



November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month.

Back in **November** 1983, President Ronald Reagan designated **November** as National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. At the time, fewer than 2 million Americans had Alzheimer's; today, the number of people with the disease has soared to nearly 5.4 million. Alzheimer's is the 6th leading cause of death in the US.

People can live with this disease for 8 - 20 years with the help of 16 million Americans who provide un-paid care for individuals living with Alzheimer's or another dementia. Learn how you can provide "respite" relief from the caregiving role for these caregivers.

As you know President Reagan also struggled with this disease "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life," he wrote in a letter addressed to his "Fellow Americans," dated November 5, 1994. The letter continued with "In opening our hearts, we hope this might promote greater awareness of this condition." "Perhaps it will encourage a clearer understanding of the individuals and families who are affected by it."

Not every family will have the resources that President Reagan's family had. GEM, with your help, can add support and resources for these families.

GEM recognizes National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness month by inviting the general public and especially the faith community to be proactive and understand the scale of Alzheimer's and related dementias among the U.S. population, as well as bring new enlightened care options for those affected. GEM invites you to help us "Reduce Stigma by Increasing Knowledge." Delana Phillips, MD said "it takes more than love and good intentions to care for a person living with dementia!"

GEM Day Services, Inc. supported by a grant from the Outer Banks Community Foundation has developed a 60 minute program to share current knowledge, and meaningful ways a faith based outreach program can improve their support and enhance their care of elders struggling with dementia and their families and friends!