

# Alzheimer's group educates on warning signs at Waldorf West

By CHARLIE WRIGHT  
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Representatives from the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter visited Waldorf West library on Tuesday to deliver their Know the 10 Signs presentation, a program designed to educate families and assist in early detection of the disease.

Programs and services manager Nancy Quarles and constituent events manager LaKeysha Boyd-Moore welcomed a handful of local residents for the event, which featured a PowerPoint presentation and video clips from citizens diagnosed with Alzheimer's. The goal was to open a discussion about the disease in order to provide better treatment and earlier diagnoses, key factors in preserving the lives of those at risk.

"With this disease, unfortunately there is a lot of stigma attached to it," Quarles said. "We as a community, we have to do a better job of wanting to talk about this and being open to having a conversation about it." Quarles is based in Prince

George's County, while Boyd-Moore operates primarily in Southern Maryland. The latter was in charge of last year's Walk to End Alzheimer's in La Plata, which drew more than 700 participants. Boyd-Moore said the outpouring of support showed they have to do more as an organization to support Southern Maryland. The 2018 Charles County walk is in September, but citizens have already raised over \$8,000, according to the Alzheimer's Association fundraising tracker.

Quarles opened by dispelling many of the myths associated with the disease, like how age is the primary risk factor, not genetics. The frequency is higher among women, but this is mostly due to females living longer than males. Memory loss or decreased cognitive function does not necessarily signal Alzheimer's or other types of dementia, which is why it's important to make a clear distinction between the disease and the typical aging process.

"Not only are we physically



STAFF PHOTO BY CHARLIE WRIGHT

Nancy Quarles of the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter details the 10 signs of the disease during a presentation at Waldorf West library on Tuesday.

aging, but our brains are also aging," Quarles said. "We may process things a little bit differently. Having a harder time remembering something is very different from having a form of dementia like Alzheimer's."

In a similar vein, proper physical conditioning can improve, or at least preserve, mental capabilities even as one grows older. Quarles explained exercise and activity helps to maintain brain function, as well as a nutritious diet. Conversely,

health concerns like diabetes, damages to the heart and serious head injuries increase the risk of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia.

"Good brain health really comes from a healthy body," Quarles said. "It's really important how we treat our bodies and what we do to our bodies."

The warning signs may seem obvious when considered in a vacuum, but can be subtle and hard to pick up when dealing with a close relative or friend. Memo-

ry changes or problem-solving difficulties are red flags, along with struggles completing once-familiar tasks. Confusion with time and place or in conversation is a common indication of dementia, along with misplacing items or using poor judgment with finances. Internal changes like withdrawal from work or shifts in mood and personality may also signal the disease.

Action is the next step if any of these signs are present. Though there is no cure for Alzheimer's, treatment and medication can slow its effects and provide a fruitful life for the patient. Friends and family who notice any of these changes are encouraged to act immediately.

"You have to talk with people about what has happened, what you're experiencing or seeing or thinking," Quarles said. "And then really important, a visit to a doctor. By all means, go to a doctor if any of those 10 signs are happening. Getting the right treatment as soon as possible is really crucial."

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# Sagepoint representatives receptive to novel zoning designation

By CHARLIE WRIGHT  
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La Plata town staff and Sagepoint Senior Living Services have reached mutual agreement in a rezoning for the upcoming campus expansion, which they shared with the town council at Monday's work session.

Both sides have settled on the relatively new Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCX) Zone, which was developed in 2015. The staff had enlisted the La Plata Planning Commission to come up with a zone that "was intended to provide more flexibility than our single-use zones and other existing zones,"

according to a memorandum from the planning department cited by Director of Planning Jeremy Hurlbutt.

The Sagepoint property is currently designated as Central Business Transition, but that zoning has hamstrung developers as the group attempts to grow the operation. Sagepoint is a product of the Davis Corporation annexation agreement, which has resulted in limitations on several projects and required a trio of amendments. The group has been working with town staff for the past few months searching for the most beneficial coding change, finally agreeing

on NCX.

"For the purpose of moving things forward, I think we're gonna go ahead with what you have," said architect Ron Litten of R.L. Litten & Associates Architects, representing Sagepoint with board of directors chairwoman Carolyn Core.

That the sides opted for NCX is somewhat unique, as the three-year-old specification isn't typically used for this kind of project. Its purpose was to provide leniency as far as what could be built on the property to allow for adjustments with surroundings, but also strict dimensional requirements.

"Part of the struggle

from the staff's perspective was the planning commission had been working with them and really instructed the staff to create this zone," Hurlbutt said. "And initially the intention of the zone, which is detailed in that first memo, was really not to assign to anything interior to the town, it was a little bit more at re-development and on the periphery in the growth area."

