

‘These Ladies Saved My Life’

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Local Man Grateful to AMH Dietitian, Diabetes Educator

ALTON - Roger Brainerd sees no reason to hold anything back in his praise for **Alton Memorial** dietitian **Naomi Ward** and diabetes educator **Lisa James**.

“These two ladies saved my life,” Brainerd says.

Brainerd, like more than 29 million people, has diabetes. For years his diabetes was controlled by oral medication. One day, during an annual visit to Dr. James Ricci, he learned that his diabetes had progressed to the point where he had become insulin dependent.

“I simply did not want to go on insulin – but I had to,” said Brainerd, an Alton resident. “I felt like I had reached a breaking point. I had been busy dying, so I decided to get busy living.”

During the year he was on insulin, Brainerd resolved to take control of his life. Encouraged by dietitian Naomi Ward, he started counting carbs and was able to drop 50 pounds. He also works out with a fitness trainer at Senior Services Plus in Alton and attends meetings of the diabetes support group offered at AMH.

Most importantly, he’s stayed with it. He’s no longer insulin dependent and his enthusiasm for his new lifestyle is contagious. In fact, he was the 2015 Red Strider Ambassador for the American Diabetes Association at its annual “Step Out Walk to Stop Diabetes” last September.

“And you know what the best part is?” Brainerd commented, “I feel better than I have in years.”

For more information about diabetes education at Alton Memorial, call Lisa James at 618-463-7526.