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FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

NYMC TO WELCOME OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY STUDENTS THIS WINTER AND SPRING

Several times per year, cohorts of occupational therapy students come to New York Memory Center for educational experiences as part of their academic curriculum. Occupational therapy is all about developing, building, and maintaining meaningful activities and connections in everyday life. These are especially important for people affected by memory loss. The partnerships are mutually beneficial for Center members who gain from the students' specialized knowledge, and for the students who learn about maximizing independence and quality of life.

Presently, the Center has collaborations with four schools of occupational therapy across New York City: Columbia University, Yeshiva University, SUNY Downstate, and New York University. This month, the Center welcomes Yeshiva students Mia Gerzberg and Chloe Krasne for a six-week rotation! They are both excited to meet and support the Center community.

The February 2026 program calendar is enclosed!

You can also visit us online at nymemorycenter.org for more details about upcoming activities and events at New York Memory Center! We look forward to seeing you soon!

We will be CLOSED for the Presidents Day holiday on Monday, February 16th.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Audrey Swanson, LMSW



Our annual caregiver satisfaction survey is now live online!

I would like to ask a moment of your time to complete a brief online survey about you and your loved one's experiences with New York Memory Center over the past year. Your feedback helps us continually evaluate and improve our programs and services. The survey is hosted via Google Forms and is anonymous, and should take about five minutes to complete. Please take care not to leave any personally identifying information in any comments you may leave. Thank you in advance for your participation!

Here is the link to the survey:
<https://tinyurl.com/2ut7awb>



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New York Memory Center



Caregiver Topic of the Month: Heart Health



February is often called "Heart Health Month," but for many caregivers, heart health is not something that comes up just once a year. Conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and heart disease are part of daily life, for both caregivers *and* for the people they love. The good news is that supporting heart health does not require big, overwhelming changes. Small, steady steps really do matter.

One of the simplest and most powerful tools for heart health is **movement**. This does not mean strenuous workouts or anything that feels intimidating. Gentle exercise — like stretching, chair-based movement, light walking, or guided group exercise — helps keep blood flowing, supports circulation, and can improve mood and energy. At the Memory Center, our gentle exercise and stretching programs are designed specifically with safety, comfort, and dignity in mind. Even small amounts of regular movement can help support cardiovascular health while also reducing stiffness and promoting relaxation.

Another important piece is **routine**. Hearts like consistency. Regular daily rhythms, such as mealtimes, activity, rest, and sleep, help the body function more smoothly. Caregivers often put themselves last, but keeping a predictable routine can benefit everyone in the household. When caregivers eat regularly, stay hydrated, and take brief movement breaks, they are also caring for their own hearts.

Food choices play a role too, though this does not have to mean rigid rules or giving up everything enjoyable. Simple shifts, such as adding more fruits and vegetables, choosing whole grains when possible, and limiting overly salty or heavily processed foods, can support heart health over time. Shared meals can also be an opportunity for connection and calm, which matters more than we often realize.

It's also worth remembering that **stress affects the heart**. Caregiving can be emotionally demanding, and chronic stress takes a toll on the body. Moments of social connection, laughter, music, and shared activity help reduce stress and support emotional well-being. These moments are not "extras," but rather they are part of caring for the whole person.

Finally, heart health is not about perfection. It is about doing what is realistic and sustainable. Gentle movement, supportive routines, nourishing food, and meaningful connection all add up. Caregivers are already doing so much. Recognizing that everyday choices — and supportive programs like those at the Memory Center — are helping both caregivers and their loved ones stay healthier can be reassuring.

This February, we encourage caregivers to think of heart health not as another task on the list, but as something woven into daily life — one stretch, one shared meal, one supportive moment at a time.



Program Spotlight: Stretch and Move Exercise

While the Memory Center emphasizes overall brain health, we also understand the importance of integrating physical activity into daily life. The Memory Center's programming includes many types of gentle activity approachable to members of all abilities, such as seated arm and leg stretches, creative movement to music, and physical games that encourage moving the body. With careful attention to mobility needs and fall prevention, physical activity is an integral part of well-being.





Upcoming Community Integration Opportunities and Activities

*Most programs listed are tailored for people affected by memory loss and their caregivers.
Advance registration is required for all programs - please check websites for details!*



Met Memory Cafe - Monday February 2nd at 2pm

Enjoy an afternoon of art, activities, and refreshments at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This event is meant to engage people living with dementia in conversations around art, and holding space for people to socialize and connect. The Met is also featuring all-day programing on Saturday, February 7th starting at 12pm to celebrate Lunar New Year - the Year of the Horse.



Arts & Minds at the Studio Museum in Harlem - Tuesday February 3rd at 2pm

Join us for an interactive gallery tour of the Studio Museum in Harlem's exhibition *From Now: A Collection in Context*. This program invites adults with memory disorders and their caregivers to explore new experiences with art. *From Now: A Collection in Context* presents a rich tapestry of Black artistic production, highlighting more than two hundred years of achievements by artists of African descent. The exhibition explores the evolving artistic canon through the diverse interests, practices, and voices of these artists. This tour is free of charge and requires advanced reservation.