Though helpful in the short-term, NCX may not be the final answer to this zoning dilemma. Both the town staff and Sagepoint were eager to progress through these discussions in order to contin-

ue with the process, but Litten was skeptical as to whether the designation would hold for the duration of the renovations.

"NCX is probably the best zone that's in the ordinance now," Litten said. "But we probably want to take a look at it down the road as we get into the Comprehensive Plan and as we see what's happening with properties in town that maybe have similar characteristics."

Following the Sagepoint update, Fred Sussman of Council Baradel law firm joined the council to review changes to the ethics code. The attorney went over the new aspects of the ethics ordinance that

would be required of the town, which he said were necessary "for consistency with changes made to the state ethics clause in 2017."

The differences were not exactly major, most of them concerning lobbying, redacting certain info in financial disclosures and conflicts of interest. Sussman explained that he was present to answer any questions about the ethics code, but that most of the changes were geared toward larger entities where lobbying and other influential practices are more prevalent.

"Overall, it really doesn't affect us," concluded Mayor Jeannine James.

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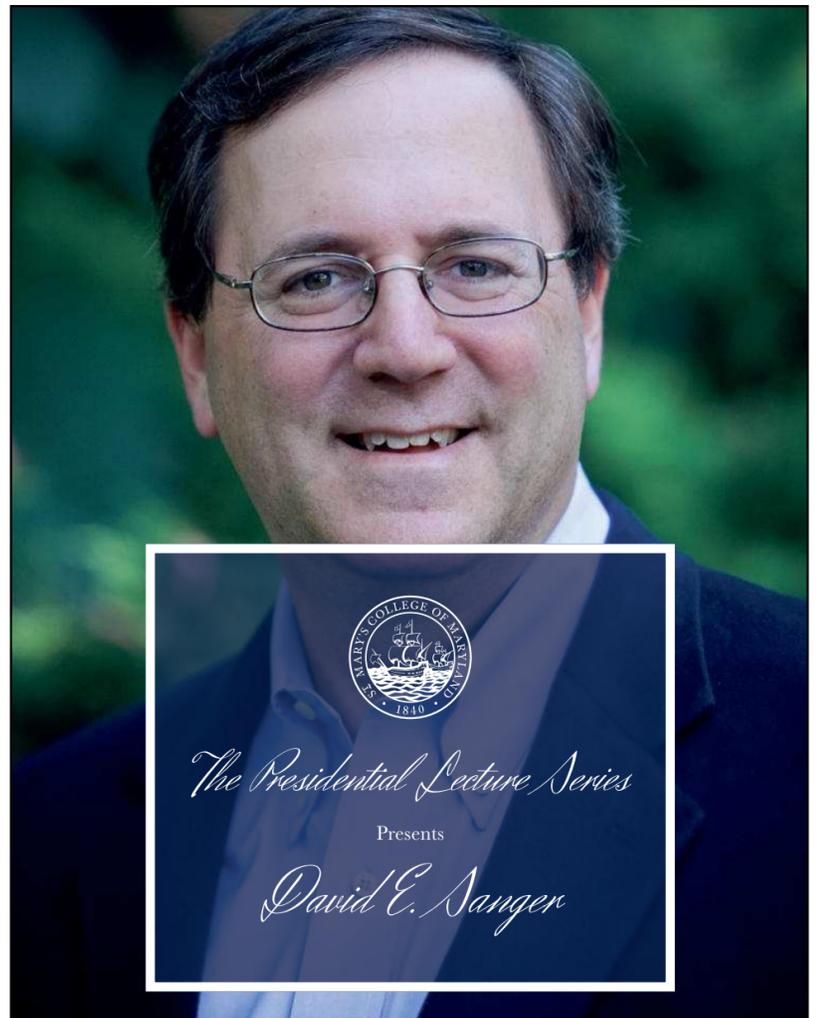
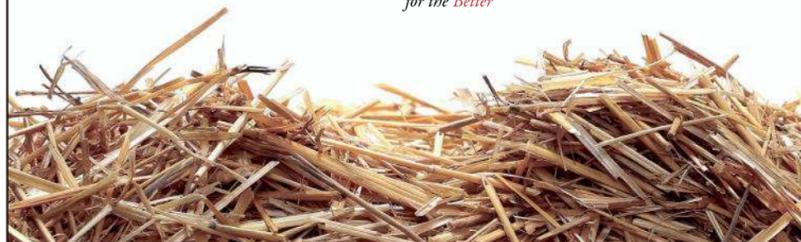


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