An Opportunity to Support Silver Club

The goal at Silver Club is never to turn away families in need due to financial circumstances. We use a sliding-scale fee so that each family pays what it can afford. The balance comes from grants and assistance from a wide array of supporters.

Recently one family, David and Peter Beardsley and their spouses, designated the Silver Club as the recipient of donations in lieu of flowers when their mother, Catherine Beardsley, died. They felt strongly that she would have wanted people to support the Silver Club where she had so enjoyed being a member for over five years.

We are so grateful to Silver Club families and friends for their generous support of our programs in whatever way they feel comfortable.

How You Can Help:

- Be an ambassador – promote Silver Club by referring families caring for a person with memory loss to our programs.
- Volunteer – if you have time, there are many ways to help, including spending time with members, participating on Silver Club committees, or helping with special projects.
- Make a gift – Silver Club relies significantly on public funding and contributions. “Gifts in kind” such as art, books and equipment make an instant impact. There are many ways to make a monetary gift, including through our online link: https://leadersandbest.umich.edu/find/give/basket/fund/367384

Sponsors & Community Partners

Silver Club is a non-profit organization primarily funded by donations and member fees. We are also supported by:

- U-M Geriatrics Center
- Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation
- Area Agency on Aging 1-B
- Brookdale National Group Respite Program
- Friends of the U-M Hospital
- Medicaid Waiver Program
- Veterans Affairs

Contact Information

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9:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Mon - Fri

Silver Club Creates Holiday Cards

Recently an exciting collaboration has occurred between Silver Club Programs and the Michigan Great Lakes Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association. The Alzheimer’s Chapter reached out to Elaine Reed, art therapist at the Silver Club to ask if their members could provide artwork for their holiday card. Elaine knew exactly who to ask for creative art work— the women of the Elderberry Club, the only group of its kind in the country designed exclusively for women with early stage memory loss.

This group of women come together weekly for support, discussion, friendship, and creative expression. They want to be heard and uplift other women who may be isolated and living with memory loss. Each member of the group painted a snowflake and the 12 snowflake designs were offered to the Chapter with the understanding that they could use any one they wished. To Elaine’s surprise, the Chapter chose to use them all and the result was a beautiful card using the 12 snowflake designs (right).

On the back of the card is a description of the Elderberry Club that begins, “Just as each snowflake is unique, each person with dementia is unique, having a different constellation of abilities and need for support, which change over time as the disease progresses. Women are at the epicenter of the Alzheimer’s crisis, with an estimated 3.2 million women age 65 and older living with the disease.

Photo credit: Patrick Young, Michigan Imaging. U-M Stamps School of Art & Design, Retaining Identity course, Professor Anne Maristela


Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Holiday Edition of our Silver Club newsletter! The purpose of this publication is to keep our friends and families informed of new developments in our constantly evolving program.

Since we began in 1998, Silver Club has been providing creative programming to members with varying degrees of memory loss, and their families. We are excited about the great programs being planned to meet our community’s ever-changing needs, including an upcoming partnership with the University of Michigan School of Art & Design (see page 2). This kind of offering positions us on the cutting edge of memory loss programming.

We are also preparing our Silver Club holiday wishlist for items that will help maintain and enrich our program. The wishlist tree stands near the Silver Club entrance, so if you would like to donate please feel free to take one of the ornaments, or call us for details. All donations are sincerely appreciated.

Best wishes to all our Silver Club friends,

Douglas Dault, LMSW
Director, Silver Club Memory Programs
A Language Of Our Own
A poem by Melissa Weisberg, Stamps Art & Design student

We sit down
I try to make small talk
Did you have a good weekend?
Is that a new drink?
Yes turns to no
No turns to yes
Their meanings blur
I am frustrated
Frustrated that I can't reach,
Can't help.
I begin to direct with small motions
Tapping the glass of water
Reminding her to dip the brush
She squints her eyes, curls her lips
A glop of orange paint unintentionally
Splatters on my paper
Both of our eyebrows rise
Our eyes widen
Laughter erupts
Why talk?
When we have a language of our own?

