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### Message from the President & Executive Director

*Mark Zorzit, President*

*Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director*

January has come and gone, and although our official “awareness” month is now over for another year, we hope that this year’s awareness theme will resonate for a long time to come. The message was a positive one: there are steps we can all take, right now, to reduce our risk of acquiring Alzheimer’s disease later in life. Through activities such as eating brain-healthy food, staying socially connected, exercising body and mind, and protecting our heads from injury, we are committing to taking all possible steps to better brain health.

Our 10th annual Manulife Walk for Memories was held on January 27 at White Pines. We are delighted to report that, thanks to your efforts and generosity, we surpassed all previous records for this event, raising over \$21,000 for important dementia programs. Thanks to all supporters for helping to make this year’s Walk an “unforgettable” event.

Pictured at right: RBC Mascot, Leo the Lion, presents a cheque for \$1,000 to Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers and Special Events. The \$1,000 is a RBC Foundation Grant awarded when RBC Employees participate in a charity event. In addition to the grant, Team RBC was successful in raising \$2,004 and won top team prize.



### Join Us for Our 22nd Annual General Meeting

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Ekaterina Rogueva will be the featured speaker at the Alzheimer Society’s Annual General Meeting, taking place on Friday, June 20, 2008 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn. Dr. Rogueva is a researcher at the University of Toronto’s Centre for Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases (CRND), and will be discussing recent research advancements in the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease. Cost to attend is \$10 per person to assist with lunch costs.

The business portion of the Annual General Meeting will take place after Dr. Rogueva’s presentation, and all members are encouraged to attend in order to elect directors, hear reports, appoint the financial Auditor, and transact any other business. For more information or to RSVP, please call 942-2195.

### Alzheimer Society Makes Historical Contribution to Research

We are pleased to announce that, thanks to the generosity of donors and the success of fundraising events over the past year, our chapter is able to contribute \$15,000 to support research into the cause and cure of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias at the Centre for Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases (CRND). This is the highest amount ever donated to dementia research from our chapter, and we thank the residents of Algoma for helping us to make this important contribution. Over the past 14 years, our chapter has contributed almost \$100,000 to research.



# News & Information

## Satellite Corner

News from the East Algoma  
Satellite Office

From Carolyn Ross, Support & Education Coordinator

### Education Session:

On January 16, 2008, Dr. James Chau presented information on dementia, medications, and natural treatments for dementia. This informative session was attended by 80 people who learned a great deal about the latest research and new medications on the horizon.



### New Geriatric Nurse Practitioner in Elliot Lake

Elliot Lake is pleased to have a Geriatric Nurse Practitioner as part of the Family Health Team. Marg Barek has been on board since November 2007 helping to provide service to seniors without physicians. She also works with Dr. Chau. She can be reached at 461-8882.

### First Link™ Program Launched in East Algoma



We are pleased to announce that the East Algoma office has joined ten other Alzheimer Society chapters in

offering First Link, which is your link to a community of learning, services, and support. First Link connects you to:

- Learning about every step in the Alzheimer journey
- Community and health care services
- Individual support and/or support groups.

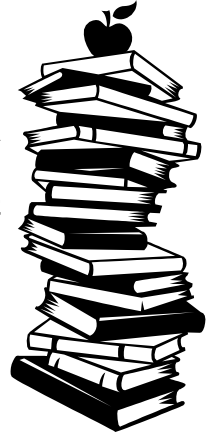
Please contact Carolyn Ross at 848-8145 if you would like to know more about First Link.

Please remember to visit our website  
[www.alzheimeralgoma.org](http://www.alzheimeralgoma.org)  
for information about the Society as well as past editions of our newsletter.

## Resource Centre Acquisitions

### Books

**The Art of Dementia Care.** Kuhn, D. and Verity, J. (2008) A practical guide for all caregivers who provide support, encouragement and care for people with dementia. The book discusses how you can make a positive difference in the lives of those you care for. Practical examples are used to demonstrate how, through recognition of the limits of people with dementia and the promotion of their strengths, you can improve their quality of life. *As part of the Alzheimer Society's ongoing commitment to public awareness and education, a copy of this excellent resource has been donated to all libraries in Algoma District.*



### **Finding Your Way After Your Parent Dies.**

Gilbert, R. (2007) The author discusses some of the issues that arise in the wake of a parent's death and offers practical suggestions for navigating these difficulties.

