



# The Renaissance of Fox Valley MEMORY PROJECT

BY JILL H. GRAMBOW

Fox Valley Memory Project (FVMP) is celebrating its rebirth! Originally operated as a program with Lutheran Social Services, FVMP provides activities and resources for those with forms of dementia and memory loss. FVMP applied to be an independent nonprofit agency and received approval as such in August. The new designation also brings with it a new full-time executive director, Jill H. Grambow; new office space at Goodwill Community Campus on Appleton Road in Menasha; and a new FVMP logo. However, many things about FVMP remain the same.

The vision of FVMP is to ease the burden of dementia and memory loss by providing support and resources throughout the Fox Valley

region. The bread and butter of programming continues to focus on opportunities for social connections and community engagement.

- The most notable social activity is the Memory Café. There are nine FVMP cafés per month located throughout Appleton, Kaukauna, Kimberly, Menasha, Neenah, and New London. Cafés take place in community locations and are facilitated by a team of volunteers with experience in recreation/adult programs. The cafés each have a theme for the month and include a variety of activities, from games and projects to guest speakers, learning experiences, conversation, laughter, and refreshments. It's a casual atmosphere where those

with memory loss can enjoy camaraderie and feel comfortable among friends.

- Other social activities include a monthly dinner at a local restaurant as well as meet ups in the community. Many friendships are built among participants, and they enjoy getting together in casual settings throughout the Fox Valley. FVMP schedules and advertises meet ups in their newsletter. FVMP friends get together at outings, such as music programs in parks, local plays and performances, museum and art programs, and other area events.
- On a Positive Note chorus is another delightful opportunity. The chorus was originally directed

by the talented Frank G. Rippl. Members practice together once per week and perform at local events and community celebrations. No formal experience is required—only a love for singing.

- There are four unique day-long bus trips offered each year. The 2018 bus trips featured travels to Sheboygan's Kohler Art Center, a boating excursion in Waupaca, Door County adventures, and exploring the Neville Public Museum in Green Bay. Each bus trip includes additional stops along the way as well as lunch and snacks.

All activities are shared experiences; care partners and those with memory loss participate together. A regular FVMP participant recently shared her enthusiasm for the rebirth. "I am really happy for the program and for all of us who count on it. These are my friends now, and coming here with mom is good for both of us. Coming to a café where people know what you are dealing with...well, it is a relief to walk in the door."

Call us at (920) 225-1711 or visit [foxvalleymemoryproject.org](http://foxvalleymemoryproject.org) for the monthly activity information. You can also find Fox Valley Memory Project on Facebook.

*Photographs provided by Fox Valley Memory Project.*

*Jill H. Grambow is the executive director for Fox Valley Memory Project. She has an associate degree in natural resources, bachelor's degree in clinical psychology, and graduate studies in organizational change leadership. She has nonprofit experience and spent the last 12 years with Menasha Schools leading a department that operates youth and family programs.*



## DEMENTIA FRIENDLY

### DEMENTIA FRIENDLY FOND DU LAC

151 E. First St., Fond du Lac 54935  
(920) 322-3632

[dementiafriendlyfdl.com](http://dementiafriendlyfdl.com)

As a goal to make the Fond du Lac County a dementia-friendly community, we plan to work with area businesses to provide employees with specialized training to help them work with customers that may have dementia. Once a local business has gone through the training with their employees, they receive a Purple Angel decal—an international sign that a business is dementia friendly.

FOX VALLEY  
MEMORY PROJECT

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## PROGRAMS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DEMENTIA ISSUES

### FOX VALLEY MEMORY PROJECT

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The Fox Valley Memory Project offers programs to improve quality of life for persons with dementia. Our vision for living well with dementia includes memory cafés, our memory loss resource center, community education, a memory assessment center, and in-home coaching.

