

# Alzheimer Society

SAULT STE. MARIE &  
ALGOMA DISTRICT

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NEWSLETTER VOL. 17 No. 1



SPRING 2004

## EXECUTIVE REPORT



Thank you to everyone who helped to make January Awareness Month another successful campaign. From the media outlets who helped us get the message out, to clients and family caregivers who so generously shared their stories about living with dementia, to volunteers and donors who helped us raise funds...the list goes on and on. Each January we see an increase in the number of people requesting service - a good indicator that the campaign has been effective.

Several projects are in the completion stages. The Care Map project, funded by an AccessAbility grant from the Ministry of Citizenship, saw 575 laminated posters of dementia care services, along with a driving and dementia flowchart, distributed to service providers throughout Algoma District in both English and French. A brochure for the public was also produced. Also, the Dementia Care Network Algoma has launched its website describing dementia-related services and agencies. Although still under construction, there will soon be lots of good information at the site, located at [www.dementiaalgoma.org](http://www.dementiaalgoma.org). We would like to thank the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care for the funding to make this project a reality, as well as the Toronto Dementia Network and webmaster Chris Benka for sharing their expertise and resources with us.

We are pleased to be undertaking a project with the Sault Police Services, OPP, and other agencies throughout Algoma to develop operational pre-

plans for emergency searches for residents/clients with dementia. The result will be a "Search is an Emergency" manual, modelled after those developed in Waterloo, Cornwall, and Nipissing, for distribution to long-term care facilities, adult day programs, retirement homes, and assisted-living programs.

Most recently, the Society partnered with the Shadows of the Mind Film Festival to bring "Iris" to the big screen. This moving film about a couple struggling to deal with the effects of Alzheimer Disease was enjoyed by a large audience who also participated in the panel discussion that followed. Please be aware that the Alzheimer Society has a copy of the video "Iris" that can be borrowed from the resource centre at any time.

We would like to remind you that the Society's Annual General Meeting will be taking place on Thursday, June 17, 2004 from noon - 1:30 at Upstairs at Romes. A light lunch will be served. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to: hear and receive reports and statements; elect Directors; appoint the Auditor; and transact any other business properly brought before the meeting. This year, the guest speaker will be board member Shelley McEachern, who will speak about the gratification for providers in caring for people with Alzheimer Disease. For information regarding nominations to the Board of Directors, or to RSVP, please contact the Alzheimer Society at 942-2195.

Carolyn Cybulski  
Executive Director

Paul Hebert, Jr.  
President

"If you think you can,  
or you think you can't,  
you're always right."  
~ Henry Ford

### Attitude Can Make a Difference in Caregiving

Caring for a loved one with dementia may be one of the most challenging journeys that you will travel. How you experience this journey can be significantly affected by your attitude. Maintaining a positive and optimistic attitude will certainly smooth the road ahead. This does not mean that there will be no frustration, no guilt, no sadness, no anger but it does mean that you will be able to keep these feelings in perspective, accept them as normal and move beyond them to make the journey a more positive and rewarding experience.

A positive and optimistic attitude can help you envision positive outcomes and when we do this we are more likely to get them. It can help you see the lighter side of your experiences thereby enabling you to keep joy, love and laughter in your life. A positive and optimistic attitude can help you truly enjoy the moment as well as motivate you to move forward and plan for the future.

In order to maintain a positive attitude, it is helpful to keep things in perspective. When encountering a problem, view it as temporary and see it for what it is. This will assist you in seeking a realistic solution and resolving it as soon as possible. Know that when seeking solutions that you cannot change the fact that your loved one has dementia but there are things you can change including your response to it. Ensure that you give yourself credit for all the good things, small and large, that you do and accomplish every day. Practice positive self-talk and push negative thoughts out of your mind. Taking breaks from caregiving can rejuvenate you enabling you to return to caregiving rested, refreshed and in a positive frame of mind.

The following poem was given to Vicky by a member of the Diner's Club Support Group.

#### Remember

Remember...

...that your presence is a present to the world.  
...that you are unique and unrepeatabe creation.  
...that your life can be what you want it to be.  
...to take the days just one at a time.

Remember...

...to count your blessings, not your troubles.  
...that you'll make it through whatever comes along.  
...that most of the answers you need are within you.  
...those dreams waiting to be realized.

