

Carers Careline

providing support for unpaid carers

Newsletter



Just before our last newsletter came out, the mother of one of our carers celebrated her 100th birthday. Roma Laboda, who is believed to be the oldest Polish resident in Redditch, turned 100 on August 1st. She celebrated with a telegram from the King, a bouquet of flowers from the WAAF, with whom she served in her early 20s, and a party in the garden with family and friends. A beautiful cake was gifted by Piotr and Agnieszka who run Olawa, the local artisan bakery in the centre of town. We know from Chris, her daughter, that she had a fabulous day of celebrations and we

wish her every joy in her hundred and first year!

Many of you will know Chris, from some of our events and get-togethers. Chris registered with Carers Careline over 13 years ago after taking on the role of caring for her mum. She told us, 'Thank goodness for Carers Careline's support for the past 13 years! It's great that there is such an organisation in our local community, providing unpaid carers with such amazing support that is absolutely priceless!' Chris's caring journey continues and we are only too happy to be supporting her in it.



(Roma in front of the Church Green)

Another carer on that journey who has been caring for her husband for over 15 years, which is when she first had a carer assessment. Doing what carers do, she has struggled on, with a bit of help from her daughters when disasters have happened and, in fact, in some ways they have all become carers for him. Obviously, over the years, his conditions have deteriorated greatly, but the family have adapted, learned to live with the problems and just got on with it to the best of their ability.

Last week, her husband had a fall when only her daughters were with him and, where normally the three of them would have dealt with it together, they had to call in the Falls Team. The Falls Team's visit triggered a social work response and before she knew what was happening someone turned up at their home to do a new assessment of her husband's needs. This resulted in a whole new package of care being put into place, together with the delivery and installation of many resources that she had not known was available to them. The whole incident has, quite honestly, changed her life for the better!

Our message from this, to you, is – if you have not had a carer's assessment for a long, long time, and you've been adapting without even thinking about it as you've gone along – please think about asking for a new assessment now. If this is you, either phone your carer's Social Worker if they have one, or give us a ring and we'll make a referral to get an assessment set up for you with Worcestershire Association of Carers who deliver the carers assessment on behalf of the Worcestershire County Council. It's so easy to just keep plodding on, taking for granted that this is what you do – and not even knowing that there could be things out there to make a difference. But that is not how it HAS to be.



No one could have prepared us for the successes we have had signposting and promoting this voucher scheme, delivered by Age UK and CAB.

Thanks to our fabulous staff team and volunteers, who have made countless calls, texts and emails to carers to get their permission to refer them, we have hit the £10,000 mark, in fact we've gone over! The new combined total that over 56 carers and those they care for have been awarded through the vouchers now stands at £10,500. Many of our carers have been overwhelmed and over the moon being awarded a little extra cash to help out with the bills, and in some cases using the money for a well deserved treat! One carer who received £225 said "Thank you so much to you all for continuing to encourage us to apply for the vouchers I am thrilled to bits".

AGM This year we will be following a new format. The Board, who are the trustees and members of the charity, will meet for our AGM on 27th November to discuss and sign the annual report and financial accounts. After this meeting, from 12pm we invite carers and those they care for to join us for a consultation with the board members and team with lunch at 1pm. As a carer, your feedback is very important to us and we would like to encourage as many carers as we can to join us to provide us with their thoughts on how the organisation meets the needs of carers and share ideas on how we can improve our programme of services. Please let us know if you would like to attend so we can ensure we have enough food for everyone at lunch. You can call the office or send us a message to let us know by 18th November if you are planning to attend, plus advise us of your dietary requirements.



Check this out when you need transport help!

Bluwave is a local community charity set up to help you get to places you need to be, such as hospital appointments, etc.

All of the drivers are vetted volunteers. You ring Bluwave and tell them your needs and they will find an appropriate driver for you. They will give you the price for your trip and tell you who the driver will be. For example, one carer had a close-to-all-day trip to Kidderminster hospital which cost her £26; her driver sat with her for the waits, assisted her into and out of the car, and negotiated the hospital departments and corridors to get her to where she should be.

The cost is kept down because the drivers are only paid for their mileage. They really do this job from the goodness of their hearts. Your driver will take you, and help you, to your appointment; they will wait with you however long it takes and then help you back to the car and take you to your home.

You will find nice, helpful people whose only interest is to help. Many of them have been, or are, carers themselves and know only too well how pressured and impossible appointments can feel and the cared for. You can call Bluwave on 01527 759650.



Drop-In: Monday-Wednesday 10.30am-12.30pm
Room 1, Ecumenical Centre
Evesham Walk
Redditch, B97 4EX
Call: 01527 66177 Mon-Thurs 10-1.30pm

Email: info@carerscareline.co.uk
Web: www.carerscareline.co.uk
Facebook: carers careline
Instagram: carerscareline
Twitter: @carers careline





The caring journey

There are an estimated 10.1 million* people now, in the UK, who are or have been unpaid carers for members of family, or friends, or the local community, the only conclusion we can come to is that the truth of life is that awful things happen to us and to those we care about. Most probably without any warning. And, in all honesty, let's not beat about the bush here – awful things happen to people we don't care much about or get on with, as well. A lot of those ten and a half million people will have given up their lives to look after somebody they don't even like but feel an obligation towards.

