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Executive Message

Karen McAndrew, President Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director

The Alzheimer Society's Annual General Meeting, held in June, saw the retirement of long-standing board member Catherine Bell, and the election of two new members, Anna Cartmill and Eric McCooeye. Catherine completed six years on the Alzheimer Society board, and during that time fulfilled many important roles, both on the board and off. Catherine was the GreenBelt Charities Association representative and as such, provided monthly updates to the board on the affairs of the GCA. She also volunteered as an office volunteer, coin can distributor, coffee break kit deliverer, Walk for Memories committee member, door-to-door canvasser, and much much more. We will miss Catherine's lively interaction at board meetings, but are grateful that she will be continuing on with many of her other volunteer tasks. We are also delighted to welcome Anna and Eric to the board, and look forward to working with them over the next several years.

Dale Goldhawk was the guest speaker at the Annual General Meeting, describing his family's struggles to cope with his father's Alzheimer Disease. Many members of the audience found they were able to identify with the situations Dale recounted.

A slightly modified mission statement was approved at the Annual General Meeting, in order to more accurately reflect our organization. The revised mission statement is:
To improve the quality of life for people with Alzheimer Disease and related dementias, and to provide support for their caregivers. We will accomplish this mission by:

- *providing support and guidance for people affected by the disease*
- *promoting the rights and well-being of the person with Alzheimer Disease or a related dementia*
- *providing information, education, and training*
- *increasing public awareness in the community*
- *providing support and/or funds for research*
- *collaborating with the provincial and national levels of the organization.*

Funding Received for PSW Newsletter

The Alzheimer Society, in partnership with the Dementia Care Network Algoma, was pleased to learn that a proposal to produce an educational newsletter for Personal Support Workers (PSWs) was accepted. The newsletter will be published three times per year for the next three years, and will be distributed to front-line workers in community agencies and long-term care homes. The funding comes from the Post-Alzheimer Strategy fund.



Sault College Bursaries

Congratulations to the two Sault College students who were the recipients of bursaries awarded by the Alzheimer Society. Heather Burke and Jennifer Scornaiencki were awarded the scholarships that are intended to promote study within the fields of health and human services, with special emphasis on the care of persons with dementia.

News & Information

New Additions to the Katherine L. Punch Resource Centre



Videos

We all experience stress, and laughter is the best medicine of all. (See Vicky Roy's column in the Spring 2005 newsletter for more on the benefits of humour.) We have acquired several videos by veteran funny-woman, Loretta Laroche, guaranteed to tickle your funny bone:

- The Joy of Stress
- How Serious Is This?
- Humor Your Stress

Books

- Talking to Alzheimers: Simple ways to connect when you visit with a family member or friend. Claudia J. Strauss. (2001).
- Learning to Speak Alzheimer's. Joanne Koenig Coste. (2003).
- Alzheimer's Disease. Dr. William Molloy and Dr. Paul Caldwell. (2003).

Replacement copy.

Elder Abuse Prevention Committee

Perhaps you suspect that your elderly neighbour is not getting the care you think she needs, but you aren't certain. Or maybe you wonder about some bruises you've seen on your aging uncle. You can't get rid of the nagging feeling that something's not right. But is it elder abuse? What should you look for, and what can you do?

Take time to understand what constitutes elder abuse, and what signs indicate that a loved one may not be getting the care that he or she deserves. Knowing more about elder abuse and who to call for assistance can help you protect your loved ones. Remember that the excellent quality of life we enjoy in our community today is the result of the efforts of seniors who forged our history, enriched our lives, and shaped our future. Seniors deserve respect and the right to be safe from harm by those who live with them, care for them, or come into day-to-day contact with them. Sometimes, however, older adults are not treated with respect. Sometimes disrespect crosses the line into abuse.

Elder abuse occurs when someone knowingly or unknowingly causes harm or risk of harm to an older adult. It can take several forms, including physical, financial, or emotional abuse, or neglect. So what can be done? If you suspect that an older adult is being victimized, please do not hesitate to contact one of the following three referral agencies that will provide initial support in dealing with the problem:

Community Care Access Centre - 949-1650
Crisis Services - 759-3398 (24 hour telephone response)
Emergency Police Services - 911



"Generations Coming Together Against Elder Abuse"

Grief and Alzheimer Disease

By Linda Sullivan, Education Coordinator

The idea that grief is a partner to dementia is not new. Grief is the emotional result of loss and as Alzheimer Disease (AD) carries with it multiple losses, it is only natural to experience grief throughout the journey. Rando's redefinition of anticipatory mourning (2000) says that it is a reaction to all losses experienced in the past, present, and future of a life-threatening disease. People with AD lose the history of who they are and lose their connections to family members when memories fade. The loss of present memories means the loss of current relationships and as the disease progresses, the loss of abilities means the loss of responsibilities and roles and ultimately the loss of independence.

