

# Longest Day Fundraiser Provides Local Memory Care Resources

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Today is the summer solstice, but for people in the Alzheimer's community, it's known simply as the Longest Day.

Every year on the summer solstice, the [Alzheimer's Association](#) sponsors its Longest Day fundraiser to encourage donations toward fighting Alzheimer's disease. People

across the country organize their own Longest Day fundraisers and events. [Home Instead Senior Care in Edwardsville](#) invited healthcare agencies to join them in providing information on dementia care and caregiver support.

“I think the one thing that we all are hoping for is a cure,” Nikki Bishop, the owner of Edwardsville’s Home Instead branch, said. “But in the meantime, it’s being able to support each other with patience and compassion.”

This was Home Instead’s second year sponsoring the event, which has grown since last summer. The [Main Street Community Center](#) hosted Home Instead and other agencies from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. A lot of the information was aimed toward professional caregivers or people who have become caregivers to their loved ones with dementia.

Bishop, who had many family members helping with the event, hoped the Longest Day fundraiser encouraged conversations about Alzheimer’s disease while also helping people who have been affected by it.

“That’s been the one special thing for us today. Not only do we want to raise awareness for other people in the community, but it actually hit home we’ve got a client that just came with her daughter,” Bishop said.

Several healthcare and memory care professionals were in attendance. They provided information about their services, ranging from home care to assisted living facilities to hospice care.

Gina Ratermann with [Brightly Senior Living](#) noted that their program is all-inclusive and that rent prices don’t rise as the patient’s level of care increases. They offer assisted living and memory care at their locations in Glen Carbon and Mascoutah, IL, with plans to expand to Columbia, IL soon.

“Do it sooner than later. Ask a lot of questions,” Ratermann advised caregivers and patients who are making decisions about long-term care.

She said that she has known people who have long-term care insurance and wait until the end of their lives to use it, adding that “it’s silly not to” take advantage of necessary resources when they’re available.

Lisa Bergschneider, representing [The Creeks Memory Care Home](#) in Troy, IL, said that caregiver stress and patient safety are two deciding factors for most caregivers who are looking into memory care options.

“If it’s starting to affect you physically or mentally as the caregiver, then you have to do something. But the other piece of it is when your loved one loses their safety awareness,” Bergschneider said. “You don’t want something to happen and you’ve waited too long,”

Other vendors included [Addington Place of Edwardsville](#), [Asbury Village](#) in Godfrey, [Home Instead](#) in Edwardsville and [Morning Glory Home Care](#) in Edwardsville. [American Freedom Benefits](#), an insurance agency in Creve Coeur, MO., was present with information about Medicare. Lynn Rutz also had a table of [Park Lane jewelry](#) available for purchase, with 50% of the day’s proceeds going to the Alzheimer’s Association.

There was also a place to donate to the Alzheimer’s Association, which is the leading organization on Alzheimer’s disease care and research. You can visit the [Alzheimer’s Association website](#) or contact Bishop to donate to the Association.

While the information was beneficial to many caregivers, Bishop hoped the event served a larger purpose.

“It gives us a chance to see them get the support that they need and also be able to enjoy some fellowship,” Bishop said. “The vendors are here to help educate them and just give them a little bit of relief knowing that caregiving is very difficult with someone with dementia.”

To learn more about the Association’s Longest Day fundraiser, click [here](#).