—Kenny Sparks,
School of Social Work student

Meet Our Staff and Volunteers

We are delighted to welcome two new staff members: Amber Williams is our new administrative assistant, replacing Emily McCully who accepted a role at the U-M Geriatrics Center. And Lisa Chasse is our new Silver Club memory specialist.

Staff: Catrice Bridges, Lisa Chasse, Doug Dault (Director), Patricia Hall, Andee Janssen, Jeanne Kero, Norma Nichols, Elaine Reed, Laura Rice-Oeschger, Kathi Tobey, Amber Williams, Cara Yonivitz

Volunteers: Richard Ager, Christina Chang, Deanna Cho, Polly Connor, Dorothy Doss, Kate Drummond, Alice Fishman, Florence Gasdick, Gabriela Granados, Becca Hinton, Sara Holmes, Jean Kelsey, Ruth Michael, Myrna Miller, Jerry Nordblom, Annie Nordblom, Cori Nordblom, Duke Nordblom, Justin O’Dell, Rose Oliver, Esther Rubin, Kenny Sparks, Cathy Strachan, Randy Thackston, Maryann Tout, Al Wooli

Advisory Board: Julie DeLoria, Alice Fishman, Sara Holmes (Board Chair), Sherri Kantor, Jean Kelsey, Myrna Miller, Robert Newman, Deb Shulman, Cathy Strachan, Julie Young

Memory, Aging & Expressive Arts
A Transformative Learning Experience

In January 2015, the University of Michigan will again offer the course Memory, Aging & Expressive Arts, designed to develop students’ understanding of individuals living with memory loss, through shared art experiences. The course is offered through the U-M Stamps School of Art & Design, in collaboration with the Health System.

Students will meet with specialists in neurology, psychiatry, public health, social work, and the arts to learn about the complexity of memory and aging, and the benefits of creativity for those with memory loss. Working with the class instructor, Professor Anne Mondro, and Elaine Reed, students will then design art projects with Silver Club members, exploring the potential of art to serve as an outlet for expression, and learning from their shared experiences.

Art at Silver Club
By staff member Jeanne Kero

This fall, Silver Club members created artwork based on the theme of the sea. We were inspired by photographs of new ocean species discovered in 2014. They were a bit unusual, but had interesting colors, shapes, lines, patterns, etc. Our theme music was Bobby Darin’s “Beyond The Sea.”

Every club member got the same colors to mix but each piece turned out quite unique.

Volunteering: ‘Getting in the Groove’ with Silver Club

My name is Lori Fithian, and I have the great fortune to visit Silver Club twice each month, to share the thing I love: drumming! I have a van-load of African-style hand drums and percussion instruments, and I visit all kinds of groups, from preschoolers to elders and anyone between. I offer my Drumminity programs all over the state, and one of my favorite groups to drum with is the Silver Club. We not only drum together, we sing and laugh and share stories inside our drumming circle.

We might drum along to She’ll Be Comin’ Round the Mountain, which gets everyone in an upbeat rhythm, smiling and laughing. Then we’ll get into a waltz rhythm and sing Take Me Out to the Ballgame, or Bicycle Built For Two. We also have old standbys like Amazing Grace, and You are My Sunshine, among many others.

We all join in, as these familiar folksongs jog our memories and bring us together. Everyone has their favorite music, and it’s amazing to witness the joy and connection that happens in our circle. Sometimes the members get playful and reach over to tap each other’s drums. Lots of interaction happens across the circle. At the end we play a little “basketball,” where I set a bag in the middle and on the count of three we all toss our drum mallets into it - or at least in the vicinity! This always brings on a good laugh!

I want to thank Patricia Hall and the rest of the staff over at Silver Club for giving me the precious opportunity to play with this wonderful group. I love this work; there is always something new, every time, and they sure do keep me on my toes!

Thanks, Silver Club Members!

No experience is necessary. Most of my students have never had the opportunity to make art. Sometimes I have to convince them they can do it! Once they begin, they lose track of time and become completely focused on their work - a peaceful way to spend the afternoon.

I always try to give my Silver Club artists the best materials we can afford: good paints, papers and canvas. My goals are for each member to have a piece of art they can be proud of, and for them to have a good time.

www.med.umich.edu/geriatrics