

United!



Registered Charity No. 1043956

Issue no. 19 September 2016

The Carers Centre

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND

25 Years at the heart of caring

THE CARE ACT ONE YEAR ON

What has it changed?

DOES YOUR GP KNOW YOU ARE A CARER?

SAVE MONEY ON WINTER FUEL BILLS

We tell you how

GET INVOLVED – GET EMPOWERED

Sign up for training and social groups

YOUR LAST WISHES

When is the right time to talk?

NEWS FROM THE CARERS CENTRE

...AND CHARLES' CHAT

Autumn issue

Letter from the Editor

Well dear readers, here we are, at the end of what has been a very changeable summer... in more ways than one. We can all say that we have lived through some of the most unique times in British politics and we are still wondering how our futures will or will not be impacted by the potential upheavals. As carers, there is always one constant feature that never changes, no matter what the political climate and that is - challenge. In order to stay sane and meet the challenge, we carers all need support and a listening ear from time to time. So, we are grateful for the hard work of The Carers Centre staff, volunteers and trustees, and many of us are glad to offer our help too. In this issue, we focus on the fantastic efforts that are being made to raise funds for The Carers Centre that help us to continue supporting the carers in our community. Please join in, take part and support our fundraisers, you will find lots of ways that you can participate and have some fun as well.

Also, please take a moment to have a look at the training sessions and support groups in this issue and sign up, get involved and get empowered! As ever, until the next issue, I wish you a joyous and peaceful autumn.

My very best wishes

Ann Johnson

unitededitor@thecarerscentre.org.uk

A word from our youngest fundraiser...

My name is George Henry Wright and I am 12 years old. I have seen many people do amazing things over the last few years and I have supported others in different events so this year I decided to set myself a challenge.

I have chosen to get fit and healthy and climb the three Peaks in Wales, England and Scotland. I will do Snowdon and will be walking up the Miners Trail. Then, a week later I will be climbing Scafell Pike in the Lake District and finally, when I have recovered, a few weeks later I am going up Ben Nevis which is 1,345 m high. I have been doing lots of walks to get fit over the last few months and have done some running and Park Runs on Saturday mornings. I have also started to go to the gym to get stronger.

I really enjoyed my training in the Peak District when I walked up Kinder Scout, we saw an amazing rainbow at the top. In the evenings I have been walking to get extra miles, sometimes around the village and sometimes at Bradgate Park or Croft Hill to practice the hills. I also use my Fitbit to help encourage me to do a few more steps.

I decided that to encourage me more I would do this challenge to raise money for charity like others do when they run the London Marathon. I chose The Carers Centre because people who look after other people are sometimes forgotten and need support and help themselves. It is a great charity and local to me in Leicestershire. If you would like to sponsor me please visit my page.

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/George-Three-Peak-Challenge>

I would like to raise at least £100 and I will be working really hard for it. I know that sometimes I will moan and want to give up but if you sponsor me you can help me overcome my tiredness and get to the top of all three Peaks this summer.

One day I would like to run the London Marathon and raise more money for The Carers Centre but I have a lot more training to do before then!

Charles' Chat

Care Act 2014

You may remember that in your last issue of United!, I mentioned a study by Irwin Mitchell Solicitors that showed that over half of social care staff don't understand the new rights in the Act, and the lack of funds available mean that carers are missing out at every level.

A new study from the Carers Trust has backed this up by saying that most carers are struggling to get help through the Act, a year on. More on this story in this issue!

Could You Be A Trustee?

Trustees are the individuals who run a charity. They are responsible for planning the direction of the charity and ensuring necessary policies and practices are in place. In addition, they oversee the delivery and quality of services to carers to ensure they are in line with the contract requirements, and meet the needs of carers from the diverse local communities. We're extremely proud of our Board of Trustees, who accept ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity and ensure that we remain solvent, well-run and meet the needs of carers.

We're looking for Trustees who will be ambitious for The Carers Centre, and committed to supporting carers. We are open to injecting a greater degree of commercial thinking into our organisation as we continue to diversify funding. This will help us to widen and improve our services. Trustees are often required to represent us at meetings and events, so it is particularly helpful if you are a confident public speaker. Experience of forging effective partnerships will be helpful, too, as we are looking to work with other agencies to deliver services. Trustees are there to ask questions, challenge, support and be a critical friend to The Carers Centre, and we could not operate without Trustees.

There are a number of Trustee vacancies coming up for the AGM – so please get in touch if you're interested in finding out more!

Finally...

If you have any comments, suggestions or queries about anything in this edition, or have any thoughts or concerns, please contact me at the office on 0116 2510999. Or you can email me at charles@thecarerscentre.org.uk or call me on 07740403294.

Alternatively, you can always write to me at:

The Carers Centre
FREEPOST
RTLH-HHXR-YAJL
LE1 1PL

I'd love to hear from you!

AN IMPORTANT DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!

THE CARERS CENTRE AGM for 2016

PHOENIX ARTS
4 Midland Street, Leicester, LE1 1TG.

FRIDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 2016

12 NOON START WITH LUNCH INCLUDED AT
1PM.

2:30PM FINISH

ANYONE WISHING TO ATTEND PLEASE
LET US KNOW.

Caring with Confidence

A FREE popular and essential support programme for anyone caring for a family member or friend, with any condition.

Caring for a chronically ill or disabled loved one can have a huge impact on your own health and wellbeing, many say they feel isolated, experience feelings of being unable to cope, unsure where to go for advice and support or feel they are not being heard. Others say they would like the chance to meet others in a similar situation.

Caring with Confidence can help with these problems and is held in a relaxed and friendly environment with two facilitators who are themselves carers. The programme runs over five weeks so come to as many sessions as you can.

Finding your Way

The introductory session which welcomes you to the programme and explains more about each session and how it can help you in your caring role. Also considers how to access support from others.

Managing Stress Effectively

Is about relaxation and how not to avoid it! Using simple techniques to incorporate in everyday life. This session looks at ways to help you juggle your caring role and also find valuable time for yourself.

Caring with Coping

Gives you time and space to look at the emotions involved in looking after someone and how to recognise and deal with stress more effectively.

Caring and Communication

Helps you get the best from communicating with professionals and service providers. Ideas to help you with self-advocacy and find out more about local support available to you.

Caring Day to Day

The essentials of caring for someone every day from medication to emergencies. Discussions around equipment available to help keep someone safe in their own home and looking at moving and handling.

Caring and Life

Invites you to take time out and think about how to juggle competing demands and how your caring role fits with other aspects of your life.

Everyone welcome!

Bring a friend or a family member if you think they could also benefit.

Complimentary refreshments are provided.

To book a place please contact Ranjana or Debbie at The Carers Centre on 0116 251 0999

Caring with Confidence Programme

Starts Tuesday 28th
September 2016

10.00am – 1pm

Harborough Evangelical
Church

121 Bath Street, Market
Harborough, LE16 9JL

Finding your Way

Tuesday 28th September
2016

Caring and Coping

Wednesday 5th October 2016

Caring and Communicating

Wednesday 12th October
2016

Caring Day-to-Day

Wednesday 19th October
2016

Managing Stress Effectively

Wednesday 26th October
2016

Starts Tuesday 15th
November 2016

10.00am – 1pm

John Storer House

Ward's End, Loughborough,
LE11 3HA

Finding your Way

Tuesday 15th November
2016

Caring and Coping

Tuesday 22nd November
2016

Caring and Communicating

Tuesday 29th November
2016

Caring Day-to-Day

Tuesday 6th December 2016

Managing Stress Effectively

Tuesday 13th December
2016

Programme for The Carers Support Group 2016

Tuesday 6 Sept, 10.30am Coffee Morning at
The Carers Centre

Come and enjoy the fun! Refreshments, board games and beetle drive!

Tues 13 Sept, 10.30am

Gorse Hill City Farm

Something different! Enjoy the country atmosphere and the lovely animals, as well as the café! (Admission - Adults £2 Children £1)

City Farm, Anstey Lane, Leicester, (Bus 74)

Tues 20 Sept, 10.30 am

Café Blends Coffee Morning

Come and enjoy the surroundings of the coffee shop

Café Blends, 43 Downing Drive, Evington (Bus 22)

Mon 26 Sept, 10.30am

Crafts and Fun at
The Carers Centre

Come along and enjoy refreshments while you have a go at card making, origami and quilling!

Tues 4 Oct, 10.30am

Autumn Stroll in
Braunstone Park

Enjoy beautiful Braunstone Park in the autumn, the outdoor gym and close by the Brite Centre for coffee and tea should it rain!!

Braunstone Park, Meet at Gooding Road Island
(Bus No 104 from the
Clock Tower)

Tues 11 Oct, 10.30

Coffee Morning at
the Peace Café

Enjoy refreshments in the relaxing atmosphere of the Peace Cafe

The Peace Café, 17 Guildhall Lane, Leicester

Mon 17 Oct, 10:30

Fun with Quizzes at The Carers Centre

Let's have fun with another quiz!! Prizes and cake!

Tues 25 Oct, 10:30

Bingo! At The Carers Centre

Come and have a fun game of bingo or beetle drive!

Care Act 2014 – One Year On

On 4th July, we received a telephone call from Radio Leicester: they wanted a local perspective on a report by the Carers Trust about how effective the Care Act 2014 has been...Charles Huddleston goes into more detail here...

The Care Act 2014 was launched, with much enthusiasm, on 1st April last year. It was expected to deliver a major improvement in the way carers and the people they care for received services, and guaranteed new rights for carers.

A year later, the Carers Trust surveyed over 250 carers to get a sense of how things have changed. The results were...not what we hoped for, but certainly what we expected.

69% of carers taking part in the survey felt that the Care Act had made no difference. Only 31% had received a Carers Assessment – and a third of those felt the Carers Assessment had helped them. In practice, then, only around 10-11% of all of the carers taking part in the survey felt that anything had improved for them.