The family's grief will become stronger as the disease progresses and they see the deterioration in their loved one's memory and abilities. The person they once knew is not the person they are now caring for. Grief may become complicated by caregivers losing social contacts and giving up hobbies. Work roles may change, relationships with friends may be stressed, and caregivers might be embarrassed about the behaviours the individual is displaying. These changes can lead to difficulty coping, which in turn can lead to depression. Some caregivers feel unable to grieve due to the stigma of the disease.

When death occurs, there may be some relief that the suffering is over for the individual, but that in no way lessens the grief. Some people feel that because the death was anticipated, the grief period should be easier and shorter. Grief can actually be enhanced by the guilt and sadness of what has happened and the feeling that they could have done more and been more patient. Grief will show up in the person's cognition, behaviour, spirituality, and in their physical being.

The goal of support is to validate the grief throughout the process of the disease and after death. In the early stages of the disease, the individual with AD is aware of the changes occurring and needs support through listening and reassurance. More research needs to be done in the area of understanding how the individual with dementia is impacted by grief. The notion that a person with advanced dementia doesn't understand and therefore can't feel the loss is under debate. Behaviours such as agitation and restlessness may be the person's way of telling us that something isn't right. Professionals can help family members recognize the losses and changes caused by the disease and offer ways to develop coping strategies and problem-solving skills.

Walk a Mile in My Shoes

By Vicky Roy, Family Support Case Worker

Every person is unique, and this is why every person with dementia has a unique response to it. However, some emotions are common responses for many people, but even these may be felt at a different time, with a different intensity, or in a different way based on the person's personality, attitude, relationships, past experiences, and present situation.

Some people may experience shock and denial when diagnosed with Alzheimer Disease or a related dementia (ADRD). Others may be relieved that there is finally an explanation for the symptoms that they have been experiencing. Following diagnosis, a person may seek out education, information, and support in regard to their new diagnosis. They may want and need to know more about dementia, treatments available, and current research being done. They may choose to plan ahead and learn how to manage their dementia in the most effective ways possible. However, there may be those that choose consciously or unconsciously to deny the diagnosis, and may not seek education, information, or support. This may be the person's conscious choice, or it may be related to fear, anxiety, sadness, grief, or lack of insight.

As caregivers, first and foremost we need to be sensitive to the person's emotions and to the choices they have made. We need to try to understand the person's experience and offer them our support as we attempt to walk the Alzheimer journey along with them. We must try to walk in their shoes. Also, as caregivers, we need to learn more about ADRD so we are better equipped to offer our support. Last but not least, we need to remember that we don't know how we would react if we ever received a diagnosis of ADRD. We would probably want others to be sensitive to our emotions, to try to understand our response, and to reach out and walk along with us in our unique experience.

Gardening: A Berry Good Idea!

By Tammy Bennardo, Recreation Therapist

Gardening has many health and therapeutic benefits. For seniors, gardening can be especially beneficial because it:



- is enjoyable exercise
- increases physical activity and maintains mobility
- improves endurance and strength
- reduces stress and promotes relaxation
- improves well-being through social interaction.

Garden spaces, tools, and equipment can be modified or adapted to help reduce the physical stress associated with gardening. Suggestions include:

- raise beds
- use wall and trellis spaces
- provide hanging baskets and containers
- use foam, tape, and plastic tubing to modify tools
- use light-weight tools.

Safety tips while gardening include:

- avoid the use of power tools
- prevent high sun exposures - work early in the morning or late in the day
- don't forget the sunscreen
- wear good shoes, gardening hat, and gloves.

Activities associated with cultivating an edible garden include:

- digging
- planting
- watering
- harvesting of food and flowers
- crafts and hobbies associated with plants
- food preparation.

Plant Strawberries!

Strawberries are a member of the rose family, and when planted in the garden or in pot containers, provide beautiful flowers and plump red berries.

Peak season for strawberries in Ontario is June and July. If you plant the ever-bearing variety, they will produce berries throughout the summer and fall.

Strawberry plants can be planted in any garden soil, but the richer the soil, the larger the crop. Strawberries are a good source of Vitamin C and are low fat.

