

# Conference good opportunity for caregivers



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COLUMNIST

With summer approaching, we look forward to being able to get outside and enjoy the sunshine and fresh air. My son was mowing the lawn recently and there were birds singing literally everywhere. It sounded like a choir.

There was a breeze blowing and the sky was blue and it was just a beautiful day. This is such a good time to take your loved one outside and let them enjoy nature. It's not too hot yet and although some days the wind is a little strong it will make them (and you) feel revived. Take them for a walk and point out different flowers that are starting to bloom, the roly polies under a rock or just the lush green grass. Enjoy the day and the quiet time together.

I am really excited to share with you about our upcoming six-week caregiver series. It will begin at 6 p.m., June 24 and will be held at the Mining Day's building located behind the Praying Hands monument

in Webb City.

The series is called "The Coin's Other Side" and was developed by Mary Sharp and Rachel Kail. Mary and Rachel took care of Mary's mother (Rachel's grandmother) through the last four months of her journey with Alzheimer's. The series gives a detailed look into the eyes of the person dealing with the disease as well as ideas and discoveries for the caregiver. There are so many things we are still learning about Alzheimer's and the treatments available. So many times we feel that once a person is diagnosed that they are lost forever but through this series you may be able to see different approaches, as well as "triggers" that can reach into a person's life and make unforgettable memories.

As I watched the first DVD, I realized that it could be used for so much more than just helping caregivers dealing with people battling Alzheimer's. There were ideas that I could incorporate into other types of care giving and even into my daily life. The series is deeply moving and at times you will shed a tear. There are also times when you will smile and think to yourself "I can relate to that." I'm confident the information you receive will make a great difference in the way you see

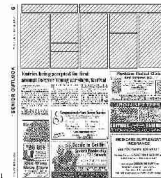
and care for your loved one.

After the first week's DVD is shown, we will show a repeat of the previous week's DVD at 5 p.m. for those that were unable to attend the week before. We will only be showing the DVD to catch you up on any information you might have missed. This series is simply amazing and I think once you see the first one you will understand why I am so excited about this presentation. The series will run from June 24-July 29 on Thursday evenings.

Once we have finished the six-week series, we will be offering a Caregiver Conference on Thursday, August 12 (more details to follow) featuring Mary and Rachel as the guest speakers. The conference will be free to attend and you will get the opportunity to meet them and hear more of their story and ideas.

We are expecting a great turnout and are very excited about the entire program. If you have any questions please feel free to call me at the Area Agency on Aging at 781-7562, ext 19, or Margie Myers from Hospice Compassus at 622-8341. We hope you can join us.

*Melissa Gronda is the family caregiver coordinator for the Area Agency on Aging.*



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