



## **Uplifting services offered during pandemic**

*By Ellen Waldman*

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With everyone doing their best to remain safe and healthy through this medical crisis, I wanted to share some uplifting services and ideas from Ashland that show our collective good hearts.

When taking a walk through my neighborhood, I ran across some expressions of gratitude and hope. Someone had written a thank you note and placed it on the lid of their trash can saying, "Thank you for providing this service during the crisis." In another driveway, someone wrote in chalk, "This too shall pass. Stay strong. Breathe." There was even this quote from Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

On a day when there was so much uncertainty, reading those words made a big difference for me.

Ashland Mayor John Stromberg sent out an email urging citizens to "Stay Home, Save Lives" ([www.ashland.or.us/news.asp?newsID=4612](http://www.ashland.or.us/news.asp?newsID=4612)). I want to point out the part about the "neighbors helping neighbors" campaign. It's a list of things we can do to feel connected to one another and help our community even though we're mostly staying at home.

Speaking of neighbors, here's another wonderful Ashland program: "We Are Connecting Neighbors When Our Community Needs it the Most." To avoid going out means getting help with groceries and errands from neighbors who are at lower risk until the emergency passes. The city has partnered with Adopt a Neighbor Ashland to promote connections. If you can you use some help with shopping and errands or can offer to help your neighbor, sign up at [www.adoptneighbor.org](http://www.adoptneighbor.org). People who do not have internet access can sign up by calling 541-552-2500.

Here's a great idea from the Ashland Senior Center called the Senior Phone Buddy Program. If you would like to be matched to another senior "buddy" for check-ins and socializing during this time of social distancing, call 541-488-5342.

Besides connecting, we all need to stay physically active. The Ashland Family YMCA ([www.ashlandymca.org/News.asp?NewsID=604](http://www.ashlandymca.org/News.asp?NewsID=604)) is offering information called "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" for the community, not just members. They have at least 28 online workout videos, and who doesn't need a workout these days?

Looking beyond Ashland, here are some other ideas that might help.

If you're at home with someone who's been diagnosed with any form of cognitive impairment (it doesn't have to be Alzheimer's), look at these services. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America (<https://alzfdn.org/coronavirus/>) has a new helpline, the Coronavirus Information for Alzheimer's Caregivers, 866-232-8484. The helpline provides assistance with questions relating to Alzheimer's disease and caregiver support. The site also has online classes and programs.

The Alzheimer's Association ([www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)) also has a 24-hour helpline, 800-272-3900. Its site includes tips for dealing with the COVID-19 virus at home.

Staying at home safely means that people who live alone might need help to remember to take their medications. This service can help. <https://pillreminderservice.com/>. There's a fee, but if this is all it takes to never miss a medication, then it's certainly worth it.

Here's one more addition to this list. Many people are asking themselves questions like, "Should I bring my loved one home from their facility, or should I place them in a facility now? How do I continue to care for myself as the full-time caregiver of someone with dementia? Do I have all my correct documents in place?"

If you have questions on your mind, and until this crisis passes, I am here for you in a new way. You can send me an email or call me (contact info is on my website) for a free, brief conversation with you.

In Ashland, let's continue to spend our time helping and acknowledging our neighbors. It just makes the day look a whole lot sunnier.