The Local Government Association had claimed that Carers Assessments would double under the new legislation. The evidence is somewhat starkly different. Many areas – including Leicester – have seen a reduction in the number of Carers Assessments, often against previous upward trends.

ADASS – the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care – have taken the line that it's all about money and that there has been progress on the Care Act for carers. Our experience is different.

Our advocacy and advice team are reporting that carers are facing cuts to services – often being expected to take up the care needs no longer being supported. Carers are reporting to us that they have not been offered an assessment in their own right. I've spoken to social care staff who know next to nothing about the laws they have to implement: whereas my staff have to qualify in Care Act Advocacy – following a strict accredited programme of learning and essay writing, social care staff merely have to attend training that does not have to be accredited.

All in all, then, depressing reading.

During the last year, I've reported on these issues and told carers that it takes time for real change to take place. During that time, I've made sure that we offer training and information sessions about Carers Assessments, we're running a small – but growing – “Self-Help Group” to assist carers to prepare for their Carers Assessments, and we will continue to work with carers to help spread the word. But that's not going to be enough.

It's unacceptable that carers are not having their legal rights met by local authorities. So I'm committing The Carers Centre to working to change this. Carers can't wait any longer.

Does your GP Surgery know you're a Carer?

Did you know that as a carer you're entitled to a free flu vaccination* every year?

If your GP Surgery knows that you look after someone then they will automatically offer you a flu vaccination every autumn.

That might not sound too attractive a proposition (albeit an important one) but they may also be able to offer you additional support such as health checks, flexible or 'out of hours' appointments that would be easier to fit around your caring responsibilities. They will also be aware of the need to keep you involved in decisions taken that are about the person you're caring for.

Once you register as a Carer, a code will be added to your health records and all healthcare professionals will be able to see this when they meet with you. Although your health records travel with you across all NHS services, no information about your caring situation will be shared with other organisations without your permission.

Our new GP Partnership Service is due to be officially launched in the autumn and will be working with surgeries across Leicester City. The service will provide training and support for surgery staff teams, raising awareness of the issues and problems carers may face. We will also be providing information and resources so that surgery staff can refer carers directly to services that can support them further.

For more information about the GP Partnership Service or to suggest a GP Practice, please contact: Kirsteen McVeigh on 0116 251 0999 or kirsteen@thecarerscentre.org.uk

Ask to register with your GP Practice next time you go in – you never know what they may be able to offer!

*The Flu jab helps to protect you from catching flu and it also reduces the risk of you passing the virus on to the person you care for. There may be an increased risk of them catching the flu because of their long term condition or disability and they could develop complications and become seriously ill as a result. (NHS Flu Fighter campaign)

PREPARED TO CARE WITH CONFIDENCE

Starts on Wednesday 9th November

PORK PIE LIBRARY

TIME: 10pm- 1pm

**VENUE: Pork Pie Library & Community Centre, Southfields Drive,
Leicester. LE2 6QS**

Caring with Coping

Wednesday 9th November 2016

Gives you time and space to look at the emotions involved in looking after someone and how to recognise and deal with stress more effectively.

Managing Stress Effectively

Wednesday 16th November 2016

Is about relaxation and how not to avoid it! Using simple techniques to incorporate in everyday life. This session looks at ways to help you juggle your caring role and also find time valuable time for yourself.

Caring and Communication

Wednesday 23rd November 2016

Helps you get the best from communicating with professionals and service providers. Ideas to help you with self-advocacy and find out more about local support available to you.

Caring Day to Day

Wednesday 30th November 2016

The essentials of caring for someone every day from medication to emergencies. Discussions around equipment available to help keep someone safe in their own home and looking at moving and handling.

Caring and Life

Wednesday 7th December 2016

Invites you to take time out and think about how to juggle competing demands and how your caring role fits with other aspects of your life.

Caring and Working

Wednesday 14th December 2016

If you would like to do something outside of your caring role, there are lots of options out there. This session explores these options available, including training, education, volunteering and work. You'll look at the many skills you have (even if you haven't spotted them yet) and start to decide what changes, if any, you want to make in your life.

Starts on 27th September 2016

Age UK

TIME: 10pm- 1pm

VENUE: AGE UK, Clarence House,
Humberstone Gate, Leicester. LE1 3PJ

Caring with Coping

Tuesday 27th September 2016

Managing Stress Effectively

Tuesday 4th October 2016

Caring and Communication

Tuesday 11th October 2016

Caring Day to Day

Thursday 20th October 2016

Caring and Life

Tuesday 25th October 2016

Caring and Working

Wednesday 2nd November 2016

Starts on 2nd September 2016

The Tudor Centre

TIME: 10pm- 1pm

Venue: The Tudor Centre, Bewcastle Grove, Leicester LE4 2JU

Caring and Life Friday 2nd September 2016

Invites you to take time out and think about how to juggle competing demands and how your caring role fits with other aspects of your life.

