JAIME'S JOURNAL

Looks like home. Feels like home!

The last trick or treater had not even rung the doorbell and Christmas decorations were already on the store shelves. The final quarter of the year brings so much fun and excitement. Fall is in full swing, which in Florida means we wake up to the low 80s rather than the high 80s. Yep—that's it for fall! Even more, we get to celebrate the holidays. We were happy as pigs in mud to celebrate Halloween—farm style. Cows, pigs, farmers and even a stray deer took over Jaime's. It was a hay bale of a good time for sure! And we will keep the good times rolling as we count our blessings this Thanksgiving and Christmas! You will not want to miss the celebration this holiday season.

TO TRAVEL OR NOT TO TRAVEL

According to some economic experts, Thanksgiving 2024 set a record as the busiest Thanksgiving ever at US airports. AAA estimated more than 3 million traveled through airports across America. Some projections are calling for 2025 to see more travelers. Car travel in 2024 was even busier – an estimated 71 million people hit the roads last year! Holiday travel is stressful before you even leave your home. Then factor in a loved one with dementia and the stress may feel overwhelming. So the question is—to travel or not to travel with your loved one?

If you decide to travel for the holidays, be prepared for some extra planning. Here are some tips to ensure a smoother travel experience for everyone in your party.

1. Do not overload your loved one with too much information. Certainly keep your loved one informed but you do not need to provide too many details, as this can be overwhelming.
2. Avoid peak travel times and be mindful of times when your loved one is at his/her best.
3. Consider accessibility accommodations. Request a wheelchair even if your loved one does not have mobility issues. Airports will be very busy and maneuvering through can be very confusing.
4. Do not schedule connecting flights. If that is not feasible, make sure there is plenty of time in between flights. And don't forget accommodations for those connecting flights.
5. Pack basic medical information and plenty of medications.
6. Don't schedule too many events for your loved one and allow time for rest throughout the trip.
7. When driving, be sure to map out stops so everyone in the car can get well needed breaks.
8. Contemplate traveling on off days—for example, Thanksgiving day is generally a quiet day for travel whereas the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the single busiest day of the year for air and car travel.

Many people feel obligated to include loved ones in all holiday plans. However, this may not be ideal. Think about your loved one's prior holiday routines. If your loved one never traveled, you may not want to start now. In addition, most people with dementia do better with routine and the holidays can be anything but. So if you travel without your loved one, do not feel guilty! There are respite options that will help you and your loved one enjoy the holidays to their fullest. From all of us at Jaime's—we wish you a restful and joyous season!

HOLIDAY FUN AROUND TOWN

Busch Gardens—Christmas Town Nightly

Avalon Aglow
Downtown Wesley Chapel
12/13/25 5—9pm

Zoo Tampa at Lowry Park
Christmas in the Wild—Nightly

Symphony in Lights—Wiregrass
Nightly 6—9 pm on the hour

Waterfront Lights Downtown St Pete—Nightly

Boat parades—various locations and dates

HOLIDAY FUN AT HOME

Mix up some festive cocktails

Have an ugly sweater contest

Binge watch Christmas movies

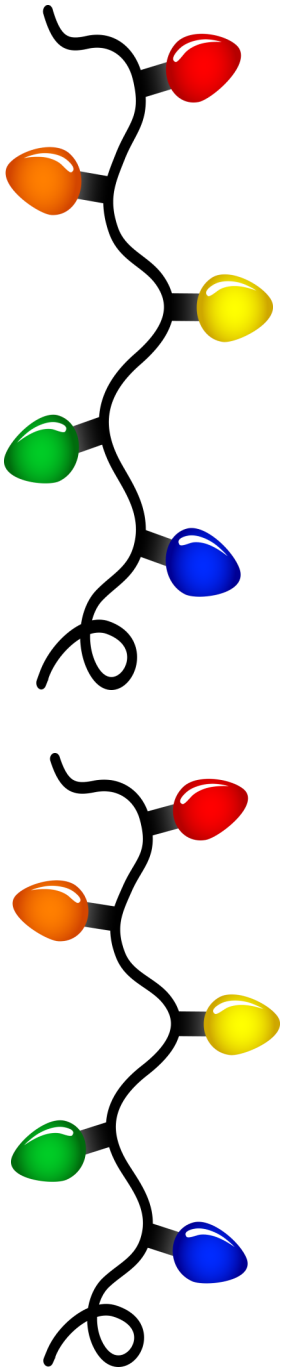
Make homemade ornaments

Take a family pic in your PJs

Read a classic Christmas book

Put on holiday music and dance

Bake your favorite holiday cookies



Stress and the holidays

As if caregivers don't have enough stress on any given day then here come the holidays. The "most wonderful time of the year" can also be dubbed the most stressful time of the year for many, especially those caring for a loved one with dementia. Holiday shopping, meals, in-laws....the list of stressors goes on and on. And that is on top of the stress of caring for a loved one. And, by the way, stress is real. It affects us emotionally and physically. But there are ways to side step stress this holiday season and always.

1. Say no. This may be our favorite but also the most difficult. With so many parties to attend, people to see and gifts to buy, many of us find it hard to say no. Pick the things most precious to you and forego the rest. You will feel much better in the end.
2. Take time for yourself. With so much to do, this may seem hard but you will actually get more done if you take a few minutes for yourself each day.
3. Stick with healthy habits. You cannot possibly say no to that peanut butter fudge but you can nibble versus gorge. Also, make sure you stick to some work out plan. You may not get in as much as you normally do but even 10 minutes of exercise daily can be impactful.
4. Make a budget and stick to it! Many of us find ourselves overspending during the holidays. Your great aunt's sister's brother's uncle will likely not be looking for a gift from you.

JAIME'S PET PROJECT—UPDATE

Thank you so much to our community partners who helped us raise over $4,000 in cash and supplies for our furry friends at AnimalLuvr's, Cat Haven Rescue, Inc. and St. Francis Animal Rescue. We are filled with gratitude to everyone who helped make such an impact.

Jaime's Adult Day Centers