



## Mission

GEM Adult Day Services, Inc. is a non-profit locally-based program that is working throughout Dare & Currituck Counties to alter the impact of dementia. The organization’s goal is to change awareness, attitudes and behaviors with a primary emphasis on promoting best practices for training, education and care.

## Programs



**Harmony Café** is a place where seniors with mild cognitive impairment, individuals who are concerned about their own memory loss, or family members and caregivers for persons

with a diagnosis may practice memory and communication skills in a safe, supportive, and engaging environment.

**Meaningful Days** provides a familiar, consistent program of activities for the care recipient while giving the care partner five hours to lunch with a friend, keep an appointment, run errands, take a nap, read a book, or just sit on the beach. Meanwhile, program participants are taking part in activities designed to maintain and/or strengthen their current abilities and state of mind.

**Art Classes** GEM partners with the Dare County Arts Council to provide weekly classes presented by local artists during the winter months, the classes are without cost to the participants.

**GEM’s Annual Candle Lighting** in November began in 2006 to “Honor, Remember & Care” for our friends and families encountering dementia.

**Caring with Love and Expertise** a class offered through COA for individuals interested in learning the Best Practices in Care for individuals experiencing Alz or a related dementia.

## Dementia Focused Care Management

We will act as a “professional relative” and help families and seniors identify areas of concern, and then work with that family and individual to create a senior care plan that can help give caregivers, family members and seniors’ peace of mind.

## Vision

GEM’s Vision is to deliver effective and loving support for people with early to moderate memory loss by sharing our expertise with training, education and tangible support for community/church friends, family caregivers and the individuals living with dementia in our community.

## GEM Affiliations

- Alzheimer’s Association
- Alzheimer’s Foundation of America
- Southern Gerontological Society
- Community Coordinating Council
- Community Services Collaborative
- Dare County Arts Council
- Dare County Center Task Force
- Dementia Alliance
- First Flight Lions Club
- Healthy Carolinians of the Outer Banks
- Lifespan Respite Advisory Team
- NC Center for Non-Profits
- NC Respite Coalition
- Outer Banks Dementia Friendly Coalition
- Dementia Action Alliance Arts Group
- Percolator Memory Café Network



# 2019 GEM ANNUAL REPORT 8/2020



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,  
GEM Adult Day Services, Inc. is a community-based nonprofit organization providing leadership in dementia care on the Outer Banks since 1997. We are dedicated to offering a positive and supportive environment for adults with memory loss, physical and mental disabilities and those who will benefit from socialization as well as their care partners, family, friends and neighbors. We provide individual care management even before a formal diagnosis of dementia and on-going through all stages of the disease. We offer programs that bring together those who struggle with dementia along with their friends and family with the goal of improving our clients' quality of life. They incorporate art, crafts, music, modest exercise, meal preparation, and socialization. These programs include: Meaningful Days, a Group respite program since 2018; monthly Harmony Cafes since 2016; Art classes since 2006; educational events since the late 1990's. Programs are held at The Dare County Center, The Baum Senior Center, The Arts Council, Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church and our Office in Southern Shores. Caregivers, family members, neighbors, friends—each group has a stake in learning about memory care and how to foster a sense of normalcy for those who still “got a lot o’ livin’ to do.” We teach caregivers skills to improve their interactions with loved ones. We also provide focused training to professional caregivers to improve their delivery of respectful and dignified care. GEM offers educational opportunities for families and other interested members in our community. Our mission is to modify the impact of memory loss and/or cognitive impairment on caregivers and families. by education to increase their understanding and empathy. We promote the best practices of training, education, and care

built upon the latest research findings of person centered care. At GEM our goal is simple; to provide meaningful days and a better quality of life to our clients and their friends. Our skilled team of employees and volunteers devoted 2,454 hours to the effort serving over 100 families last year.

GEM has consulted, coached, loved and entertained for over 22 years. Until there's a cure, GEM provides the CARE!

Sincerely,

**GAIL SONNESSO**

MS, GCM, AFA Partner in Care  
Founder & Executive Director

*“Gail Sonnesso and G.E.M. have done so much for dementia patients and their caregivers on the Outer Banks.”*

-Noel G. Preston, Rear Admiral, USN

*“...What GEM has provided me is a window into a world I had been both reluctant and ill-equipped to enter as well as additional tools to assist me in navigating that world's thoroughfares. Repetition, compassion, routine, and caregiver support are mainstays of that world. GEM and the local organizations co-hosting its activities affirm these values for Dare and Currituck residents' day in and day out.”*

Elaine "Lainie" Walls Reed, Ph.D.

*“Gail With your energy, imagination and tender loving concern, you give older kids so much more than “Day Care”—YOU give them the kind of security and self-esteem that really makes a difference—Thank you for being a special part of Ann's life!”*

Allyson Bristow, Ann, Katy and Gregg Bell

*“... I feel that the GEM program is an excellent asset to our community, not only for those with Alzheimer's and dementia but also f or the caregivers. There is not another program like this...Quite an asset to our Community.” Tina Tice*



# 2019 GEM ANNUAL REPORT 8/2020

## Program Impact

Total Events: 62  
Total Attendance: 704  
Total Volunteer Hours: 2,454.5

### Harmony Café

Number of Events: 21  
Number of Participants: 98  
Number of Volunteer Hours: 1,397.5

### Art Classes

Number of Events: 12  
Number of Participants: 51  
Number of Volunteer Hours: 242