### DVDs

**Advance Care Planning.** Ian Anderson Continuing Education Program in End-of-Life Care, University of Toronto (2007) This DVD provides an introductory look at some of the basic concepts involved in advance care planning. Using a storied approach, the DVD highlights a number of common health care scenarios and their impact on individuals, families and health care professionals.

**She's Happier There.** Deveaux Babin Productions. Based on a true story and told by a young teenager, this DVD makes us reflect on our values and how we would care for our family member. The story touches on the conflicts that can occur when an elderly family member who needs care moves into her daughter's home.



# Education & Research Update

By Linda Sullivan, Education Coordinator

## An Update on Stem Cell Research

By Dr. Jack Diamond, Scientific Director  
Alzheimer Society of Canada

Stem cells are immature cells in the body that have not yet developed to the stage when they show a recognizable mature identity, which is one that would label them as nerve cells, heart cells, and so on. The most attractive feature of stem cells for the medical scientist is the possibility of using them to replace cells that have died because of disease or trauma. From the perspective of the Alzheimer community, the interest in stem cell research focuses on one issue – can they be used to replace lost brain cells?

Two new research reports were released the week of November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The reports emanated from two teams, one in Japan and one in the US. The Japanese team used skin from the face of a 35-year-old woman, and the US team used foreskin cells from a newborn baby. Using a virus, the researchers effectively shuttled up to four transcription factors into adult human skin cells. These factors were already known to be highly active in stem cells but not in adult cells. The effect of these transcription factors was to activate genes that converted the adult skin cells back into cells that closely resembled normal embryo-derived stem cells. The skin cells were 'reprogrammed'; they lost their original adult skin-like character and instead looked and behaved like normal immature cells. The excitement generated by these two reports was not just because of the discovery of how to transform normal adult cells into stem cells, but because of the implication that stem cells could now be obtained without the involvement of human fetuses.

A wonderful advantage of using skin as a source of stem cells is the possibility of using the skin of the patient himself or herself, thereby allowing for a replacement cell strategy without the complication of rejection. However, there have always been problems associated with the stem cell therapy. Firstly, there is no guarantee that laboratory-studied

stem cells will eventually convert into totally normal adult cells. The adult nerve cells derived from the embryonic-like stem cells discovered in adult skin lacked some critically important mechanisms involved in the signaling role of normal adult nerve cells. The genetic make-up of the stem cells created from adult skin cells was not identical to that of conventional embryonic stem cells. It is not known how abnormal the consequences of these genetic differences are. Another major concern is that the use of a retrovirus might introduce the potential for initiating tumors in the host or of causing undesirable genetic mutations in neighboring cells. Moreover, reprogrammed adult skin cells might still contain DNA abnormalities caused by earlier exposure to sunlight or environmental toxins that could carry over to the newly created stem cell population.

To promote useful function, the implanted neural cells or tissues have to become correctly integrated into the existing neuronal circuitry. The implanted material has to be positioned at the right anatomical sites, the new nerve cells have to be recognized by other nerve cells as appropriate targets with which to make new connections, and they themselves have to grow out nerve fibres that will make connections with the correct receiving nerve cells.

The results of a variety of studies suggest that cues exist, even in adult nervous systems, which help guide newly-growing nerve fibres to correct destinations. It seems that some of the mechanisms that operate during early development to ensure that the correct connectivity is achieved survive into adulthood.

So, provided that neuroscientists are able to implant stem cells, or stem cells already transformed into adult nerve cells, into the required brain locations, it could be that enough new connectivity would spontaneously develop to maintain or restore functions threatened by disease or trauma. In the case of the Alzheimer's disease, the brain regions involved in memory and cognitive functions would be the prime target of such implantations.



# Family Support Information

By Vicky Roy, Family Support Case Worker

## Our Call to Greatness

*“Everyone has the power for greatness – not fame but greatness, because greatness is determined by service”  
~ Dr. Martin Luther King*

Each of us has a personal call to greatness. Not greatness in a worldly way but greatness that reaches out and deeply touches someone we care about. For some of us that call for greatness is the call to provide care for a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease. That call may be our opportunity to really make a difference in the life of a loved one and to have the significant experience of traveling the Alzheimer journey side by side with them. There are a number of things we can consider when embarking on this journey.

