

But it was striking. Even though their brains may not remember things, their bodies have a different way of remembering," she says.

The dancer was just one of several artists hired under an \$18,500 grant from Milwaukee's Helen Bader Foundation to explore ways to communicate with people who are in various stages of Alzheimer's, an incurable, progressive disease that eats away memory and the ability to reason.

Bader's board wanted solid research, says Mayrl, who oversees Bader Foundation grants to Alzheimer's projects. Could music, dance and other art forms reach Alzheimer's patients and improve the quality of their last years?

With the search for answers to such questions, Milwaukee is fast becoming a center for Alzheimer's research and for new techniques in the care and treatment of Alzheimer's patients — thanks largely to the late Helen Bader. Bader died in 1989. She left behind as her legacy the Helen Bader

Foundation, with assets of \$100 million and a mission to finance the study of Alzheimer's, as well as some social issues.

Nearly 4 million Americans are afflicted with Alzheimer's, according to the National Institute on Aging, which estimates that 98,400

of those patients live in Wisconsin, based on the size of our population and the incidence of the disease nationally. From the onset of symptoms, those afflicted can live from 3 to 20 or more years with the degenerative brain disease, and the cost of their care is staggering.



Photo by JACK ORTON

But patients in Milwaukee have one major advantage.

The \$4,422,598 the Bader Foundation has given thus far to Alzheimer's projects has stayed largely in Milwaukee. The foundation now devotes much of its efforts to turning Milwaukee into a model community, where agencies offer a broad range of services to help patients continue using what skills remain for as long as possible.

For example, one of Bader's largest Milwaukee-area grants offers training in how to identify and work to clear up dementia that is reversible, such as in cases where a

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Daniel Bader, president of the Helen Bader Foundation, and Robin Mayrl, the foundation's staff expert on Alzheimer's, are overseeing the growing impact of Helen Bader (far left) on helping people with the disease.

