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Area lucky to have good programs for older citizens

Our Opinion

Sometimes, in our zeal to help someone important to us - maybe an elderly parent, a spouse, a grandparent or a friend - we overlook programs or services close at hand that could help us do an even better job for that person.

The Adult Day Program at the O'Neill Senior Center is just such a program. It provides much-needed respite to family members or others who give up so much to care for their loved one, often leaving them to feel frustrated, resentful or alone.

It doesn't have to be that way.

At the Adult Day Program, the effort is there to give the participant an appropriate mix of activities and care while giving the caregiver the peace of mind that their loved one is in a safe, nurturing place. It's a program with a proven record of success, and it offers financial assistance to those who may qualify. It's a win-win situation for families.

It's likely more of us will require services like these for a family member in the years to come. According to the Alzheimer's Association of American, Alzheimer's disease strikes an estimated 4.2 million to 5.8 million Americans.

Also consider:

- It is projected that the number of Americans with Alzheimer's disease could more than triple to 16 million by mid-century.
- An estimated one in ten persons over age 65 and nearly half of those 85 or older have Alzheimer's disease.
- It is estimated that one to four family members act as caregivers for each individual with Alzheimer's disease.

There's no question we're getting older. And there's no question that as we age, the need for services will increase. Thankfully, the greater Marietta community has programs like the Adult Day Program at the O'Neill already in place. We just have to take advantage of them.