Remember...

...that decisions are too important to leave to chance.  
...to always reach for the best that's within you.  
...that nothing wastes more energy than worry.  
...that not getting what you want is sometimes a wonderful stroke of luck.

Remember...

...that the longer you carry a grudge, the heavier it gets.  
...not to take things too seriously.  
...to laugh.

...that a little love goes a long way and a lot goes forever.

Remember...

...that happiness is more often found in giving than getting.  
...that life's treasures are people, not things.

Author Unknown

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Are you concerned about memory loss?  
Have you been diagnosed with Alzheimer  
Disease or a related dementia?

If so, please join us for a  
Mild Memory Loss Information and Discussion  
Group

Every second Monday afternoon

March 22 - May 31, 2004

Please call the Alzheimer Society at 942-2195  
for more information or to register.

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This article, written by Cindy Ellen Crawford, originally appeared in Senior Life (a Sault Star specialty publication) on November 21, 2003.

## Recreational Therapy Program returns quality of life to those affected with memory loss

The loss of memory can be as devastating for the caregiver or spouse as it is for the individual.

A new program launched by the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District has been created to improve quality of life for people affected by dementia as well as their loved ones.

"The Recreation Therapy Program is meant to help people who are affected with cognitive impairment," says recreation therapist Kara Benka. Cognitive means the level of comprehension concerning memory, judgement and reasoning. "It is also helpful for the caregiver or family member as it provides them with a way to bring back activities that meant a lot to that person," she says.

Perhaps someone once enjoyed leisure activities such as playing cards, music, gardening, or crafts and now appears to no longer have an interest in it. It could be that the desire is still there but the ability to initiate that activity is diminished or non-existent. Enter Benka as the initiator.

"By stimulating old behaviours, it can bring back a person's self-esteem," says Benka. "After assessment, I may have to modify a game or activity to reflect their current cognitive level but it can still bring them happiness."

On the initial visit, Benka conducts an assessment, develops a treatment plan based on those findings and then sets realistic goals. The assessment takes upwards of one hour and a half and involves both the caregiver and the individual (client). "There are a number of questions that I'll ask pertaining to family history or what his or her past leisure or recreational interests were," she says.

"What we want to do is create a simple and stress-free activity," says Benka, adding that she'll also show the caregiver how to initiate or modify the activity so that it can again become part of their regular life. "A lot of people don't understand the value of recreation but it is therapeutic and brings back ingrained behaviour."

Benka is able to interact with an individual regarding a variety of interests. She totes around her portable keyboard, cards, craft supplies, and whatever items are identified as being necessary to initiate an activity.

Carolyn Cybulski, executive director of the Alzheimer Society, says that this in-home Recreation Therapy program works closely with the adult day programs offered across Algoma District. "These programs are intended to complement one another in order to determine the most appropriate means of returning clients to their former leisure interests," she says.

Referrals can come from a physician, other health organizations, the Alzheimer Society Family Support Case Worker, family members or even self referral. The Alzheimer Society can be reached at 942-2195.

Vascular Dementia

Vascular Dementia (VaD) is caused by problems with circulation of blood to the brain. Narrowing and blockage of arteries that supply blood to the brain or strokes that interrupt blood flow within the brain can cause this. This type of dementia is most common between the ages of 60 and 75, and is slightly more common in men.

Due to the fact that VaD often co-exists with other types of dementia, especially Alzheimer Disease, it is difficult to determine if the client has VaD or not. Not everyone who experiences a stroke will develop VaD. The only true way to diagnose VaD is through an autopsy of the brain after death. A probable diagnosis can usually be made within three months of a stroke. Some differences between VaD and other dementias that help physicians determine whether or not the client has VaD are:

- people with VaD decline more rapidly than people with AD
- VaD is sudden onset
- progression is step-wise, meaning that the cognitive condition deteriorates after a stroke, stabilizes, and then deteriorates again after the next stroke
- if further strokes don't occur, decline may not continue and improvement may occur
- clients with VaD usually succumb to heart attack or major stroke
- CAT scans and MRI s can show the damage caused by the stroke.

Risk factors for VaD are the same as the risk factors for stroke. They are high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, high cholesterol, smoking, being overweight, and a family history of heart problems. Many of these risk factors are preventable or treatable and therefore VaD is potentially preventable. Healthy lifestyle choices, which include exercise, healthy diet, stress reduction, and avoiding smoking are some of the ways to reduce risk.

