



Alzheimer Society

SAULT STE. MARIE &
ALGOMA DISTRICT

Newsletter: Volume 19, Number 1

Spring 2006

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Executive Message

Karen McAndrew, President

Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director

2006 marks the 100th anniversary of the discovery of Alzheimer's disease by Dr. Alois Alzheimer, and this was the focus of our message for January's Alzheimer Awareness Month. Dr. Alzheimer identified the "plaques" and "tangles" in a 51-year old woman's brain as the hallmark traits of Alzheimer's Disease, and transformed what was once considered "senility" and a normal part of aging into the disease now named for him. Our awareness campaign focused on the progress that has been made to date in the search for a cause and a cure and on the promising discoveries that researchers expect within the next 10 years.

1906-2006 ALZHEIMER DISEASE



YEARS OF DISCOVERY

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Jack Diamond will be the key note speaker at the Alzheimer Society's Annual General Meeting, to be held on June 16, 2006. Dr. Diamond is the Scientific Director of the Alzheimer Society of Canada, and will be delivering an address entitled "Alzheimer's Disease: What's Going On Up There and What Are We Doing About It?". He will be highlighting the latest research in the search for cause and treatments of Alzheimer's disease. For more information about this event, please contact the Alzheimer Society office at 942-2195.

Alzheimer Society Scholarships

Each year, the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District offers three scholarship awards to Sault College students. The scholarships are intended to promote study within the fields of health and human services, with a special emphasis on care of persons with dementia. Congratulations to the winners of the 2006 awards, Vanessa Lauszus, Sara Johnson, and Diana Petainen, who are all enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program.

2006 Alzheimer Education Conference A Success!

The 2006 Alzheimer Education Conference was held on February 22 at Riuniti Banquet Hall. 122 people registered for this educational day, which featured key note speaker Dr. Michael Gordon discussing the issues of ethics and end-of-life dementia care, as well as sessions on advance care planning, pain and symptom management in late-stage dementia, and grief and dementia. Feedback from the day was very positive. Stay tuned for information about next year's conference!

Thank you...

To Station Mall Drug Mart for its ongoing support of the Alzheimer Society through sale of Nevada Tickets. Also thanks to the many people who donated their A&P tapes to the Alzheimer Society throughout the past year. We are pleased to announce that, with your help, this program raised \$411.50 this year.



News & Information



New Additions to the Katherine L. Punch Resource Centre

Books

- Parenting Your Parents: Support Strategies for Meeting the Challenge of Aging in the Family. M. Gordon and B. Mindszenty. (2005) This insightful book offers practical strategies for dealing with an aging parent. The case studies are realistic and easy to read. The personal parenting planner included in the book is an excellent tool to help open discussion between family members about health care issues.

Cuddle Bear Program



We wish to acknowledge the knitters who volunteer their time all year long to producing these lovable fellows as well as assorted blankets, slippers, and shoulder wraps. These items are donated to persons with Alzheimer's disease in long-term care facilities to provide some comfort. We welcome donations of yarn to help these dedicated knitters continue their work. Thank you to everyone who makes this program successful.

Alzheimer Society Annual General Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend the Alzheimer Society's Annual General Meeting, which will be held on Friday, June 16, 2006 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is:

- to hear and receive reports and statements;
- to elect Directors;
- to appoint the Auditor; and
- to transact any other business properly brought before the meeting.

As noted on page 1, Dr. Jack Diamond, Scientific Director of the Alzheimer Society of Canada, will be speaking on the topic of Alzheimer Research. There will be a small charge to cover the cost of lunch.

For more information regarding nominations to the Board of Directors, or to RSVP, please call 942-2195.

Volunteer Corner

Bingo volunteers are urgently needed for Tuesday evenings from 6 - 10 p.m. Thank you to the teams that come out weekly and volunteer for the Society - we appreciate your dedication throughout the year. Volunteering for bingo is a great opportunity to meet new people and have some fun while helping a worthy cause. If you or someone you know might be interested, please call Bea or Monica at 942-2195.

Coin Cans: Almost \$1,000 was collected this year through our Coin Can program. Coin cans may be found throughout the city and district at various commercial locations. Thank you to all volunteers who help in coin can collection. If you know of a location that might accept one of our Coin Cans, please let us know.

In Memoriam...