Acceptance – It is a simple fact of life that there are circumstances in our life that we cannot change and there are those we can change. The fact that a loved one has Alzheimer’s disease is something we cannot change. However, we can change how we respond to it. Acceptance is the first step towards making a conscious decision to cope with Alzheimer’s disease in a positive way or a negative way. Choosing a positive attitude puts us on a path that helps us to view our caregiving experience as a time to learn, love and grow. In walking the Alzheimer journey with a loved one we learn that attitude is everything. Accepting the situation and setting out to provide the best care we can puts our situation in a better light.

Live for Today – I’m sure you’ve often heard the quote, “Yesterday is history and tomorrow is a mystery. That is why we call today the *present*.” Indeed living in the present is a gift. Fretting over yesterday and worrying about tomorrow depletes our energy. It is better to live for today and enjoy the moments we have with our loved one.

Remember Love – It is therapeutic to remember the love and the bond we have built with our loved ones over the years. These ties are the ties that bind. These ties are the ties that inspire us to stand

by our loved ones in their time of need.

We can Grow – Caregiving can make us stronger. Our life and the life of our loved one will change as we face the challenges that Alzheimer’s disease can bring into our lives. However, we can grow as human beings. We will tap into sources of inner strength we may not realize we have. We’ll learn to do new things and take on new roles. We’ll learn to become our loved one’s advocate. I believe we do, in time, become more sensitive to others pain, more compassionate and caring.

Caring for Ourselves – This is not selfish. In order to care for our loved one we need to care for ourselves. Keeping friends and family in our life give us the support we need. Taking time to replenish ourselves gives us the strength to care for another. Keeping our sense of humor brings us joy and hope. A shared smile or laugh can be the highlight of our day as well as create a precious memory. We need to give ourselves permission to be imperfect. None of us was born an expert caregiver. We cannot be strong all the time. Remember that great caregivers are made, not born. Know that caregiving is difficult. The more experience we have in doing something, the better we get at doing it and the easier it will become. It is okay to seek for and ask for help. Needing help is not a character flaw! Accessing the services and help that you and your loved one need is important. We need to remember that we like to help others. It is human nature and others therefore others like to help us.

Our Call to Greatness – Caregivers are truly every man and every woman. We come from all walks of life. Our call to greatness means we need to acknowledge our caregiving role and embrace both the joy and sorrows as we walk side by side with our loved one throughout the Alzheimer journey.

*“If you have found it in your heart to care for someone, you have succeeded.” ~ Maya Angelou*



# Great Leisure & Recreation Ideas

By Amy Bird, Recreation Therapist

## Activities That Work

We are often asked what types of activities caregivers can do with their loved ones at home. Upon further discussion we frequently learn that the person with Alzheimer’s disease is involved in a variety of activities but these are “activities of daily living.”

Activities of daily living are activities like bathing, brushing one’s hair, sweeping, dressing and all of the things we normally do on a day-by-day basis. These activities can be seen as less important than traditional activities such as knitting or playing a game.

To the person with Alzheimer’s disease, however, activities of daily living are important activities for one’s self esteem. Integrating these activities into a daily routine can assist in building confidence. These activities should be done at the level of participation that matches the person’s abilities. The person may not be able to initiate an activity, but may enjoy carrying out the activity once started. For example, the person with dementia may have difficulty making the decision to sweep the floor and then going to find the broom, but may enjoy sweeping if the broom is placed in his or her hand.

The caregiver should focus on the person’s strengths when planning an activity. Strengths to consider include: ability to use senses, ability to remember well learned skills, long term memory, sense of humour, and music appreciation. The following is a list of activities that are generally “no-fail” because they focus on common strengths.

