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Worried About Your Memory and What to Do?

By Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC

If you find yourself forgetting names, places, dates or appointments, you might think you have a dementia like Alzheimer's. You may seek answers from lots of different people or the Internet. You may also put it on the back burner and chalk it up to stress or overworking.

Professional care managers can help guide you to resources that will evaluate your situation. They will give you hope and direction that will allow you to be more proactive while reversing and reducing the symptoms that are worrying you.

All of us forget at times. We drive past the exit we wanted, we forget the name of a neighbor we have known for years, or we go to the market and buy everything but the milk we needed! Stress, dehydration, multitasking, being a caregiver or many other situations can all contribute to forgetfulness.

The positive point of getting an early diagnosis, such as Alzheimer's, is that you could then be a candidate for medications that can help preserve some of your function. It can also give you a chance to change lifestyles, eat healthy foods, stay engaged and exercise more. You can design the care you want and make legal and financial decisions to support your wishes.

10 Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer's:

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life;
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems;
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks at home, at work or leisure;
4. Confusion with time or place;

5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships;
6. New problems speaking or writing words;
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps;
8. Decreased or poor judgment;
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities; and
10. Changes in mood and personality.

Source: Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org)

A professional care manager can be your conduit to good solid answers, proactive planning, resources that respect your values and fit your budget while considering your current and future needs.

Some memory loss can be attributed to other illnesses such as depression, vitamin deficiencies, thyroid problems and many other medical diagnoses. We advise going to your physician with your symptoms early on. Don't be fearful of the diagnosis; be proactive and take charge to have the highest quality of life possible.

We perform memory screenings in the Eldercare Services office at no charge. If this simple test shows any evidence of cognitive changes, we will give you a report for your physician and refer you to a local neuropsychologist, Alzheimer's center or hospital diagnostic center for further testing.

Call for an appointment – the test will not exceed 15 minutes. It is confidential and administered by one of our certified professional care managers who have backgrounds in health and human services fields such

as counseling, psychology, nursing and social work.

Please join me for my next class, "Dementia Behaviors: Strategies & Solutions," from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Thursday, June 4 held at our office, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek. This class will give you the tools on how to have conversations about overall needs when denial is present, and we will discuss the different types of dementia.

Advance registration is requested, and the class is limited in size, so be sure to make your reservation early. Call (925) 937-2018 today and ask for Lindsay.



Linda Fodrini-Johnson is the founder and executive director of **Eldercare Services**; she is a licensed Marriage, Family and Child Counselor, and a certified Care Manager. **Eldercare Services** is full-service care management and home care company that has been providing care management, home care, counseling, support groups and education to Bay Area families since 1989. For information, visit www.EldercareAnswers.com.

Glorietta Elementary's Production of Disney's 'The Little Mermaid Jr.' Opens May 15

Submitted by Hillary Weiner



Glorietta Elementary School cast of "The Little Mermaid Jr."

Photo provided

Glorietta Elementary School presents its spring musical, Disney's "The Little Mermaid Jr." on May 15 and 16. Based on the Disney film and the Hans Christian Anderson story, "The Little Mermaid Jr." is a journey "under the sea" with Ariel and her aquatic friends. This tale of a magical underwater kingdom follows a beautiful young mermaid, Ariel, as she tries to leave her ocean home and her fins and live in the world above. Ariel's adventures include defying her father, King Triton, making a deal

with the evil sea witch, Ursula, and her romantic encounters with Prince Eric to convince him that her enchanting voice is the one he has been seeking. The score includes hit Disney songs such as "Part of Your World," "She's in Love," and the Oscar-winning "Under the Sea."

The production is directed by music teacher Ron Pickett, with the assistance of parent producers Betsy Shandalov, Susan Jordan and Kathryn Ishizu. There are two student casts, comprised of approximately 90 students along with a

student tech crew. The production is primarily funded by parent contributions and the Glorietta Parents Club, with additional support from Orinda Arts Council and EFO. "The Little Mermaid Jr." takes place at Glorietta Elementary School, 15 Martha Road, at 4 and 7 p.m. Friday, May 15 and at 3 and 7 p.m. Saturday, May 16. Tickets for the Friday and Saturday performances (all reserved seating) will be available in advance online at www.showtix4u.com. Tickets may also be available at the door prior to the show.

San Francisco Opera Orchestra Musicians Star in 'Whirlwind'



The Gold Coast Chamber Players having fun. Photo provided

The woodwinds will take center stage with works by Robert Schumann, Johann Nepomuk Hummel and a little-known German composer, August Klughardt, during the Gold Coast Chamber Players' 2014-15 season finale, "Whirlwind," at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 17 at the Lafayette Library Community Hall. Klughardt's Schil-

flieder (Reed Songs) was written in the romantic spirit of Franz Liszt, while Hummel's Septet bridges the Classical and Romantic eras. Robert Schumann's Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano will feature hornist Kevin Rivard and pianist Yana Reznik. A pre-concert talk at 2:30 p.m. will start the afternoon.

"Woodwinds, in this case, flute, oboe and French horn add tremendous variety of color and dynamic range to our program," said GCCP Artistic Director and Violist Pamela Freund-Striplen. "So much of the chamber music repertoire centers on strings and piano but this program offers a fantastic range of tone color. Each instrument has its own inherent character. The oboe, with its plaintive expressive quality is often used for the most emotional moments in a film. Oboist Mingjia Liu is recognized for his charismatic performing skill and 'singing ability' on the instrument – in fact, his last appearance with GCCP was so well received, we had our largest audience to date – selling out of even standing room! The French horn is a brass instrument and is well suited to epic moments. Kevin is a sensitive musician, and while he could blow the walls down, he isn't likely to! The flute is a beautiful balance for the oboe and horn and adds a lightness and sprightliness to overall color."

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