We offer our sympathy to families in Algoma District who have lost loved ones, and we express our thanks to family members who have made donations to the Alzheimer Society in their memory.



Support & Education

**By Vicky Roy, Family Support
Linda Sullivan, Education
Carolyn Ross, Education/Family Support, East Algoma**

How Do You View Your Role as a Caregiver?

How do you view your role as a caregiver to a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia? Do you think often of what you and your loved one have lost? Losses may include a change to the plans that you had for your retirement years or the fact that you are grieving the person as you knew them before the dementia rather than accepting the person as he/she is today. Or, do you think more often of the positive things that you have now, in the moment? What you may have now is an inner strength you didn't realize you had, acceptance of your role as a caregiver, more purpose and meaning in your life related to your goal of providing the best, most compassionate care you can for your loved one. It is often easier to think about the losses which are, realistically, more tangible. However, you can enhance your caregiving experience and your relationship with your loved one by focusing on the present rather than mourning the past. It is important to focus on your loved one's remaining strengths rather than what they've lost so you can both enjoy the best that each day has to offer. Whether you are optimistic about your caregiving experience or whether you are pessimistic directly affects your relationship with your loved one and the care that you provide. It also affects how you feel about yourself. When facing life's challenges with optimism you will view life more positively, you will feel more motivated, you will see possibilities that you did not see when being pessimistic, you will also learn to expect more positive outcomes and get them. Having an optimistic attitude does not mean you will never feel sadness, frustration, anger or grief. It is perfectly normal to feel these emotions. However, an optimistic attitude can help you accept these feelings, keep them in perspective and get past them. An optimistic attitude can motivate you to seek solutions to the challenges of caring for a loved one with dementia and to find them. It is very important that you take the time to reflect upon how you view your role as a caregiver. If optimism seems elusive or unattainable it is likely a sign that you need to seek assistance. Reach out and talk to a friend, a family member or call the Alzheimer Society at 942-2195.

“A happy person is not a person in a certain set of circumstances, but rather a person with a certain set of attitudes.”
Hugh Downs

Research Updates

Mental Stimulation Reduces Dementia Risk

More than 29,000 subjects were involved in 22 studies that were reviewed to determine the relationship between complex mental activity and dementia. Lead author of the review, Dr. Michael Valenzuela of the University of New South Wales, found an association between complex mental activity and significantly reduced incidence of dementia. Brain reserve (the effects of education, job complexity, and mental stimulation on cognitive decline) was found to have a protective effect over a median follow-up time of 7.1 years. Compared with people with low brain reserve, those with high brain reserve had just over half the risk of developing dementia. This risk reduction applied even if complex mental activity occurred late in life.

Source: *The Medical Post*, February 21, 2006, Vol. 42, Issue 06



Problems with Gait May Precede Alzheimer's Disease

Researchers at Rush University Medical Centre are suggesting that gait problems in older people which have no established cause may be one of the first signs of Alzheimer's disease. The researchers found that the more neurofibrillary tangles (which are a classic brain abnormality in Alzheimer's disease) that were found in the brains of autopsied subjects, the more impaired the person's gait was before his death. Dr. Julie Schneider, study author, advises: “The best current recommendation, given the literature, is close clinical follow-up for patients with gait impairment”.

Source: *The Medical Post*, February 14, 2006, volume 42, Issue 05



Volunteer and Fundraising News

By Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers and Special Events

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of the Alzheimer Society's dedicated volunteers and supporters for helping to raise awareness as well as much-needed funds for the services that we provide for people affected by Alzheimer's disease. You truly help us in our mission to provide "Help for Today and Hope for Tomorrow". I am honoured to work alongside each and every one of you. I also wanted to welcome all of our new volunteers - I hope you are enjoying your experience with the Alzheimer Society. We are planning a volunteer appreciation event in early summer and will be contacting you with all of the details within the next few months.