Caring and Working Friday 9th September 2016

If you would like to do something outside of caring, there are lots of options out there. This session explores the options available, including training, education, volunteering and work. You'll look at the many skills you have (even if you haven't spotted them yet) and start to decide what changes, if any, you want to make in your life.

Katie's Wise words

Helping someone who is visually impaired

My mum had a sight problem, so I wanted to share some tips that made her life much easier.

Mum liked her independence so I attached a strip of elastic on the right shoe or I would sew a button on, so she could identify the correct slippers for her feet.

When in hospital she could not operate the buzzer so I asked if I could put marks on it, this helped her and the staff.

Mum could see yellow quite easily, so I used yellow tape and dots on lots of things, for instance I always marked the right shoe with a piece of yellow tape inside.

I put yellow dots above the keyhole to easily see where the key should go.

I used to get little bright coloured bags to put things like her keys or other important items in so they could easily be found in her handbag.

Vista were so helpful they helped me sort out many day-to-day things that helped my mum stay independent. My mum let me know when things worked for her so I could keep helping and overall she felt so much less stress.

There are lots of tips on the Vista website or you can call them on this number

0116 249 8839 www.vistablind.org.uk/

Information Sessions

As part of our new contract with Leicester City Council, we've been asked to organise regular sessions to provide information and advice on a variety of topics. If you have any suggestions for future topics, please let us know.

All sessions will be held in the Meeting Room at The Carers Centre, Unit 19, Matrix House, Constitution Hill, Leicester. Session times are shown below, and the sessions will run for a maximum of three hours.

Please contact Debbie or Satwant to book a place on 0116 2510999 or email enquiries@thecarerscentre.org.uk

Date and times: Session

Thursday 1st September

1pm start

Personal Independence Payments What is "PIP" and how do you claim for it? How does it work?

Friday 16th September

2pm start

Carers Rights What are your rights as a carer? What do those rights mean?

Tuesday 20th September

10am start

Carers Assessments What is a Carers Assessment? What can it do for me? How do I get one? How do I prepare for one?

Thursday 22nd September

1pm start

Planning for Emergencies What do I do in an emergency? How can I prepare for one?

Wednesday 28th September

10am start

Open session Do you have questions about social care, caring, or any other topic related to your caring situation? Come along and talk to our team in an

open session!

Tuesday 4th October

10am start

“Keeping In Touch” Hear from Mosaic about an exciting new City project to help disabled and isolated people over 50 to keep in touch!!

Thursday 6th October

1pm start

Mental Capacity and Medication Make sure you and the person you care for are using medication safely.

Tuesday 11th October

10am start

Wills and Trusts Session covers the importance of writing a will and some of the issues around that. Question and answer session at the end.

Tuesday 18th October

10am start

Managing Stress Find out what causes stress and how to deal with it – don't let stress rule your life!

Thursday 27th October

10am start

Mental Capacity: Power of Attorney and Deputyship/Court of Protection Session covers preparing for loss of ability to make decisions, and what to do if the person does not have capacity

Saturday 5th November

10.30am start

Relaxation – and how not to avoid it! Session covers simple techniques to improve relaxation and reduce stresses

Tuesday 8th November

10am start

Open session Do you have questions about social care, caring, or any other topic related to your caring situation? Come along and talk to our team in an open session!

Tuesday 15th November

10am start

Carers Assessments What is a Carers Assessment? What can it do for me? How do I get one? How do I prepare for one?

Saturday 26th November

10.30am start

Carers Assessments What is a Carers Assessment? What can it do for me? How do I get one? How do I prepare for one?

Wednesday 30th November

10am start

Speaking Up For Yourself! How to prepare for an assessment and present your case.

Tuesday 6th December

10am start

Planning for Emergencies What do I do in an emergency? How can I prepare for one?

Wednesday 7th December

1pm start

Carers Rights What are your rights as a carer? What do those rights mean?

Tuesday 13th December

10am start

Open session Do you have questions about social care, caring, or any other topic related to your caring situation? Come along and talk to our team in an open session!

Thursday 15th December

1pm start

Open session Do you have questions about social care, caring, or any other topic related to your caring situation? Come along and talk to our team in an open session!

What has our fund-raising team have been up to?

As always, Babs and Nadine have been working hard to keep raising much needed extra funds for The Carers Centre. Nadine looks after the “big” stuff – requests to charitable trusts and so on, as well as regular tin collections at both Glenfield General Hospital and Leicester Royal Infirmary, while Babs does the “small” stuff taking her stall of assorted goodies around, selling bits and bobs wherever she can.

Since the last magazine, Babs raised £138 in sponsorship for our marathon runners, £680 in sales at various fairs and markets and £348 at her Fashion Show. Over the next few weeks, she will be attending a fun day at Friar Lane Football Club, Loughborough Community Heroes Day, Beaumont Lodge Fete, Oadby Farmers Market and Blaby Bazaar. Nearer Christmas, she will be at the RNIB Craft Fair in Loughborough, and South Wigston Christmas Capers.

