



FOR RELEASE
July 28, 2022

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Region IV Area Agency on Aging & Twin City Players partner to host “Steering into the Skid” on Tuesday, August 9th

A community reception, A short play about memory loss, & A discussion

St. Joseph, Mich. On Tuesday, August 9th from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm, the Region IV Area Agency on Aging and Twin City Players partner to present a free in-person and virtual Remember Project event featuring “Steering into the Skid.” This special program helps family members, caregivers, local businesses, and the broader community be in conversation around dementia and the most well-known form of memory loss, Alzheimer’s Disease. All community members are welcome and encouraged to attend this free program to be held at the Campus for Creative Aging, 2920 Lakeview Avenue, St. Joseph, MI 49085. Doors will open at 5:00 pm for a community reception with light refreshments and the play will begin at 5:30 pm.

The play, “Steering into the Skid”, was written by the husband-wife team of Arnold Johnston and Deborah Ann Percy and published in *The MemoryCare Plays*, a book of three one-act plays compiled and edited by Dr. Margaret A. Noel. “Growing older has led us to think about the effects of aging on ourselves and our relationship,” said the playwrights. “We’ve known friends --- couples --- who have faced Alzheimer’s or other devastating conditions with such dignity, courage, and love that we felt compelled to write about a couple forced to adjust to new demands on their imperfect but loving marriage.”

Audience members meet Tim and Amanda, played by professional actors Jim Pounds and Danette McCarthy. In 12 short scenes, one per month – starting on New Year’s Eve – and all taking place in Tim & Amanda’s SUV, the audience comes to know this loving couple and bear witness to the early progression of dementia. As the months pass, the audience sees the subtle changes and adjustments the couple deals with due to memory loss.

“Our ultimate goal,” said facilitator and actor Danette McCarthy, “is to assist community members and leaders to consider new ways to think about memory loss and to become aware of

local resources that support families who are dealing with a diagnosis of dementia or Alzheimer's Disease.”

This program takes a unique approach to building awareness, sharing information, and inviting authentic community conversations. Audience members come together either in-person at the Campus for Creative Aging (2920 Lakeview Avenue, St. Joseph, MI 49085) or via Zoom, then watch the play together, followed by a facilitated conversation.

“We are excited to be building a local arts and public health partnership with the RIVAAA” said Andrew Glisson, President of Twin City Players Southwest Michigan. “Through bringing the experiences of community members living with dementia or memory loss to the stage we can support greater community awareness, dialogue and action for building an inclusive and thriving community for all.”

“Steering into the Skid” was part of The Remember Project, which toured the lower St. Croix Valley in the fall of 2015. To date, over 300 performances and conversations have taken place to address the isolation and fear associated with dementia. This unique experience uses theater and conversation to learn and make decisions about the future.

In addition to the Region IV Area Agency on Aging and Twin City Players, the program is also supported in partnership with The Ghost Light Theatre and the Berrien Community Foundation. To learn more or register for the play and conversation, please call (269) 982-7748 or simply reserve your free seat through Eventbrite by visiting www.campusforcreativeaging.org .

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Photo: Jim Pounds and Danette McCarthy play the roles of Tim & Amanda in “Steering into the Skid” by Arnold Johnston and Deborah Ann Percy.