Lucky us, the ones who are caring for a person we love! In some ways it may make the caring a little bit easier – we might not want it but we can't mind too much constantly toileting, washing and dressing, as if they were a baby, the person we love most in all the world. Well, we might mind it, but most of us wouldn't want anyone else to be doing it. How much worse to have to be performing that role for someone you don't get on with.

There's the awful situation of not being able to get out of the house because you can't face the thought of what might happen while your caree is left alone for even minutes. A trip to the pharmacy even, to pick up necessary meds, might give you fifteen minutes of nightmare in your head just imagining the worst. And knowing – or feeling – that the worst will be all your fault.

No wonder then that carers suffer greatly from anxiety and stress. The responsibility of keeping our person alive - let alone content - weighs heavily on our shoulders.

Anxiety is often a way of pre-empting what might happen in order to give us some sense of control. So – imagining the worst gives us some kind of comfort because if it does happen, we've already run through it in our brains. And, mostly, let's be honest, the imagined doesn't happen. That doesn't stop the stress though – the fight or flight response that's responsible for our body re-acting in all sorts of ways so that in the middle of the queue to pick up the meds we want to run out and get home as quickly as possible. The best thing to do is some breathing activity, breathe in for four slowly, breathe out for seven, breathe in for four, breathe out for seven. If we can slow our breathing down, we can get a little bit more control and kick into touch the adrenaline that's fuelling our stress.

Easily said, not so easy to do. Bursting into tears or feeling like we're having a heart attack in the middle of Boots' or Morrison's, or the Kingfisher Centre, is not a rare thing for carers! It's a well-known symptom of the role!

Rather than panicking, what we should be doing is giving ourselves a pat on the back, whoever and wherever we are. We are, each, one of an army of 10.1 million very important people – an army of special carers saving the NHS from absolute oblivion! *Source: Carers UK Carers Week Report 2024

Irene



Carers Connect will be going live in November! We have spoken to many carers who have signed up to join our WhatsApp service to keep carers up to date and informed in real time. If you have told us you would like to join, you will be sent a form to fill in and return in a stamped addressed envelope. Once we receive this, you will be added to the group. If you haven't yet been contacted or have missed us trying and would like to join the group, please give the office a call and we will set this up for you.

The Adventures of the Ladies of Table No. 1 (the Naughty Table)



The Old West & Colorado

How dee, Folks! We parked our Chevy outside the old mining town and walked up the mud and dust road, feeling out of place in our posh frocks. We visited the General Store. Here we bought full western dresses, button-up boots, and large hats with ostrich feathers. Old men sitting about outside the Grand Hotel invited us to share

their moonshine whisky. It didn't take many glasses before we were up on stage in the saloon singing, 'I'm just a gal who can't say no.' The bar tender told us to leave but said he would find us a job if we came back later. You know the rest by now – Hazel gave him a hug and promised to return.

We strolled the town; just as we passed the Pioneer Bank shooting broke out. Suddenly grabbed by the bank robbers – the notorious Covidditte Gang – Irene was taken hostage. There was nothing more to do than to join the Sheriff as he raced out of his office to form a posse. I grabbed a horse from outside the livery stable. It was only then I realised I had never been on horseback. I have only ever ridden donkeys but Irene had to be saved so, holding on for grim death, I followed the Sheriff. The posse tied neckerchiefs over their faces and, with guns blazing, put up a chase. The bandits, who had a bounty on their heads, were soon caught. Irene was saved and we were given a share of the bounty.

Back in town we caught the rickety old train up to the gold mine. Hazel found the minder who had lost his Clementine so she gave him a hug and assured him there would be other ladies in his life. As the train tunnelled underground I cracked my head on the roof. Gold dust and nuggets cascaded down upon us. I had opened up a rich seam as well as my head. Someone shouted, 'Call the Doc,' and he soon appeared and bandaged my wound. You've guessed it – Hazel gave him a hug as payment!

We took our gold to the Assay Office and found that the dust was genuine but the nuggets were only Fool's Gold.

Back at the Saloon the owner was waiting for us. We said that although we were slightly ricker now we had promised to return so here we were. As his dancing girls were otherwise occupied, he said they were cleaning bedrooms, he gave us their dresses and instantly we were performing the Can Can on stage for the rowdiest audience you could imagine. Soon their cheers turned to jeers – shouts of 'Get 'em off!' – meaning us not our clothes – filled the air so, scrambling up from the splits, we dashed backstage and out of the stage door, jumping into a covered wagon to hide. The family were leaving town to meet up with a wagon train. Being richer now, we were able to pay the pioneers to take us to Brighton in Colorado County.