Meanwhile, Nadine has done amazing work with the Marathon sponsorship in general, raising several thousand pounds, as well as another few thousand from charitable trusts and similar organisations. Add in around another £700 from hospital tin collections and you can see we are justifying our existence!

Babs and Nadine

The Carers Centre's 25th Birthday Bash

With live music from the PTA Band

On 24th June, at Market Harborough Methodist Church, we had another party to mark our 25th anniversary. The PTA Band agreed to play a range of music from the 1950's to present day, everyone had their feet tapping and hands clapping! It was a fun filled evening! We had a pretty impressive raffle, and were spoilt for choice on the prizes. Many thanks to The Plant Man, who have a nursery in Braybrook, near Market Harborough, for donating the roses for our raffle.

Also we would like to thank staff and volunteers for giving up their time and supporting Nadine on the night. Many thanks to Alexia, Geoff, Ranjana and Sonia.

LIFE'S NOT ALL BEER AND SKITTLES... !

But on FRIDAY 18th November, it could be! We have booked the skittle alley at The Horse and Trumpet, Bull Head Street, Wigston from 7.00pm, for a fun evening including a lovely pub meal of faggots, sausages, chips, mushy peas and crusty bread, as well as a couple of games of skittles, plus raffle.

The cost per person is £8.50 and we are limited to 40 places, as the skittle alley is not terribly big. Also, please note, that due to the age of the building, there is no wheelchair access, as there are a few steps to negotiate at both entrances to the alley.

As always, tickets are available from The Carers Centre, 0116 2510999, or if you prefer you can call/text Babs direct on 07833 090537

The next Carers Centre quiz night

Following the success of the quiz night we held on April 1st, I have been persuaded to do another one! So, the next Quiz Night will be on Friday 9th December, 7.30pm at Stoneygate Baptist Church.

This seems like a long way off, but as we know, time flies, so this is an opportunity to make a note in your diary now, before it starts filling up with all the Christmassy stuff in December. As before, it will be a team quiz, 4 to 6 players, £10 per team and, as it is at that time of year, the quiz will have a smattering of "festive" questions. If you are lucky, you might get a mince pie, too! There will be another reminder in our winter newsletter, but that is not due to hit your doorstep until after 21st November, so make a note now!

To register a team, contact The Carers Centre on 0116 2510999, or direct to Babs on 07833 090537

Why I volunteer for The Carers Centre

My name is Helen, I have been a carer now for a long time and I sometimes felt lonely. I wanted to do something useful, so I decided to become a volunteer for The Carers Centre. It gets me out and about. I get to meet other volunteers who are carers for a chat and tea/coffee and cake, everyone is so friendly.

I help as much as I can. Being a carer it is sometimes difficult for to get out and leave my husband. I really like being a volunteer with the fundraising team, I get to do tin collections at the hospital and supermarkets, and I help at community events on the stall. You get to meet lots of people at these events.

Being a volunteer is helping me get my confidence back. I've tasted a bit of freedom and I don't want to give it up!

London 10K 2016

A massive well done to Britney Hendry for completing the London 10K in 1 hour and 10 minutes! She not only ran it speedily but did an amazing job with her fundraising, and raised double her target, with an amazing £500!

Do you or someone you know dream of running the London 10K 2017? Give Nadine a call on 0116 251 0999, or email nadine@thecarerscentre.org.uk

WANTED!

Second-hand books, of any genre wanted to do a book sale, later this year!

Contact Nadine on 0116 251 0999

Carers Week Tin Collection – A New Record!

For Carers Week 2015, we were fortunate enough to be invited to do a week's worth of tin collections at Sainsburys in Wigston and we made just over £1000 - a very respectable sum.

This year, we were only offered one day at Sainsburys Wigston store, so we decided to try and cast our net a little wider and, after some friendly negotiations, managed to get 7 tin collections in 7 supermarkets in 7 days! What a marathon! This is what we did:

Monday; Sainsburys Wigston: £125.11.

Tuesday; Waitrose Oadby, £261.75.

Wednesday; Asda Abbey Lane, £246.00.

Thursday; Asda Abbey Lane, £205.24.

Friday; Sainsburys Melton Road, £400.00.

Saturday; Sainsburys Melton Road, £621.05.

Sunday; Sainsburys Fosse Park, £324.91.

This made a grand total of £2184.06 – a magnificent result! If you also add in a collection that Nadine did at the Royal Infirmary which raised a further £150, the total rises to £2334.06.

It was a punishing schedule, but made so much better than it might have been by our lovely volunteers. Special thanks go to Dave, Helen, Malc, Alexia, Isabelle, Siobhan, Geoff, Kirsteen, Nahid, Phil, Sonia, Lozza, Debra, Frankie and Debbie. I don't think we've left anyone out....

The supermarket staff were very welcoming and helpful and made the week go that little bit easier. Several have indicated that they would be happy for us to go back there again, so I will be following those up. Standing for up to six hours is very tiring, but the figures make it so worth it. Our heartfelt thanks also have to go to every single person who took the trouble to put a few coins (or notes in some cases!) into our tins.