JM Journeys at the Jewish Museum – Wednesday February 11th at 2pm

Participants with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and their care partners are invited to join a lively and creative program that encourages personal connections to original works of art and each other. This program will explore portraiture in the Jewish Museum's collection and *Joan Semmel: In the Flesh* through facilitated discussions, multi-sensory experiences, and art making.



Jazz at the American Folk-Art Museum – Wednesday February 18th at 1pm

Enjoy jazz standards from the American Songbook with guitarist Jeff Wurtzel and special guests in The Museum's galleries. This is a popular program so advance registration and arriving early are recommended. Be sure to also check out the Museum's monthly online program "Folk Art Reflections" on the first Thursday of each month.



Brooklyn Botanic Garden - Friday February 20th at 1:30pm

Join us for a special winter-season guided tour of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, followed by a hands-on horticultural activity. Delight in seasonal highlights, connect with nature, and enjoy a sensory experience. This is a leisurely stroll with plenty of stopping opportunities and is wheelchair and walker friendly.



~~SPECIAL LONG ISLAND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS~~

Art in Action at the Parrish Museum - Friday February 20th at 11am (NEW!)

In The Moment at the Long Island Museum - Wednesday February 25th at 2pm (NEW!)



COMING SOON! - Lincoln Center Moments Spring 2026 Calendar!

Are you interested in a community integration opportunity or activity?

Please let us know at New York Memory Center! We can help you learn more about any program or suggestion listed above, and work with you and your caregivers to make arrangements to attend. Call us at 718.499.7701 or ask us in person!

NEW YORK MEMORY CENTER HAPPENINGS

BIRTHDAYS, PHOTOS, and SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Join us in wishing our members
a Happy Birthday this February!

Fred - 27th



**stories IN THE
moment®**



New York Memory Center is excited to welcome back Magda Kaczmarska and Hilary Brown-Istrefi and the **Stories in the Moment** program for 2026! **Stories in the Moment** is an evidence-informed dance, movement and collaborative storytelling program that centers the expressive voices of people living with dementia and care partners, while extending their resources for meaningful communication. Magda and Hilary have several sessions planned with us in early 2026. Pictures above are from their visits last summer!

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
2 <i>Groundhog Day</i> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 INTREPID MUSEUM - STORIES WITHIN (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Famous Places 1:00 BINGO 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	3 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Famous Faces 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Finish the Phrase 1:00 Name That Tune 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	4 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 BROOKLYN MUSIC SCHOOL (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 20 Questions 1:00 Staff Karaoke 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	5 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Conversation Cards 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Ring Toss 1:00 PROGRAM WITH YESHIVA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	6 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 STORIES IN THE MEMONT WITH MAGDA (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Opposites 1:00 Art Activity - Painting 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox
9 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Poetry Appreciation (LC) 12:00 Lunch - PIANO MUSIC 12:30 Rhyme Time 1:00 GUITAR WITH DEBBY 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	10 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Trivia 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Ball Toss 1:00 Table Games and Puzzles 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	11 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 BROOKLYN MUSIC SCHOOL (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Charades 1:00 FOLK ART REFLECTIONS WITH ELIZABETH (LC) 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	12 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Famous Symbols 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Would You Rather? 1:00 PROGRAM WITH YESHIVA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	13 <i>Valentine's Day (14th)</i> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Reminiscing 12:00 Lunch 12:30 What Would You Do? 1:00 ACCORDION WITH ISMAIL 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox
16 CENTER CLOSED PRESIDENTS DAY HOLIDAY 	17 <i>Ramadan begins</i> <i>Lunar New Year, Mardi Gras</i> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Name 10 If We Can 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Balloon Volleyball 1:00 PROGRAM WITH YESHIVA OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	18 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 BROOKLYN MUSIC SCHOOL (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Bean Bag Toss 1:00 Family Feud 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	19 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 JEOPARDY WITH AUDREY (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Trivia 1:00 Staff Karaoke 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	20 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Famous Faces 12:00 Lunch 12:30 A to Z 1:00 GUITAR WITH DEBBY 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Stretch and Jukebox
23 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 ART WORKSHOP WITH THE JEWISH MUSEUM (LC) 12:00 Lunch - PIANO MUSIC 12:30 Hangman / Fill in the Blank 1:00 Sing-Along Songbooks 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	24 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 PERCUSSION WITH DAVID 11:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Anagrams 1:00 Art Activity - Mixed Media 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	25 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 BROOKLYN MUSIC SCHOOL (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Basketball 1:00 ACCORDION WITH ISMAIL 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	26 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 Creative Storytelling / Time Slips (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 Word Grid 1:00 Bowling 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox	27 9:30 Coffee and Conversation 10:30 Stretch and Move Exercise 11:00 STORIES IN THE MEMONT WITH MAGDA (LC) 12:00 Lunch 12:30 MAD LIBS WITH AUDREY 1:00 BINGO 2:00 Gentle Stretching 2:30 Afternoon Snack and Jukebox
		 EARLY-STAGE LOTUS CLUB Programs marked by "LC" <i>Made possible by grant support from the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation</i>	COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES - New York Memory Center will support you in planning to attend community activities you may enjoy. Please ask us and see our monthly newsletter and postings in the Center.	PEER SUPPORT - Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays SPANISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM - Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