The mainstay of treatment is prevention. High blood pressure can be controlled with medications and positive lifestyle choices (reduced alcohol consumption, smoking cessation, weight control). Medications can also be used to prevent clots from forming in the small blood vessels. Surgery may be required to remove a blockage in the carotid artery (main blood vessel to brain). Should VaD be present, support measures include treatment of symptoms, facilitating independence and quality of life to the greatest extent possible, and increased support for caregivers.

Reference: Alzheimer Society of Ontario Research Update July/August 2002

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### Upcoming Events

- ❁ Education Conference...There is still time to register for the March 29 conference featuring dementia experts Jayne Harvey and Lori Schindel Martin on the topics of aggression and sexuality. Call the Alzheimer Society for more details.
- ❁ Living With Grief Videoconference... Brought to you in partnership with Sault College and the Hospice Foundation of America, this year's videoconference deals with the grief related to Alzheimer Disease. Cost is \$32.83 (includes textbook). To register (after Mar. 24), contact Sault College at 759-0016.
- ❁ Caregiver Education Series... This popular series for family caregivers will next be run on May 5, 12, and 19 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Topics include: Understanding Alzheimer Disease, Challenging Behaviours and Effective Communication, and Therapeutic Activity. There is no charge but pre-registration is required. Please call 942-2195.
- ❁ Caregivers Have Feelings Too!... A new session focusing on the emotions of caregiving, this workshop will be held Thursday, April 1, 7 p.m. at Upstairs at Romes. Register at Romes Customer Service Desk or call the Alzheimer Society at 942-2195.



Congratulations... to the three Sault College Students who are the recipients of the Alzheimer Society bursaries. They are: Diana Alopaeus, Sara Johnson, and Connie Lynn Newton. Please remember that the Alzheimer Society annually makes available four scholarships in the amount of \$200 each to students in a Health Sciences program who meet the following requirements:

- grade point average of 3.0 or greater
- volunteer work with the Alzheimer Society or associated groups
- letter of interest from applicant.

For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office at Sault College.



Thank you...to our Nevada ticket locations: IDA Drug Mart at Station Mall and Northgate Service Centre at Montreal River Harbour. Thank you also to the many businesses and organizations who put our awareness message on their outdoor signs throughout January.

♥Volunteers.....Give from the Heart ♥

A great big "Thank you" to the volunteers who helped this year with door-to-door canvassing and all of you who either volunteered your time or came out to our annual "Walk/Run for Memories". A good time was had by all. Our fundraising efforts, education and awareness events could not happen without you. You are there when we need you most.

UPDATING VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORMS: Thank you to all of the canvassers who filled out and returned their "Volunteer Information Forms". This goes a long way towards updating our files. According to the Society's volunteer policy, we require all volunteers to fill out a Volunteer Information Form. The information we receive is strictly confidential and is not shared with any other organization. If you have not filled out this form, or if your file needs to be updated, you will be receiving a form in the mail in the next little while and we would ask that you fill it out and return it to the office. Thank you.

NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!!! We are looking for committed individuals to work as Volunteer Recreation Assistants. You would work closely with the Society's Recreation Therapist, assisting individuals with their leisure interests. For more information, please call Marion.

A&P Tapes: Thanks to everyone to donated A&P tapes over the past year, we recently received a cheque from A&P for \$516.28 - a record! Please keep them coming.

Board of Directors 2003-2004	
Paul Hebert, Jr., President	Shelley McEachern
John Campbell, Past Pres.	Catherine Bell
Karen McAndrew, Vice-Pres.	Heidi Atkinson
Jerry Stefanizzi, Treasurer	Mark Zorzit
Dr. Grace Tridico, Secretary	Beth Laderoute
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Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director	
Marion Lewis, Volunteer Coordinator/Office Asst.	
Vicky Roy, Family Support Case Worker	
Monica Ruzyski, Bookkeeper	
Linda Sullivan, Education Coordinator	
Bea Fioramanti, Events Coordinator	
Kara Benka, Recreation Therapist	

*This newsletter is based on the assumption that it does not render professional advice. Information and opinions contained herein are gathered from sources thought to be reliable, but their accuracy and/or correct interpretation cannot be guaranteed.*

Mark your calendars!!  
Our Volunteer Appreciation Night will be held this year on Monday, June 21, 2004.  
Details will follow closer to the date.  
**PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND!**

I am continually taken aback by the incredible support from people in the community. From the little girl who saves her pennies and donates them to the Society to corporate sponsors, and everyone in between, we truly appreciate your support.