Here, on a mission, we first visited the hospital and bought two cylinders of oxygen and then off to the store we went to buy pork scratchings, knocking on a door which was answered by Alan who was there looking after his dad, Ed, who is Geraldine and Kate's brother. Remembering us from when he visited our lunch club and Table No. 1, he was pleased to see us and asked us to join him for his favourite tea – soft roe on toast. Tasty! As he has been quite poorly we gave him the oxygen, also the pork scratchings which Geraldine had assured us were one of his favourite treats. When it was time to leave, Hazel gave him three hugs, one each for Geraldine and Kate and one for herself. This time Irene and I shared in the hugs but found Ed's long white beard quite tickly.

Heading for the Prestige Equipment Inc, we sighted Parkdale, Brighton's Skate and Board Park. We couldn't resist. It looked so easy. Hazel has boards in her garage at home so knows how to keep her balance. Irene and I preferred skates. Whoops! We caused so much havoc we quickly left. Finding the equipment place closed, we searched their yard and found a small Bobcat. We worked hard and took off the front shovel. After pushing a gold nugget with a note of explanation through the letter box, we climbed into the cab and proceeded on our travels across Route 66 to Las Vegas.

Diary Dates - September 2024

When	Organised by	Activity	Detail	Where
Friday 4th October 1pm	Millcroft Care Home 01527 433411	Fish and Chip Fryday Call the Millcroft team to book—no charge	Join the Millcroft team on the first Friday of the month for free fish and chips.	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close, Redditch B97 6RU
Monday 7th October 10 - 11am	Carers Careline	Care for Coffee? Book with one of the team	Join Nat at Aroma for a catch up and a coffee or cuppa.	Aroma Church Green East B98 8BP
Tuesday 22nd October 10:30-12:30pm	Carers Careline	Creative Writing Group Book with one of the team	If you've never thought of joining the writing group – come and give it a whirl – you might find you love it!	RYCE (REDI Centre) South Street B98 7DQ
Thursday 10th October 10 - 12pm	Older Peoples Forum Redditch	Older People's Forum Services Day	Over 55? Join us and many other local service providers to find out what services and help there is for you in the local community.	Ecumenical Centre
Wednesday 23rd October 11-12 pm	Millcroft Care home 01527 433411	Sing-a-long Call the Haywood Lodge team to book	Come and join the Millcroft team for a great time, The Sing-a-longs put any donations towards Primrose Hospice Charity!	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close, Redditch B97 6RU
Saturday 26th October 10 - 1pm	Repair Cafe	Repair Café	The Repair Café experts will try to fix your items in need of repair. it's a free repair service, spare parts need to be paid for or supplied.	Community House 103 Easemore Road B98 8EY
Monday 28th October 2-3.30 pm	Carers Careline	Bereavement Group No need to book	If you have been, or know someone else who has been bereaved recently this group is for you and them. You do not have to be registered with Carers Careline to attend.	RYCE (REDI Centre) South Street B98 7DQ
Regular weekly classes and events				
Tuesdays October 2:30 pm	Millcroft Care Home 01527 433411	Salsa Call the Millcroft Care team to book—no charge	Salsa fun, everyone welcome!	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close, B97 6RU 1st/8th/15th/22nd/29th
Wednesdays Fortnightly October 10:30 - 1pm	Redditch Stroke Association	Support group Call Ann for any queries 07799 808487	The group meet on Wednesday fortnightly. There is a half hour exercise class incorporated into the group. Anyone can join as long they are a stroke survivor or a carer.	Willow Trees Community Centre B98 9JG 2nd/16th/30th
Wednesdays October 10-11am	Carers Careline	Gentle Keep Fit £3 per session No need to book	Join Sue's keep fit class, gentle exercise that will improve your fitness and enhance your wellbeing.	Ecumenical Centre 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th
Wednesdays October 10 - 12pm	Healthy Worcestershire 01905 928185 or 0800 772 0307	Free activities and topics	A new service to help improve your strength and balance, support your mental health, and provide social activities.	Abbeydale Community Club B98 8JE 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th
Wednesdays October 10 - 12pm	Frhens woodlandelectrical @btinternet.com	Frhens No need to book— donations welcome	A group at the Ecumenical Centre for women who are looking for friendship, a support network and fun activities, especially crafting of all kinds.	Ecumenical Centre 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th
Wednesdays October 11am	Millcroft Care Home 01527 433411	Chatty Café Call the Millcroft team to book—no charge	Pop to the Chatty Café for some company over a cuppa.	Millcroft Care Home Alfrick Close, Redditch B97 6RU 2nd/9th/16th/23rd/30th
Fridays October 10 - 4pm	Emmanuel Church & Community Centre	Friday Warm Welcome No need to book	Enjoy a cooked breakfast from just £3.75. A partnership between Emmanuel Church and charity Disability Support Project (DSP).	6 Evesham Walk, Redditch, B97 4EX 4th/11th/18th/25th

Don't forget our Telephone Support and Counselling services - if you would like additional contact or support, call one of the team on 01527 66177. We can schedule a regular support call, email or text or arrange support with one of our qualified counsellors.