The only downside is that we have set ourselves a heck of a target for 2017!!

Babs and Nadine

Life Through A Lens...

Photography became a part of my life when I was 10. Watching Dad black out the living room and change the lightbulb for a red one that gave out barely enough light to see your hand in front of your face. The smell of the chemicals...the negatives hanging from a peg (don't walk by them, you'll get dust on them)... watching the images form on the paper as if by magic...Mum complaining about the mess...What wasn't there to enjoy?

In those early years I never felt happier than when I was going out on trips with my camera, sometimes with the family, or just me and Dad, or with people from the local camera club Dad took me to. I loved trying to find ways to take a picture that said something about the subject, or told the story differently... not that I was particularly good compared to some of the others, but that didn't matter. I was proud of my results. They meant something to me. For a long time I missed those days, as being a carer meant little time for hobbies.

Shortly after starting work at the Carers Centre I began to rekindle my interest, as it coincided with the advent of digital cameras. I quickly realised that this was a way back into photography. No film. No chemicals to develop the picture. Less time consuming, which made it possible to rekindle the hobby aspect of photography. A chance to think about something that had nothing to do with caring. A break!

The great thing about digital photography is that once you've paid for the camera – or the phone – you don't need to have prints made. Most keep them on their phone or download them onto their computer. And the results, while they may not be as good as a purist would want, are pretty reasonable. With the help of photoediting software, you can improve the picture or play with effects. More importantly, instead of being restricted by how much film you could afford, you can take as many as you like. As long as you have enough battery! You can see the result on the screen in seconds.

The great thing about photography is that you can do it wherever

you are – mostly – and you don't need masses of equipment to get an acceptable result. Of course, some of us have all the gear – a couple of cameras, masses of lenses, a hernia...but the rest of us manage with a compact camera, a bridge camera or a mobile phone.

Carer Julian Price has sent some photos to us. Both are winter themed, and you can feel the cool, crisp air. The reflections photograph shows how still the water was, giving a near-mirror-like reflection. I've added a couple of my own. One was taken on Bradgate Park, the other at our Big Care Signup event last year where I was able to combine my work and photography into one neat package.

Charles Huddleston

Here's a challenge...

Get out there and take some photographs. Whatever you like. Use a camera, a phone, iPad, whatever. Enjoy being out in the air, enjoy creating a memory. If you can't get out, then take some photos indoors if you can. And share it with someone – anyone. If you like, you can share it with us. And we'll try to find space in future United! editions to give everyone an idea of how much talent there is out there in the world of caring.

Talking About Your Last Wishes Can Be Positive

In my line of work whilst taking a client's will instructions, talking about death is an essential part of my working day. Client reactions when broaching the subject of their death varies from that of being highly organised and confident, whilst others may shy away from the subject, and prefer not to have to make arrangements, leaving the decision making to those left behind.

However, not knowing what a loved ones wishes are, could cause significant problems immediately after a death. Family members and friends may wish to offer their own thoughts and suggestions, naturally with all good intention, but for many reasons they may have differing points of view. Bereavement is often said to be a major cause of stress, and having to deal with any potential conflict at times like these can often cause unnecessary tension and anxiety.

For me, dealing with the wishes of a deceased loved one is made so much easier when they are communicated during lifetime and having a 'plan' in place may well be the best course of action.

One client told me recently that it was perhaps the most difficult conversation she had had with her daughter in years. She had intended on taking just a few moments to discuss a few simple wishes and to talk through the decision of burial or cremation. She went on to say that they discussed offering her body for medical science purposes as another family member had done so some years before. It was important for my client that her daughter felt comfortable with her wishes.

Once my client's daughter had accepted that her mum wanted to talk about her wishes, she said that there seemed to be an air of relief and indeed it provoked some light hearted chat. She said that they talked about the funeral service itself, and favourite songs and poems. They agreed on a collection for charity and much to my client's amusement they even discussed sandwich fillings and cake choices for the 'get together' afterwards!

She added that she was pleased to have finally put all of her affairs in order. These arrangements had clearly played heavily on my clients mind for some time.

An ideal way to get started with your own wish list is to pop the kettle on and if you wish, invite those closest for a chat. Write down your thoughts and wishes. Some folk like to add snippets of life events and memories, but you can include as much or as little detail as you wish.

I have a friend, who has created an A4 folder with 20 odd pages for her family and together we often muse about its content, not to mention the sheer volume. I think I'll be making myself scarce when the time comes for that one to be implemented!

A copy of your list, or as it is may be known, your 'memorandum of wishes' should be stored with your will, and maybe a further copy given to family members? It's a great way to add the personal details and instructions to your affairs, and of course you can change it at any time in the future should circumstances change.

You may also wish to look at pre-paying for your funeral, again a great way of taking away the burden from your family. With a little forethought now, and a discussion that you need only have once, you may indeed make the whole process of dealing with the death of a loved one a lot easier for those you have left behind.