Here are some of the highlights from the past few months:

❁ Best Western Friends In Need: We are grateful to the Best Western Great Northern for choosing the Alzheimer Society as the recipient of the proceeds from the "Friends in Need" program. During the holiday season, rooms were offered at the rate of \$32, with \$12 from the sale of each room being donated to the Society. Additionally, the Best Western partnered with the Alzheimer Society by hosting a Corporate Christmas Luncheon, with a portion of the proceeds to the Society. Their incredible support didn't stop there - the staff also decided to make donations to the Alzheimer Society in lieu of exchanging Christmas gifts. In total, over \$10,000 was donated to the Society. Special thanks to Mike Quinn, Debbie Montgomery, Tracy Stoneman, and all the staff at the Best Western Great Northern, as well as everyone in the community who participated in any of these events.

❁ Walk/Run for Memories: We were pleased to see more families come out and enjoy all of the festivities at the George Leach Centre, especially the children who made great use of the children's play area. Over 85 people enjoyed a fun-filled afternoon of activity that included complimentary massages, entertainment, refreshments, and plenty of prizes! Many thanks to our volunteers, participants, and donors, as well as the staff of George Leach Centre for their hard work. It is gratifying to see this event grow incrementally every year.

Special Thanks to the Sponsors of the  
2004 Walk/Run for Memories

- The Sault Star
- Lamon's Printing
- Penny's Pets
- The Athlete's Foot
- Northwood Funeral Home
- Rome's Independent Grocer
- Second Hand World
- KPMG
- Lock City Monuments
- Castle Realty
- Dairy Queen
- Great Lakes Power
- Mio's Furniture Fashions
- Bell Canada
- G.P. Flakeboard
- Hess Jewellers
- I DA Pharmacy
- Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corp. and Casino Sault Ste. Marie
- Soo Mill Buildall

❁ Door-to-Door Campaign: A big thank you to all of our canvassers who once again were up against the elements. January was an incredibly cold month, but this did not deter the efforts of our dedicated canvassers! They braved the weather and raised over \$24,000. We are also pleased to welcome our new canvassers. Thank you also to the many businesses and service clubs who contributed to this effort, as well as those who donated their dress-down day funds. Special thanks to long-time canvasser Christine Ingrubelli who not only canvassed for us, but also spearheaded the donation of tips from the Tim Horton's at Pine and McNabb. The day staff generously donated more than \$1,000 to the Society in the month of January. What a community-minded bunch!

Congratulations to our Top  
Door-to-Door Canvassers:  
Sault Ste. Marie - Mary Venn  
Algoma District - Sally Horton  
Student - Ryan Bentley  
All received gift certificates  
generously donated by  
The Athlete's Foot.

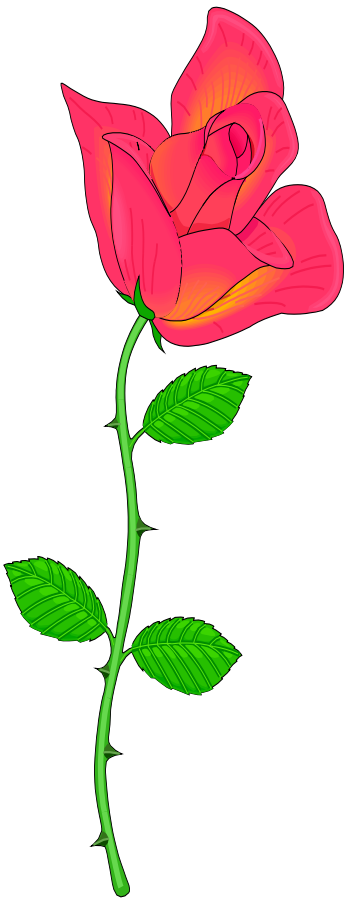
Join Us For A

# Ladies' Night Out

An Entertaining Evening Just for the Girls

Get together with friends and family!  
Treat Mom to an early Mother's Day Gift!  
Leave the men at home!

Tuesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at 7:00 p.m.  
at the Riuniti Banquet Halls



Sit back, relax, and have some fun as M.C. Lou-Anne Young introduces us to:

- ◆ Laura-Lee Willis: *My Body, Your Body, AnyBODY's Body*: The power of positive thinking and turning negatives into positives.
- ◆ Deborah Antonello: *Dating, Mating, and Relating*: A look at relationships from a light-hearted perspective.
- ◆ The Comedics: A "healthy dose" of humour will be provided by a group of local health professionals whose antics will keep us "in stitches".

Tickets are \$15 and include Entertainment, Refreshments, and Great Prizes! Cash bar available.

Sponsored by: Riuniti Banquet Hall, Curves, Lancome, New North Greenhouses, Headlines Hair Salon, and Lindt & Sprungli.

Tickets available at: Alzheimer Society, Collegiate Heights Retirement Home, and Riuniti Banquet Hall.

Get your gang together and we can deliver tickets to your group of 8 or more.

All proceeds to the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District. For more information, call the Alzheimer Society at 942-2195.

Video: More Than A Thousand Tomorrows. A sequel to A Thousand Tomorrows: Sexuality, Intimacy and Alzheimer's, this video portrays what has happened to one couple over an eight year period as they struggle to deal with Alzheimer Disease. The central theme to the video is the husband's discussion of his feelings and decisions regarding the changes in his ongoing intimate relationship with his wife who has Alzheimer Disease.

Book: Alzheimer's Early Stages, by Daniel Kuhn. This book is for families and friends of people with early Alzheimer Disease. It focuses on what the disease looks and feels like in the early stages and what problems are first encountered by the person with the disease. It talks about ways to deal with these problems effectively and offers guidance and advice.

### Cuddle Bears



Thank you to the volunteers who have donated armfuls of cuddly hand-crafted bears. Each bear is unique with his/her own personality, charisma, and vibrant colour.

During our January Awareness Month these beautiful bears were donated to The Davey Home, The Finnish Rest Home, Van Daele, Tendercare, and The Great Northern Retirement Home. Our objective is for cuddle bears to bring comfort and peace to the residents who suffer from Alzheimer Disease.

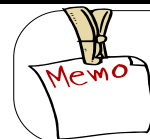
If you are interested in knitting, crocheting, or sewing a cuddle bear contact us at the Alzheimer Society. If you need wool we have quite a selection that was donated to us and we would be happy to give you a few balls.

### In Memoriam

We offer our sympathy to families in Algoma District who have lost loved ones (listed below), and we express our thanks to family members and friends who have made donations in their memory in the past months.

Ada Connell	Lester Knull
Agnes Newcastle	Lloyd Green
Angela & Felice Notte	Luise Alisat
Annie Smith	Lylia Caron
Annie Verdoni	Mae Welch
Arthur McNutt	Marguerite Belair
Ben DeGasparro	Marguerite Johnson
Betty Donaghue	Marie Myers
Betty McGonegal	Mario Scornaiencki
Cecile Lavallee	Martin Yukich
Claudia Colizza	Maureen Lofstrom
Dean Russ	Mello Bumbacco
Delmar Robinson	Minnie Chyz
Donna Scholfield	Mr. Clayton
Doreen McCarter	Norris Swaffield
Doris Carter	Ora McIntryre
Earl Real Lauzon	Pat McBrayer
Edna Pituly	Patricia Stephen
Eleanor Morrison	Riccardo Ongaro
Elsie Goodwin	Ronald Pettenuzzo
Emyra Lamb	Rose Barsalou
Florence Lawrence	Rose Lucic
Garry Auger	Ryszard Sikorski
George McConnell	Stan Johnson
Grace Beaudette	Sylvia Stadnik
Helen Kinahan	Ted Clark
Henry Loewen	Tom Duncan
Irene Bennett	Tony Stuitz
Jean-Denis Gareau	Vera Desjardins
John Corbett	Vince Guzzo
John & Rina Del Rizzo	Winnifred Brayley
Laina Salomaa	Yoland Frappier
Lavina Yensen	Lenora Davidson

Our mission: To improve the quality of life for people with Alzheimer Disease and related dementias, and to provide support for their caregivers.



Office hours are Monday to Friday  
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Evenings by appointment.