. 28, 2019
FREE SEMINARS WILL BE OFFERED
Sundays: 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.
Mondays: Noon to 1 p.m.
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