

# The Owl on with life



may 2015

**The goal of this newsletter is to encourage people who are growing older to keep on with the business of living.** The experience of growing older should focus on achieving and maintaining a quality of life that is enjoyable and desirable.

In each edition of The OWL, we spotlight a West Michigan agency or program that provides services, programs, or benefits to people who are growing older. In this edition, we take a look at the ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION.

The Alzheimer's Association of Michigan has several chapters throughout Michigan including the West Michigan Chapter in Grand Rapids. The West Michigan Chapter covers the following counties: Kent, Ottawa, Ionia, Montcalm, Mecosta, and Osceola.

Alzheimer's Association offers a variety of services and programs for persons diagnosed with dementia and their family members. There are many forms of dementia, Alzheimer's being the most common form. Alzheimer's Association offers many education opportunities and support groups. The organization provides important facts and statistics in its online booklet. Alzheimer's Association trains caregivers for the

difficult task of caring for a loved one with dementia. Alzheimer's Association also sponsors community events to raise funds and these events bring experts, caregivers, and family members together to strengthen the connection for caring for a person with dementia. For those experiencing a crisis related to dementia, a **24/7 helpline** is available: call **800.272.3900**.

West Michigan Chapter of Alzheimer's Association has developed a series of presentations on various aspects of understanding dementia and caring for a person with dementia that are repeated throughout the year in various locations throughout the six-county area it serves. Here is a look at events being held in June, July, and August:

- Three-Part Alzheimer's Series: Understanding the Disease, Legal and Financial Issues, Strategies for Navigating the Dementia Journey: June 8, 15, and 22 @ Spectrum Health Big Rapids Hospital; 6:30-8:30pm
- Secondary Caregiver: Support and Education for Adult Children who want to Understand more about Dementia: July 21, 28, and August 4 @ Mercy

## Did you Know?

**How many species of owls are there?**

Answer: 240.

**What is the most common owl species?**

Answer: the barn owl.

Source: Public Broadcasting Station program entitled Nature.

Health Southwest Campus in Byron Center; 6:00-8:00pm

- The Savvy Caregiver: a series of six classes for the primary family caregiver of a person living with dementia: August 5, 12, 19, 26, and September 2, 9 @ Spectrum Health Healthier Communities in Grand Rapids; 1:00-3:00pm

**Registration is required for the programs. To register, call 800-272-3900. Respite care may be available.**

For more information about the classes and the West Michigan Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, find it at [www.alz.org/wmich](http://www.alz.org/wmich); call the Alzheimer's Association at 616.459.4558; visit them at 2944 Fuller Avenue NE, Suite 100, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49505.

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# New Legislation

## Affecting Continuing Care Retirement Communities

Gov. Rick Snyder signed into law the *Continuing Care Community Disclosure Act* on December 30, 2014. The new law replaces the Living Care Disclosure Act, and both providers (owners of retirement communities) and consumers (residents of retirement communities) are still parsing the changes and the impact of the changes. A few items of interest include:

- Continuing Care Communities (“Communities”) must register with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) and renew the registration each year. This allows LARA greater oversight and regulation.
- Communities registering with LARA

must state whether an executive officer or director had been convicted of a felony involving fraud or embezzlement or had been subject to an injunction regarding licensing of a facility. Injunction is a court order to stop or start an action related to an aspect of licensing regulations.

- Communities may petition the probate court for a guardian of a resident who becomes incapacitated and unable to handle personal or financial affairs.
- Disputes between residents and Communities will be handled by arbitration rather than allowing residents to take legal action

when a dispute arises.

- Communities will be exempt from rules that previously prevented them from transferring residents from one type of care to another. The new law makes transfers easier; however, there is no indication the new law impacts how communities decide to transfer a resident.



## FINANCIAL SCAMS

Several scams are circulating through Western Michigan and we highlight just a few of them and a recommended response:

**SCAM:** IRS calls and threatens to arrest person unless taxes are paid.

**RESPONSE:** IRS does not call directly to a person’s home seeking money – [hang up](#).

**SCAM:** Fraternal Order of Police asks for donations to keep police officers on patrol.

**RESPONSE:** Police officers are city employees; their salaries are paid from tax revenues; police departments do not use telephone fund-raising tactics – [hang up](#).

**SCAM:** Utility Company threatens to shut off services unless homeowner purchases debit card or “green dot card” to pay the utility bill.

**RESPONSE:** Utility companies send shut off notices by mail only; utility companies will not demand the homeowner purchase a debit card or green dot card to pay the utility bill; fake utility company instructs homeowner to send money to an unfamiliar address – [hang up](#). If the utility company comes to the door, do not let him or her in the house. Instead, call the company to verify any repairs needed or bill collection issues.

**SCAM:** Scammer calls late at night and identifies himself or herself as grandchild who needs money because s/he has been in an accident, been arrested, or had his/her money stolen while traveling. The caller sounds embarrassed and asks “grandparent” to wire money as soon as possible.

**RESPONSE:** the caller is not a relative and the money sent by Western Union is not recoverable because the person sent it voluntarily, even if tricked into doing so – [hang up](#) and never send money by wire until you confirm independently with the relative that he or she needs money.