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The Foundation for Alzheimer's and Cultural Memory

Crossings

Spring 2010

Greetings from the Bridge,

Welcome to Memory Bridge's spring edition of *Crossings*. Memory Bridge is a non-profit foundation dedicated to building emotionally meaningful relationships with people with Alzheimer's disease. Our goal is to create a global community of people who are listening to learn from people with dementia for what they have to teach us about our own humanity.

If you know someone whose spirit would be lifted and mind inspired by Memory Bridge's mission, please share our newsletter with them. Until there is a cure for Alzheimer's disease, the best medicine we can offer each other, is each other. Community heals. Welcome to ours...

There Is a Bridge

"Beautiful Circle of Knowledge"

By: Michael Verde

The Memory Bridge Initiative was featured on the front page of the Chicago Tribune on April 14, 2010. Pulitzer-prize winning journalist Ted Gregory followed a Memory Bridge class over a four-month period. Ted attended every class, every Buddy visit, followed three of the students throughout an entire school day; interviewed families of the students and Buddies, the teacher of

Meeting in the Middle

Once a Teacher, Always a Teacher

By: Amy Wescott

Although Sue and I enjoyed getting to know one another, her lack of interest in group-based cognitive activities persisted. A home visit was arranged, allowing me to connect with Sue on a more personal level in her home environment, where we played games and perused her photos and books. Sue sustained interest and actively participated without signs of apathy or

the class, and spent over 15 hours talking with me about the origins, vision, and social significance of Memory Bridge's educational mission to people with irreversible dementia and America's youth.

Read the online [version](#) of the Chicago Tribune article on Memory Bridge

Hoping Skills

THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT!

By: Patricia Luster

When a person with dementia does something that might be annoying to you but isn't hurting anyone, we call that "so what behavior."

So what if it happens, it's not the end of the world.

At 5:30 in the morning the nurse came into the neighborhood to pass out the morning medication. She hadn't been there long when she got called away. Before leaving she pushed her cart into the nurses station and locked the gate.

Doris came wandering out of her room looking for action and spied the medicine cart, specifically the half-filled pitcher of cranberry juice perched on top. She had just enough arm length to reach over the gate and snatch up the pitcher. With her other hand she grabbed a stack of 30cc med cups.

I should have stopped her but I was curious to see what she was going to do, so I stood back and watched.

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frustration. She especially cottoned to reading aloud and assuming the role of teacher-having been a first-grade teacher for many years-while I assumed the role of student. This visit reinforced for me the magic that happens when activities and facilitators resonate with individuals' unique abilities and emotional needs.

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Reading for Life

The Memory of Mad Men

By: Kim Bell

Like nearly every other television show of its caliber, Mad Men-a series about the glossy world of advertising in the early '60s-explores the role of memory in fascinating ways. Don Draper, the handsome star of the show, has rejected his past in order to invent a new life for himself. He is as successful in this pursuit as he is as a partner in his advertising firm; in fact, the Life of Don Draper is probably his most persuasive advertising campaign. It's slick and sexy, city and suburban, and-as we know by the multitude of women he attracts (this viewer included)-has a wide appeal. However, a façade is always just that, and, as the narrative develops, more and more elements of Don's past life disrupt the linear flow of the story, as well as Don's ability to remain present to his family, his co-workers, and himself.

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