

## Center for Family Caregivers

February 2018

3661 S. Babcock St., Melbourne  
321.434.7625 or [HFsenior.org](http://HFsenior.org)

## Programs for Caregivers and Loved Ones

**“Get Stronger in 2018 – Sit, Stretch, Exercise, Harmonize and Socialize”** class will be held every Wednesday from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Instructor Pat DeAngelis, RN, will be introducing a new chair-based exercise class, which will include moving to music, stretching for strength, relaxing your mind and muscles, recharging your spirit, and a calming cooldown. This class is designed to: improve muscular strength and endurance; increase flexibility and stamina; improve balance, posture and breathing; help prevent falls and encourage socialization. RSVP to 321.434.7625.

**Arts & Crafts class – meets every Thursday from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.** Our volunteer art instructors will help participants make a decorative item for all seasons. Please join us as we continue making special items for Valentine’s Day. All materials will be supplied. Socialize with others, share memories and create a homemade art project. RSVP to 321.434.7625.

**Melbourne Early Stage Support Group meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 2 to 3:30 p.m.** This is a monthly group designed to provide emotional, educational and social support to people diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer’s or a related dementia, as well as their care partner. Tanya Thompson will be the guest speaker and will talk about home safety. Please call 800.272.3900 to RSVP.

**MindSet – a free class to exercise and improve brain health will be held on the following Mondays: January 29 and February 5, 12, and 19 from 9:30 to 11 a.m.** MindSet is a series of classes that help exercise your brain, create healthy habits and improve communication. The classes are designed for individuals with early stage dementia or mild cognitive impairment. Care partner participation, such as bringing a family member or friend, is highly recommended. The classes are taught by trained instructors. Each class offers tools for both the person with memory impairment and the care partner, helping to develop thinking strategies that might improve/maintain function over time. RSVP 321.434.7614.



Instructor Pat DeAngelis, left, (“Grandma Claus”) is seen with “Grandpa Claus” during holiday activities.

Everyone had a good time exercising to “Jingle Bells” and “Jingle Bell Rock” and enjoyed a holiday social after class, which was generously sponsored by Hibiscus Court Assisted Living and Memory Care Community.

## Programs for Caregivers

**The Stress-Busting for Family Caregivers Program will be held at the Center for Family Caregivers from 1 to 3 p.m. on the following Tuesdays: February 6, 13, 20, 27 and March 6 and 13.** This is a multi-component program that meets for 2 hours per week for 9 weeks. It provides caregivers the tools and strategies they need to take care of themselves. This program helps them: cope more effectively with stress related to caregiving; manage grief, loss and depression; deal with challenging behaviors; learn relaxation and coping strategies; and choose a path of wellness. Participants learn about stress and its effects, practicing stress management techniques, and developing problem-solving skills. The material for this program is based on research and caregiver feedback from those who have participated in the program. For more information or to register for future classes, please call Sue Cosker at Eastern Central Florida Memory Disorder Clinic at 321.434.7614.

**This program will also be offered at the East Central Florida Memory Disorder Clinic from 10 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays, January 16 through March 13.**

**“Cross Train Your Brain for Brain Fitness” will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 21.** This presentation will be presented by Carol White, MSW, CDP, CADDCT, Division Dementia Care Manager, Brookdale Senior Living, Inc. Carol will discuss why it is important to cross-train your brain for brain enhancement, how to exercise your brain, and the positive effects of training and using your brain. Carol will discuss what goes on in the brain when it is stimulated, the benefits of growing new brain cells and some fun exercises to show how to engage your brain. RSVP to 321.434.7625.

**A Living Healthy Workshop will be held from 9:30 a.m. to noon on the following Wednesdays: January 31 and February 7 and 14.** The workshop is designed for those who are looking to take control of an ongoing health condition or are caring for someone with one. Learn how to manage symptoms, communicate effectively with healthcare professionals, lessen your frustration, fight fatigue, build your confidence, make daily tasks easier and get more out of life. **Call 321.434.4335 to register for future classes, starting April 12.**

## Veterans Affairs Aid & Attendance

**Thursday, February 15  
10:30 a.m.**

**Led by Amy B. Van Fossen, P.A.**

Attorney Amy B. Van Fossen will discuss the Veterans Affairs (VA) Aid & Attendance program, which provides pension benefits to help veterans or eligible widowed spouses pay for care.

It allows for a family member, such as a son or daughter, to provide this care. It can also be used to help pay for in-home professional nursing care, assisted living rent, medical insurance premiums, prescription drug co-pays and much more. Amy will discuss who is eligible for VA Aid & Attendance, how to determine eligibility and, if so, how to obtain them. The Law Office of Amy B. Van Fossen, P.A., can assist veterans and their widowed spouses in Florida in preserving assets and remaining in their homes as long as possible. Join us to see if you or your spouse meet the eligibility requirements to receive these benefits. RSVP to 321.434.7625.



The Law Office of Amy B. Van Fossen, P.A.:  
“Striving to protect the people you love, the assets you own, and the dreams you hold dear.”

