

Amazing Place *Family* Album



Jerry B. and Kaneisha cut a rug

Joan B. plays piano for a sing-a-long



Del K. and one of the visiting Briargrove Elementary students



Miah Arnold, Inprint Writing Teacher, with several of her students at their writing presentation (l to r—Lincoln F., Sally S. Mary D. and Bob J.)

AMAZING PLACE
A day center for adults with mild to moderate dementia

Family Spirit

Monthly News and Program Calendar FEBRUARY 2016

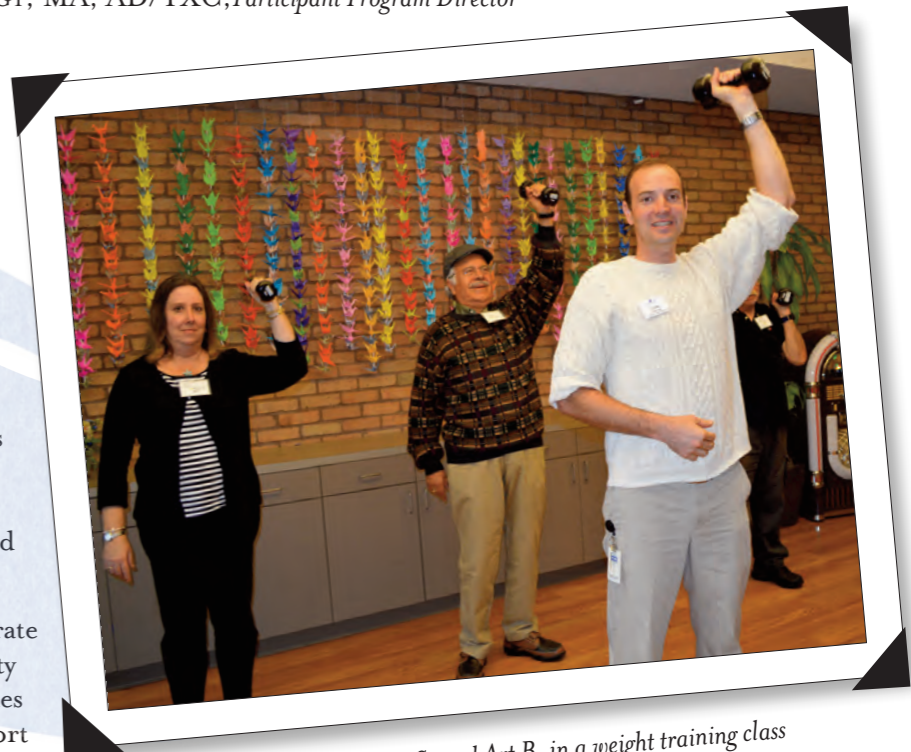
Working Our Bodies to Help Our Brains

by EMILE UNVERZAGT, MA, AD/TXC, Participant Program Director

Our brains are huge energy hogs. They consume up to 20% of our blood oxygen despite making up just 2% of our body weight. So it makes sense that a strong cardiovascular system would benefit brain health. Exercise also increases the release of BDNF (Brain-derived neurotropic factor) which has been called fertilizer for neurons. It increases alertness & decreases anxiety as well. Research as shown regular physical activity is the best thing we can do to maintain health and this doesn't change with a diagnosis of dementia. A six-year long study in Seattle determined that "Higher fitness levels in early Alzheimer's disease participants were associated with preserved brain volume".¹

Every week, Amazing Place hosts over 20 separate physical activity programs. These serve a variety of purposes yet all maintain our basic principles of being failure-free and voluntary. In an effort to keep things fresh and innovative, Amazing Place will be rolling out the following new programs.

- **Movement to music**- This class is a modification of our morning seated class. It will be led by volunteer Nancy Mansford every Thursday beginning February 18th. The class will enjoy creating fun beats with a variety of percussion instruments as they are challenged to not just move along to the music, but also create it.
- **Zumba Gold**® - Jose Cuellar has become a certified Zumba® instructor and has already begun rolling out some new dance moves in the Tuesday & Thursday morning workouts.
- **Seated Hip-Hop Aerobics**-Kim Squire & Ariel Thompson have put together an upbeat and engaging routine that's sure to get the class bouncing in their seats. This class will be offered every Wednesday beginning in February.
- **Active Evening Games**-Xbox Kinect, Tabletop bowling & corn hole are just a few of the games that we break out at 4:30PM. These physical games help to release some of the anxiety that tends to come on later in the day.
- **Oldies but goodies**-In addition to the new classes, we will continue to offer Tai Chi®, Pilates® and Laughter Yoga



Emile with Susan S. and Art B. in a weight training class

¹ Burns, J.M. et al. 2008. Cardiorespiratory fitness and brain atrophy in early Alzheimer's disease. *Neurology*, 71, 210-216