1. *Home Activities:* floral arranging, shoe shining, separating socks, gathering laundry, washing windows, rolling pennies, dusting, clipping coupons, setting the table
2. *In the Kitchen:* shelling peas, baking cookies/bread, making salad, tasting parties (tea, popcorn, unusual foods), making homemade lemonade
3. *Physical:* raking leaves, planting seeds, weeding the garden, dancing, sweeping, walking

4. *Games:* crokinole, dominoes, cards
5. *Personal Care:* facial, massage, manicure, styling hair, cleaning jewellery, cleaning glasses
6. *Intergenerational:* bubble blowing, baby day, Easter egg hunt/colouring eggs, balloon toss, letter writing
7. *Music:* lullabies (calming), big bands (moving), polkas (fun)
8. *Reminiscing Kits:* tool box, sewing, jewellery, fishing, photo albums
9. *Crafts:* sanding wood, stringing Cheerios for birds, stuffing toys, stamping/print making
10. *Discussion:* giving opinions, political parties, bible/famous quotes, proverbs/similes

Adapted with permission from the Alzheimer Society of Toronto.



### Giving in Celebration and in Memory

Over the past year, two couples have generously made donations to the Alzheimer Society as part of their wedding celebrations. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to:

- Dr. Matthew Holmes and Dr. Jennifer Atwood who asked guests for donations to the Alzheimer Society in lieu of gifts in memory of Dr. Holmes’ grandmother, Leni Holmes.
- Anne Duncan and Chris Duggan who raised money for the Alzheimer Society by charging \$5 per kiss in memory of Phyllis Duggan.



If you are interested in doing something similar, give us a call and we can help make your next celebration more meaningful by knowing that you have helped improve the lives of people that are affected by Alzheimer’s disease.



# Fundraising News

By Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers & Special Events

## Thank You!

We would like to thank all of the dedicated volunteers who helped during a very busy January awareness month. Without your help, we would not be able to provide important services such as recreation therapy, family support, and education for people affected by Alzheimer's disease.

### Manulife Walk for Memories

As noted on the front page, an amazing \$21,000 was raised to help people coping with Alzheimer's disease. Over 90 people attended a fun afternoon at White Pines CV&S that involved complimentary massages, entertainment, refreshments, a scavenger hunt, great prizes...and a bit of walking too! Many thanks to our sponsors:



Provincial Sponsors: Manulife, CTV, Marlin Travel

Local Sponsors:

*Platinum:* North Star Broadcasting

*Gold:* Northwood Funeral Home, Brookfield Power

*Silver:* Penny's Pets, Lamon's Printing, The Medicine Shoppe - Great Northern Rd., Bell, The Athlete's Foot, Royal Purple #155

*Bronze:* Allstate - Allan Moore, And Son Contracting, Avery Construction, Blue Flame Gas, Castle Realty Ltd., Dairy Queen, Hess Jewellers, KPMG, Lock City Monuments, Mike Moore & Sons Construction Ltd., Mio's Furniture Fashions, North Star Travel Plus, PUC Inc., Repeat Rentals, Soo Mill Build All, Soo Video Sales and Service, We Care Home Health Services

Special thanks to the staff of White Pines for their help and support, to the donors of prizes and refreshments, and to all of the participants and supporters of the Walk.

Congratulations to top pledge earner Lisa Carter who raised an incredible \$1,650 using the online pledging system, and to top pledge earning team, RBC Royal Bank (see picture on front page).

## Door-to-Door Campaign

January brought some very challenging weather at the end of the month, from rain to a blizzard in the space of two days! A big warm thank you to all canvassers who braved the elements. Thank you also to the individuals, businesses, and service clubs who generously supported this annual campaign.

Congratulations to our top canvassers:

Sault Ste. Marie - Terry Wilson

Algoma District - Teena Tregonning

Student - Jared Discher

## Half Life

We would like to extend our most heartfelt appreciation to the Sault Theatre Workshop for choosing the Alzheimer Society to benefit from the staging of the moving play, Half Life, on March 4. Over \$700 was raised from ticket sales.

We are pleased to recognize the platinum and gold sponsors of the 2008 Manulife Walk for Memories:



Continued thanks to Station Mall Drug Mart for the ongoing support through the sale of Nevada Break-Open Tickets.



Did you know that you could help the Alzheimer Society save postage costs by requesting an electronic version of the newsletter rather than a paper copy?

For more information on our e-newsletter, please contact us at 942-2195.