Richard Lockwood of collective legal solutions offers free, no obligation consultations in the comfort of your own home. For more details and assistance in making a will, memorandum of wishes, powers of attorney or funeral planning please call him on (0116) 2432200 or mobile 0771 229 8779

Get Healthy Leicester is a unique service commissioned by Leicester City Council and Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group.

We play an important role in managing referrals from a range of health and social professionals, by taking the patient through a triage process and referring them onto the most suitable service to meet their health and wellbeing needs. The services that we can refer you onto include weight management programmes, stop smoking support, increasing physical activity and alcohol support services all of which are completely FREE!

To find out whether you are eligible to access the services please give us a call on 0116 217 1881.

Please note if you are a health and social care professional or offer a support service to the community in Leicester and would like to find out how you can refer the individuals you are working with into the referral hub please contact Shavez Jeffers on 0116 243 7390.

La dolce vita

One of Chef Graeme's favourite cuisines is Italian, so, for this issue he has gone totally **Italian-issimo!**

Bolognese Sauce

One of the most versatile of all Italian sauces

Ingredients

1 Onion (very finely chopped)

1 Carrot (very finely chopped)

2 Sticks of Celery (very finely chopped)

2 cloves of Garlic (crushed)

25g 1 oz. Butter

15ml 1 tbsp. of Olive oil

130g 4 1/2 oz. of rind less Streaky Bacon (cut into small dice)

250g 9 oz. of lean minced Beef

250g 9 oz. of lean minced Pork

2 Tins of crushed Plum Tomatoes

500-750 ml 6 fl oz. -1 1/4 pints of Beef stock

100 ml 3 1/2 of Double Cream

Method

Add the oil and butter to a sauce pan, and then add your chopped vegetables. Cook over a low heat until softened.

Add the bacon and continue to cook over a low heat for about 10 minutes.

Add both the minced meats; stir them into the vegetables and bacon. Cook for a further 10 minutes.

Add both tins of tomatoes and stir into the vegetable and meat.

Add the beef stock little by little as it gets absorbed; you are looking for a slightly runny sauce but one that looks like a soup. This should take about 2 hours but you don't have to stand and watch the pot, just add the stock stir and leave to become absorbed.

Taste your sauce and add any salt and pepper that's needed.

Stir in your cream, cook for around 20 minutes.

This sauce is best left for 24 hours to really bring out the flavours.

You can use this sauce in Spaghetti Bolognese (it should really be Tagliatelle, Lasagne, Pasta Bakes, Calzone (folded over Pizza) or on a Pizza. By removing the meat and using one of the many very good meat substitutes you can make it vegetarian and remove the butter and cream (just add the extra as oil) to make it vegan.

Panzanella

(Bread Salad)

Ingredients

400g 14 oz. of Stale White or Brown Bread Rolls

4 Large Tomatoes

1 Large Red Onion

1 Small handful of fresh Herbs (chopped)

60ml 4 tbsp. Virgin Olive oil

30ml 2 tbsp. of White Wine Vinegar

Salt and Pepper.

Method

Cut or tear the rolls into thumb size pieces add to a bowl and cover with cold water. Leave for around 30 minutes.

Cut the tomatoes into wedges and finely slice the onion add these to a salad bowl.

Squeeze as much water out of the bread as you can, then add to the tomatoes and onion.

Put the oil and vinegar in a clean jar and shake well, taste and add salt and pepper to taste.

Pour over the salad and mix well.

Leave in a cool place for about 2 hours then add your chopped herbs mix them in and serve.

Great on a hot day or with a BBQ.

Spaghetti alla Carbonara

Ingredients

30ml 2 tbsp. of Olive Oil

1 onion (finely chopped)

8 Thick rind less rashers of Smoked Streaky bacon (cut into strips)

4 Eggs

350 ml 12 fl oz. Spaghetti

60 ml 4 tbsp. of Crème fraiche

60 ml 4 tbsp. of freshly grated Parmesan Cheese

Salt and pepper to taste.

Method

Add the onion to a sauce pan, cook over a low heat until softened, add the bacon and cook for about 10 minutes.

Add the crème fraiche, eggs and the Parmesan cheese to a bowl and beat until combined.

Cook the Spaghetti as per the instructions on the packet. Drain then add to the bacon and onions.

Remove from the heat and add the egg, crème fraiche and cheese. Mix well, so that it coats the Spaghetti and also cooks the eggs with the heat of the bacon and Spaghetti.

Taste and add any seasoning you think it needs.

Coffee Granita

Ingredients

500 ml 16 fl oz. of Water

115 g 4 oz. of Granulated Sugar

250 ml 8 fl oz. of very strong (cold) espresso Coffee

Whipped Cream (to garnish)

Method

Add the water and sugar to a saucepan and cook over a low heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring up the heat and bring it to a boil.

Remove from the heat when it boils and allow to cool.

Combine the coffee and sugar syrup. Pour into a freezable container and place into a freezer.

