

Alzheimer's Association Marks June as Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Six Things People Living with Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementia Want You to Know.

This June, during Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month, the Alzheimer's Association - Western Carolina Chapter and the Alzheimer's Association - Eastern North Carolina Chapter are revealing insights from people living with early-stage dementia and what they wish others knew about living with Alzheimer's and other dementia. Many Americans struggle with what to say and do when a family member, friend, co-worker or neighbor is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another dementia. The shock of someone revealing a dementia diagnosis can leave many at a loss for how to engage. Efforts to be supportive can be dampened by concerns of saying or doing the wrong thing. Worse, not knowing what to say or do, some individuals distance themselves from diagnosed individuals, further deepening the sadness, stigma and isolation people living with Alzheimer's and dementia can experience in the wake of a diagnosis.

The Alzheimer's Association recently asked those living with early-stage Alzheimer's and other dementia what they want others to know about living with disease. Here are six things they shared:

- 1) My Alzheimer's diagnosis does not define me. Although an Alzheimer's diagnosis is life changing, many living with the disease say their diagnosis does not change who they are. Many diagnosed individuals say they want to continue doing the activities they enjoy for as long as possible and stay engaged with family and friends.
- 2) If you want to know how I am doing, just ask me. The sudden change in how others communicate with someone recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia is a frustrating experience for many living with the disease. Many individuals say it can be upsetting when family and friends only check on the person through a spouse or an adult child. They say avoiding or side-stepping direct communication only makes them feel more isolated and alone.
- 3) Yes, younger people can have dementia. While the vast majority of Americans affected by Alzheimer's and other dementia are age 65 and older, the disease can affect younger individuals. Those diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's (before age 65) say it is important for others to avoid the common misconception that Alzheimer's and other dementia only affects older people and to take cognitive concerns seriously at any age.
- 4) Please don't debate my diagnosis or tell me I don't look like I have Alzheimer's. While family members and friends may be well-intended in attempting to dismiss an Alzheimer's diagnosis, many living with the disease say such responses can be offensive. If someone says they have been diagnosed with dementia, take them at their word.
- 5) Understand sometimes my words and actions are not me, it's my disease. As Alzheimer's disease and other dementia progresses, individuals can experience a wide range of disease-related behaviors, including anxiety, aggression and confusion. Diagnosed individuals say it's important for others to recognize disease-related symptoms, so they are better prepared to support the person and navigate communication and behavioral challenges.
- 6) An Alzheimer's diagnosis does not mean my life is over. Earlier detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease and other dementia is enabling diagnosed individuals more time to plan their futures and prioritize doing the things most important to them. Many people living with early-stage Alzheimer's and dementia say they want to continue living active, fulfilling lives for as long as possible.

"The stigma surrounding Alzheimer's and other dementia is due in large part to a lack of understanding of the disease," said Katherine L. Lambert, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association - Western Carolina Chapter. "These personal insights from people living with early-stage dementia highlight common disease-related stigmas and provide valuable guidance for improving how North Carolina residents can support and engage these individuals."

During Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month in June, the Alzheimer's Association encourages everyone to learn more about disease-related challenges facing those living with Alzheimer's and other dementia. Educating yourself and others about the disease is one of the best ways to reduce stigma and misperceptions. The Alzheimer's Association offers guidance for navigating every stage of the disease. The Association's Live Well series provides tips to help early-stage individuals live their best lives. For other disease-related information and resources, visit alz.org.

This program supports the 180,000 North Carolinians living with Alzheimer's and their 356,000 caregivers.

"Warning Signs of Alzheimer's" - will take place on June 30 from 6-7 p.m. Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias cause memory, thinking and behavior problems that interfere with daily living. Alzheimer's experts will share how to recognize common signs of the disease; how to approach someone about memory concerns; the importance of early detection; benefits of diagnosis; possible tests and assessments for the diagnostic process and Alzheimer's Association resources.

Additional information on educational programs and other care and support resources or how to get involved with the Association, can be found by visiting the Alzheimer's Association - Western Carolina Chapter at: act.alz.org/ncmonthlyprograms or by calling our 24/7 Helpline (800.272.3900).

Additional Facts and Figures: (alz.org/facts)

- An estimated 6.5 million Americans age 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's dementia, including 180,000 North Carolina residents, a number estimated to grow to as many as 210,000 by 2025.
- Nationally, more than 11 million caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. In North Carolina, 356,000 caregivers provide a total of 514 million hours of unpaid care, valued at a total of \$7.3 billion.
- One in three seniors dies with Alzheimer's or other dementia.
- Nearly two-thirds of those with Alzheimer's - 3.9 million - are women.
- Older non-Hispanic Blacks and Hispanic Americans are disproportionately more likely than older whites to have Alzheimer's or other dementias.



Mrs. Guadalupe "Lupe" Juarez Hildreth

On Sunday, June 12, 2022, Mrs. Guadalupe "Lupe" Juarez Hildreth, 86, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother passed away peacefully with her family by her side.

Funeral services were held on Friday, June 17, 2022, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Wadesboro. Interment followed in Bethlehem Cemetery in Ansonville. Father Fidel Melo officiated.

The family received friends on Thursday evening, June 16, 2022, at Edwards Funeral Home in Norwood.

Lupe was born November 10, 1935, to the late Francisco and Maria Iglesias Juarez in San Angelo, Texas. Throughout her adult life she worked in several different job capacities, always helping others and always learning something new. Her favorite job was being an Interpreter at the Anson County Courthouse and the Anson County Health Department. She was able to help others using her bilingual skills to translate. Lupe was a lifelong catholic and was a faithful member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church for 60 years, where she served as a greeter as long as she could drive.

Lupe loved her family and considered them her greatest accomplishment. She was a wonderful, loving and compassionate mother who cared very deeply for her family. She was the foundation of her family through and through.

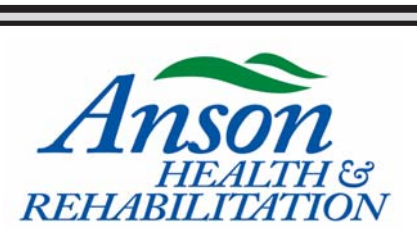
Lupe was a lady of great faith. She loved the Lord and believed that we should always trust in God with all our heart. She always expressed how God loves everybody and we should always treat others with kindness.

She was a strong person with a big heart. She was a "people" person. She loved talking to and meeting new people. She enjoyed her social time with her friends, eating out and attending the Red Hat Club meetings. She will always be remembered for her sweet smile and loving personality. When departing from close friends and family members she would always say, "I love you the most, because I'm the oldest." She will be missed.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of nearly 60 years, Bennett Covington "Chuck" Hildreth; siblings, Odilia Cruz, Francisco Juarez, Jr., Alvaro Juarez, Margaret Andros, Josephina Ramirez, Manuel Juarez, Francisca Cruz, Caroline Torres and Ramona Moreno.

Those left to cherish her memory are her daughters, Yvonne Randall (Kerry) and Allison Martin (Ben) of Ansonville; grandsons, Matthew Randall (Tiffany) and Eli Randall (Jordan); and great grandchildren, Evan, Caleb, Eason, Madelyn, Emma and Jada.

Memorials may be made to: Bethlehem Cemetery, c/o Rev. Robert Burr, 1287 Dickie Little Road, Wadesboro, NC 28170.



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