# Upcoming Events

Join Us For Our Fifth Annual

## Ladies' Night Out

An Entertaining Evening Just for the Girls

Tuesday, April 29, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

at Algoma's Water Tower Inn

Doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Hors d'oeuvres served to your table at 6:30 p.m.

### This year's line-up:

**Live in Your LIME-light!** Katherine G. MacRae of SuccessBiz will share ideas on how to "Live In the Moment for Everyday Success".

**The Big Squeeze!** Deborah Antonello will help us take a "bite" out of the sandwich generation.



**Sue Barber and Shot in the Dark Productions:** This hilarious acting troupe will show us the funny side of family events that go terribly wrong.

*Master of Ceremonies: Lou-Anne Young*

Advance tickets are \$30 and include entertainment, coffee, tea, hors d'oeuvres, selection of sweets and fruits, and a great time. Tickets are selling fast so don't be disappointed—reserve your table soon.

We wish to acknowledge the major sponsorship of Algoma's Water Tower Inn, as well as other valued sponsors: Curves, Mane Street Salon and Spa, Bennardo Jewellers, New North Greenhouses, Zenones, Lindt Chocolatiers, ICI Paints, Community First Credit Union, and Sears Cosmetics and Fragrances.



## An Alzheimer's Disease Update

### Public Forum

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Location: Algoma's Water Tower Inn  
East Room

Presenter: Dr. Bill Dalziel, MD  
Chief, Ottawa Regional Geriatric Program,  
Ottawa Hospital

Agenda: 1:45 p.m. - Reception  
2:00 p.m. - Presentation

RSVP: Alzheimer Society  
942-2195

## Caregiver Appreciation Day

Caregivers of persons with dementia are invited to join us for a day of relaxation and rejuvenation on May 2, 2008 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Featured sessions include:

- Recreation Therapy - will discuss how to modify favourite activities and motivate your loved one to enhance enjoyment and participation
- Personality Dimensions® - will help you foster and deepen understanding of others, facilitate communication, and improve relationships

Call Vicky at 942-2195 for more information.

**Alzheimer Society Scholarships:** Each year, the Alzheimer Society offers scholarship awards to Sault College students. The scholarships are intended to promote study within the field of health and human services, with a special emphasis on care of persons with dementia. We would like to extend our congratulations to the winner of the 2008 award, Liza Turpin in the Collaborative BScN program.

# Alzheimer Society

SAULT STE. MARIE  
& ALGOMA DISTRICT

## Contact Information

### Main Office:

633 Albert St. E.  
Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K5  
Phone: 705-942-2195  
Fax: 705-256-6777

### East Algoma Satellite Office:

100 Manitoba Rd.  
Elliot Lake, ON P5A 3T1  
Phone: 705-848-8145  
Fax: 705-848-1306

General Email:

[info@alzheimeralgoma.org](mailto:info@alzheimeralgoma.org)

Website:

[www.alzheimeralgoma.org](http://www.alzheimeralgoma.org)

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.

## Support Through Membership

Please show your support for the work of the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District. To become a member or make a donation, please complete, detach, and return to our office with payment.

- Membership:  Individual \$15  Seniors/Students \$10  
 Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

As a Member, you will receive our newsletter published three times per year, notice of upcoming events and meetings, voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting, and a charitable tax receipt.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your support!**

## Our Mission

To improve the quality of life for persons affected by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in Algoma District, and to provide support for their caregivers.

## Our Values

Respect  
Compassion  
Integrity  
Accountability  
Partnerships  
Person-centred

## Our Vision

The Alzheimer Society will be a premier dementia knowledge resource and a recognized leader in dementia education and support.

## Board of Directors

Mark Zorzit, President  
Karen McAndrew, Past President  
Susan Van Atte, Vice President  
Anna Hamilton, Treasurer  
Beth Laderoute, Secretary  
Eric McCooeye, Director  
Anna Cartmill, Director  
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Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director  
Vicky Roy, Family Support Case Worker  
Linda Sullivan, Education Coordinator  
Amy Bird, Recreation Therapist  
Carolyn Ross, Education & Support  
Coordinator, East Algoma  
Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers  
& Special Events  
Monica Ruzyski, Bookkeeper/  
Office Assistant