## Family Caregiver Support Groups

### WEEKLY SUPPORT GROUPS:

- **Caregiver-to-Caregiver Support Group meets every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.** for caregivers caring for someone in advanced stages of dementia or a chronic illness, and for those caregivers transitioning from caregiving after losing a loved one. This group focuses on helping each other face challenges and losses and moving toward more resilient living with understanding, strength and support. (Pre-registration is required for this support group. Please call 321.434.7625 for registration details.)
- **Coping with Caregiving meets at 10:30 a.m. every Wednesday** and will focus on support for caregivers of loved ones with memory impairment or any chronic illness. Join us for an informal sharing of practical caregiving information and helpful community resources. This weekly support group will focus on successful strategies for coping with the concerns, feelings and responsibilities of being a caregiver. It will be led by Joyce Brang, LCSW, Health First Health Plans and Health First Aging Services.
- **The Empowered Caregivers Support Group meets at 11 a.m. Thursdays**, allowing those caring for someone with memory loss or any condition, to share their journey with others who understand what they are experiencing. This includes group discussions and education. It is led by Alyce Webster, MSW, Health First Aging Services.

### MONTHLY SUPPORT GROUPS:

- **Living with Grief:** Living with grief is a universal human experience, and we need support and tools to cope. Join us for an opportunity to listen/share/learn in a group setting. Led by Karen Czarniak, Bereavement Counselor with Hospice of Health First, on the **first Tuesday of every month at 10:30 a.m.** (Please call 321.434.3238 if you are planning to attend for the first time.)
- **Stroke & Aneurysm Support Group** is held on the **first Monday of every month at Holmes Regional Medical Center Auditorium from 5:30 to 7 p.m.** Survivors and caregivers are encouraged to join Health First's Stroke & Aneurysm Support Group. Professionals will help you cope and recover in a relaxed environment, where you can discuss your fears, hopes and frustrations. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to 321.434.1752.

**Special Announcement for Melbourne Early Stage Support Group:** This group will meet from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on February 7. Tanya Thompson, MA, Associate Director of Community Outreach from the Alzheimer's Association will be our guest speaker. Please RSVP to 321.434.3238.

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### February's quote:

"What do we live for, if it is not to make life less difficult for each other?"

– George Eliot

## Caregiving Essentials: Part 1

(Rescheduled from January 12)

**Enhancing your skills to build confidence, create your caregiving toolkit, reduce your stress and reach the power of acceptance, patience and peace**

This is a 7-week caregiving education series led by Pat DeAngelis, BS, RN, LCN. This is the first of a three-part comprehensive training series for family caregivers. Classes meet from 10 a.m. to noon on the following Fridays: April 6, 13, 20 and 27 and May 4, 11 and 18. Classes may be taken individually. RSVP to 321.434.7625.

- **Class 1: “Enhancing Your Physical Health” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, April 6.** This class is designed to: help participants create a personal health records toolkit for both the caregiver and loved one, to include: forms to record vital personal information and medical history; recommended preventive service, results of previous tests and due dates for next tests; tracking forms for medication, blood pressure, heart rate and diabetes; and tips to enhance communication with healthcare providers and visits to the doctor.
- **Class 2: “Enhancing Skills for Better Care” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, April 13.** This class is designed to help caregivers develop a Caregiver’s Plan to build confidence, understanding and stamina; understand the value of knowing what to expect in the disease progression; and identify steps to follow to stay well, proactive and organized.
- **Class 3: “Enhancing Caregiver Patience for Better Communication” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, April 20.** Participants in this class will learn the technique of communicating with patience, empathy and humor to produce more positive outcomes, helping them learn to identify key principles in meaningful connections with loved ones.
- **Class 4: “Enhancing Responses/Reactions to Challenging Behaviors” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, April 27.** This class is designed to help caregivers identify changes in the brain that result in typical changes in behavior and understand the impact of these changes as the disease progresses. The instructor will help caregivers build confidence in their responses to challenging behaviors, using techniques to handle difficult situations.
- **Class 5: “Enhancing Awareness of Hazardous Caregiving Emotions” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, May 4.** This class is designed to help caregivers identify the triggers/causes of emotions and harmful effects on mind, body and spirit. Our instructor will help participants develop caregiver steps to manage emotional fallout and create a balance of personal, social and health needs for both the caregiver and loved one.
- **Class 6: “Enhancing Positives for Stress Management” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, May 11.** In this class, caregivers will learn to recognize early warning signs of high stress – be it physical, emotional, behavioral or within relationships – and the barriers to manage it. Steps to prevent caregiver burnout will be discussed as well, since resources and techniques can help manage stress.
- **Class 7: “Enhancing Your Ability to Make Difficult Decisions” will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Friday, May 18.** Discussions include difficult decisions facing caregivers, as well as coping strategies for life transitions and realities. It is designed to teach caregivers steps to define and clarify difficult issues and problems; explore options and solutions; and design an action plan with acceptance, courage and confidence.