January was once again a very busy month with Alzheimer Awareness in full swing. Here are some of the highlights:

Walk/Run for Memories: Once again, individuals and families enjoyed a fun afternoon at White Pines while supporting the Alzheimer Society. Participants enjoyed lots of activities that included complimentary massages, entertainment, fabulous refreshments, a scavenger hunt, and plenty of prizes! Many thanks to our volunteers, participants, donors, and to the following sponsors:

- Northern Star Broadcasting
- Penny's Pets
- Rome's Independent Grocer
- The Athlete's Foot
- Castle Realty
- KPMG
- Mio's Furniture Fashions
- Soo Mill Buildall
- Northwood Funeral Home
- Lamon's Printing
- Brascan Power Corporation
- Allstate - Allan Moore
- Dairy Queen
- Lock City Monuments
- North Star Travel Plus
- Soo Video TV Sales & Service
- Sault Ste. Marie Elks and Royal Purple
- Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corp. & Casino Sault Ste. Marie
- Bell Canada
- Hess Jewellers
- Mike Moore & Sons Construction Ltd.
- PUC Services Inc.

Special thanks to Flakeboard Co. Ltd. and the staff and students of White Pines for all of their help and support, and to all prize donors.

Door-to-Door Campaign: It was hard to believe that it was canvassing season and the weather actually cooperated for the dedicated canvassers in January! A big thank you goes out to all of the canvassers who helped us raise over \$25,000. Thank you also to the many businesses and service clubs who contributed to this effort, as well as those who donated their dress-down days' funds.

Congratulations to our top canvassers for 2006:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Sault Ste. Marie: | <i>Dave Muncaster</i> |
| Algoma District: | <i>Team of Cindy Crawford and Aurora Tynan</i> |
| Students: | <i>Team of Stewart Bentley and Matthew Horbatuk</i> |



Get Ready For...Ladies' Night Out!

Riuniti Banquet Halls is the place to be on Thursday, May 4th for our third annual Ladies' Night Out! Doors will open at 6:15 for a delectable chocolate fountain that is available only until 7 p.m. At that time, M.C. Kelly Weeks will introduce us to an amazing line up of entertainment. Antoinette Blunt, winner of the 2005 Athena Award, will share her thoughts on empowering yourself to reach your full potential and realize your dreams. Pam Cooper will show us why the gift of time is such a meaningful "present" as she discusses time management techniques. And Sue Barber, together with Shot In The Dark Productions, will show us that it's not all beauty and glamour for the "Real" Desperate Housewives"! Tickets are \$20 and include coffee, tea, dessert/fruit, great door prizes, and loads of fun! Don't be disappointed...tickets sell out early. Purchase your table or ticket soon!

We would like to acknowledge the presenting sponsor, Riuniti Banquet Halls, in making this event possible, as well as other sponsors: Curves, Mane Street Salon & Spa, Sears Cosmetics and Fragrances, New North Greenhouses, Everything Chocolate, Glidden Paints, Bennardo Jewellers, Bulova, Jeree Montier, and Zenone's.



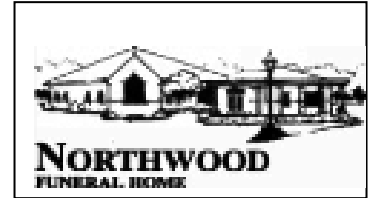
Recognizing Our Sponsors...

The Alzheimer Society is pleased to recognize the following platinum and gold sponsors of the 2006 Walk/Run for Memories:

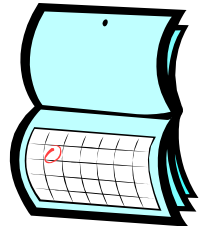
Platinum:



Gold:



Upcoming Support & Education Events



Drive Wise Seminar: Presented by Bill Mackan of the OPP, this free information session is sponsored by the Sault Ste. Marie chapter of CARP. It will be held on Monday, April 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Drop-In Centre at 619 Bay St.

Caregiver Education Series: This informative 3-week session is intended for family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. It will take place at the Alzheimer Society office from 7 - 8:30 p.m. on three consecutive Wednesdays: May 3 - Overview of Dementia; May 10 - Responsive Behaviours; May 17 - Celebrating Life Creatively. There is no charge to attend but pre-registration is required. Call 942-2195.

Diners' Club: Do you enjoy going for dinner, but not on your own? The Diners' Club is a group of current or former family caregivers who no longer feel the need for formal support programs but who are still interested in informal peer support and socialization. The Diners' Club meets on the last Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at a different restaurant each month. The Diners' Club and the Alzheimer Society invite you to attend. For more information, call Vicky at 942-2195. *Note: All participants are responsible for their own food and beverage costs.

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