### Meaningful Days

Number of Events: 29  
Number of Participants: 131  
Number of Volunteer Hours: 815

### Total:

#### Combined figures for all 3 programs:

Participants: 280  
Caregivers: 149  
Board Members: 213  
Paid Staff (Meaningful Days): 62  
Total volunteer hours: 2,454.5

## Leadership

Executive Director Gail Sonnesso, MS, GEM founder and executive director  
Staff- Ana Figiel, CNA  
GEM gratefully acknowledges the technical support of Roger Pfendler and Website design & maintenance by Susan Pfaff

## 2019 Board of Directors

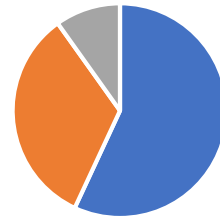
Angelo Sonnesso, MA, MS, President  
Charles Daly, M. Div. Board Chairman  
Merry Mendelson, MEd, Secretary  
Ron DeVeau, JD, Treasurer  
Terry Blocher  
Rose Clark  
Susan Darling  
Cathy Pfendler, RN  
Rosalind Pugh

## Attendance



■ Participants   ■ Caregivers  
■ Board Members   ■ Paid Staff

## Volunteer Hours



■ Harmony Café   ■ Meaningful Days  
■ Art Classes

We are grateful for the support of the Dare County Arts Council and the Dare County Center for hosting our programs. A special thank you to Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church as our host for Harmony Café and Meaningful Days

## Board Emeriti

Delana Phillips, MD  
Jean Basnight  
Luanne Hege  
Mary Ellen Hawthorne  
Nancy Kosanovich, NP  
Oscar Northern  
Rachel Besancon, RN  
Rev. George Smith  
Susan Firman, RN  
Val Cummings  
Vera Berg



# 2019 GEM ANNUAL REPORT 8/2020

## Community Support

### **Donors**

Allyson Bristow  
 Andrew Darling  
 Baum Senior Center  
 Carol Ann & the Jolly Roger  
 Cathy Pfendler  
 Chip Payne  
 Christie McEwan  
 Currituck Dare Community Foundation  
 East Coast Caregivers  
 Elaine Reed  
 First Flight Cruisers  
 Fraternal Order of Eagles #4506  
 Gary Smith  
 Gregg Bell  
 Island Pharmacy  
 League of Women Voters  
 Margie Williams  
 Mary Blanch & Boyce Harwell  
 Mary Lambert  
 Monica Thibodeau  
 Morgan Mason  
 Network for Good  
 Outer Banks Association of Realtors  
 Outer Banks Woman's Club  
 Pirates Cove Billfish Tournament, Inc.  
 Roe Fickik  
 Roger Pfendler  
 Ron DeVeau  
 Sara Munson  
 Steve Yaccarino  
 Susan Darling  
 Noel Preston ~ Susan Preston Memorial Fund

### **In Kind Donors**

All Saints Church  
 Amanda Conner  
 Barbara Hanft  
 Becky Watson  
 Bev Jones  
 Black Pelican  
 Captains Crew  
 Cathy & Roger Pfendler  
 Coastland Times  
 Colington Methodist Church  
 Community Church  
 Dare County Art's Council  
 Dare County Center  
 Debbie Zeigler  
 Dowdy & Osborne LLP  
 Friends of Youth  
 Holy Redeemer by the Sea  
 Interfaith Community Outreach  
 Jason Woolard, Lead minister  
 Just Play'n Dixieland  
 Karen Potter  
 Kaye White  
 Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church  
 Lainie Reed  
 Lib Fearing  
 Lisa Branick & Lloyd Minerich  
 Lost Colony Choir

Luanne & Harry Hege  
 Mako Mike's  
 Mary Bryson  
 Mary Pendill  
 Mike Kelly  
 Chandra of Mommy & Me  
 My Coastal Home  
 Mona & Tina Tice  
 Mt. Carmel Methodist Church  
 Natalie Drummond  
 Nature Out Loud  
 Nick Hodsdon & Wendy Boone  
 Lisa Brickhouse-Davis  
 Our Ladies by the Sea  
 Outer Banks Community Foundation  
 Outer Banks Homecare  
 Outer Banks Hospital  
 The Freedman's Colony  
 Outer Banks Presbyterian Church  
 Outer Banks Choir  
 Patty Privett  
 Peggy Bryson  
 Pig Man's BBQ  
 Rev. Colin Snider  
 Rev. Jody Moore  
 Rev. Keith Dey  
 Riff Tides  
 All Saints Servant Ministry  
 Sunrise Church of Christ  
 Sue Waters  
 Summer Copland  
 Susan Darling  
 Susan Pfaff  
 Unitarian Universalist Church  
 Vickie Schreffler

### **Dare County Arts Council Artists**

Chris Sawin, Executive Director  
 Laura Howard, coordinator  
 Adele Castillo  
 Barbara Hanft  
 Carol Jones  
 Carolina Coto  
 David Huff  
 Julie Moyer  
 Eileen Tulner  
 Emily Holmes  
 Faye Davis  
 Gay Tillett  
 Ginny Flowers  
 Harry Meraklis  
 Holly Nettles  
 Jack & Marcia Horst  
 James Melvin  
 Judith Saunders  
 Judy Bailey  
 Kathy Rose  
 Mary Remer  
 Peggy Saporito  
 Sue Freeman  
 Susan Pfaff