When you want to use your granita remove your mixture from the container and cut into large chunks, place into a food processor and process until you have small crystals.

Spoon into serving glasses and top with the whipped cream.

If you don't like coffee then use the same method but change the coffee for any fruit juice you prefer.

CARING AND EMPLOYMENT

Can you help
with a new research project?

Are you:

- A woman aged 45 – 65?
- Currently (or have previously been) caring for an adult family member or friend?
- Working in formal employment or have recently finished working?

If you answered yes to all three questions:

- Do you want to have your voice heard and add to understanding of the key issues affecting carers and their employment?
- Would you consider taking part in a research project looking at the experiences of women who combine caring and formal employment currently living in Leicester/Leicestershire?

If so please get in touch:

Louise Oldridge – PhD Researcher
Email – louise.oldridge@dmu.ac.uk
Telephone – 0116 257 7430

(If I don't answer please try again or
leave a message)

Leicester City Parent Carer Forum

Are you a parent carer living in the city or support parent carers of children aged 0 to 25 with special educational needs and/or a disability?

Join others like yourself and have your say about Education, Health, and Care services provided in Leicester for disabled children and young people.

The Forum is attended by the Local Authority, Health, Social Care, Education and Voluntary Organisation representatives who are there to listen to you and act on your recommendations.

2016 dates:

Wed's - Oct 12th - Barnes Heath House

Wed's - Nov 16th - Barnes Heath House

Wed's - Dec 14th - Barnes Heath House

Forum meetings are from 10.00am to 1.00pm

Transport for meetings can be arranged if required.

Refreshments are provided and lunch provided from 12.30 to 1.00.

Telephone: 07582197173

Email: leicesterparentandcarersforum@live.co.uk

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/LeicesterCityParentCarersForum)

LeicesterCityParentCarersForum

Carers self-help group

We are family carers from all walks of life, who help family members who need support to look after themselves. The group is facilitated by myself, Gill. I am a family carer who has a qualification in advocacy and more years than I care to count negotiating for the needs of people who need additional support often within my own family.

We cover all sorts of issues to do with getting our voice heard. We have looked at carer assessments, raising concerns and any other issue that is brought to the group where as a group we work to help each other. As a group we have agreed there is a need for confidentiality within the group to enable us to feel comfortable talking with each other. The main rule we have is that everyone is allowed their own opinion and we do not say things that would make others feel uncomfortable. This helps us feel safe enough with each other to discuss things together and work together to help each other.

As a family carer I have had a lot of personal experience of trying to get support around caring needs and I want to use my knowledge to help others help themselves.

How can family carers join the group? Simple, turn up on the day and time we meet as a group, and get involved.

We meet at The Carers Centre on either a Thursday or Friday between approximately 11am and 1pm. Contact The Carers Centre for more details on; 0116 251 0999 or email enquiries@thecarerscentre.org.uk

We look forward to seeing you at the group.

Gill Huddleston

WINTER FUEL PAYMENT

Winter Fuel Payment is a lump-sum payment to provide help with your fuel bills. To be eligible for winter 2016/17 you need to be born on or before 5 May 1953 and normally resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland.

If you live in an eligible European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland you may also be entitled to a Winter Fuel Payment. This is subject to you having a genuine and sufficient link to the UK Social Security System.

You can find the most up-to-date and detailed information about Winter Fuel Payments on GOV.UK which answers approximately 98% of Winter Fuel questions. The information covers:

Rates – how much Winter Fuel Payment you might get.

Eligibility – which includes how old you need to be to qualify for a Winter Fuel Payment.

How to claim

If you do not get State Pension or any other benefit from DWP you will need to make a claim.

For those getting State Pension or any other benefit from DWP you will automatically get your payment.

For more information go to www.GOV.UK or ask us at The Carers Centre to check if you don't have access to the internet.

Snippets

Like us -The Carers Centre is now on Facebook!

For regular updates and a chance to feed back your comments to us, why not look up “The Carers Centre Leicestershire and Rutland” on Facebook, or “like” us from our website page. www.thecarerscentre.org.uk

And you can also follow us on Twitter twitter.com/CLASPCarers

Drop in at The Carers Centre

The Carers Centre welcomes visitors Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 5.00pm. This is a chance to get some general information about who we are and what we do. We are always glad to see you but please remember if you need to have more advice that is specific to your situation or if you want to talk to an advocate please call us on 0116 251 0999 so that we can make an appointment for you. We look forward to seeing you!

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTORS WANTED!

Do you have some spare time? Would you like to see more copies of UNITED! available in your community?

We are looking for volunteers who would be happy to distribute copies of United! to specific locations (GP surgeries, clinics, libraries etc.) in their local area.

If you are interested please contact us on 0116 251 0999

Contact Information

The Carers Centre
Leicestershire and Rutland
Unit 19, Matrix House,
7 Constitution Hill, Leicester. LE1 1PL
T: 0116 251 0999
E: enquiries@thecarerscentre.org.uk
W: www.thecarerscentre.org.uk

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