A cool summer treat is Strawberry Gelato. Heat one cup of sugar with 1.5 cups water until the sugar dissolves. Let cool. Combine 3 cups pureed strawberries, 2 tbsp. finely chopped lemon zest, and 3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice with the cooled sugar mixture. Freeze until firm and enjoy!



Gardening is a healthy stimulating activity that can be enjoyed by everyone. With some planning, you can create a safe, accessible, interesting, and pleasant space, while having fun at the same time!

References: www.betterhealthchannel.com and www.ontarioberries.com.

Contact Us

Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District
633 Albert St. E.

Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6A 2K5

Phone: 705-942-2195

Toll free: 1-877-396-7888

Email: alzssm@shaw.ca

Website: www.dementiaalgoma.org/alzheimersociety

Office hours are Monday to Friday 8:30 - 4:30.

Evenings and weekends by appointment

Can you help?

We are in need of:

Volunteers: for our volunteer visiting program and for Tuesday night Bingo at GreenBelt Bingo Hall.

Yarn: for our cuddle bear program.

A&P Receipts: for the Save-A-Tape program.

Any assistance in these areas would be greatly appreciated! Call for more details.

Volunteer and Fundraising News

By Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers and Special Events

Thank you volunteers! We cannot say it often enough. Our chapter could not exist without you, and words cannot express our appreciation for all that you do. A Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held at the Riuniti Banquet Halls on June 29, and almost 70 volunteers joined us as we paid tribute to our dedicated and supportive group. Thank you to guest speaker Mary Ellen Szadkowski and to the businesses who donated the great door prizes.

Recent Events:

Ladies' Night Out: For the second time in as many years, Ladies' Night Out was sold out! Thanks to the 360 women who attended this memorable evening of laughter, entertainment, prizes, and refreshments. A big thank you to our major sponsor, **Riuniti Banquet Halls**, for the incredible support. Thanks also to our sponsors: Curves, Ferrero, Inner Beauty Day Spa, Calvin Klein, Dior, Weight Watchers, and New North Greenhouses; and to our supporters: Bennardo Jewellers, The Comedics, The English Butler, Showstoppers, Lamon's Printing, The Loon's Nest, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Mini Maids, Royal Bank, Glassworks, Skinsations, Tea & Mary, Sweet Greetings, The Treasure Chest, Collegiate Heights Retirement Home, Ideal Concept in Gift Giving, Hallmark, Shoppers Drug Mart (Second Line), Ocean Waves Aqua Massage, and Zenone's; and to Vicki Chiappetta, Julie Hryniewicz, Shelagh Mosher, and Timothy Murphy; and to all of the volunteers who provided their time and expertise. *Thank you all!*

Witness for the Prosecution: We hope that you had the opportunity to see the Algoma District Law Association's production of *Witness for the Prosecution*. Proceeds from the production will be shared with the Alzheimer Society, Algoma Fall Festival, and Algoma Family Services Foundation. Thanks to sponsors, advertisers, supporters, actors, and the many people who worked behind the scenes to make this event a success. Special thanks to the Algoma District Law Association for choosing the Alzheimer Society as one of the benefiting charities, and especially to Rom Kwolek and Jim and Marie Arcangeletti for their commitment.

Upcoming Events:

Forget-Me-Not Tea & Dessert: Collegiate Heights will once again be sponsoring the Forget-Me-Not Tea & Dessert on Thursday, September 8 from 2 to 4 p.m. Admission is \$3 at the door. The local trio "The Skylarks" will entertain with music from the big band era.



Algoma Fall Craft Show: Thanks to organizers Lucy Boston and Gerlinda Haefele, the Algoma Fall Craft Show will be held at the Best Western Great Northern on Sunday, September 25 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. The show will feature artisans from across Algoma District who will be selling their hand-crafted items, as well as the popular Alzheimer Society silent auction table. Visit our table and place a bid - you might get a unique treasure for a great price!



Wild Game Dinner: Outdoor columnist Peter Denley will be the guest speaker at

3rd Annual Wild Game Dinner, which is being held on Saturday, November 26, 2005 at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Northern Ave. The menu features stuffed boar, lasagna, fresh fish, salad buffet, and much more! Tickets are \$30 each and proceeds are divided between the Alzheimer Society and the Knights of Columbus Council #11608.

Thank you once again to our Nevada site, IDA Station Mall, for its ongoing support of the Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District.

It's Back...!



This year, Coffee Break celebrates its 10th anniversary! Stay tuned for more information about our efforts to make the Guinness Book of World Records with the World's Largest Coffee Break!

Watch for the giant Coffee Cup balloon around town...coming to a host site near you!

Join us for the 10th annual Alzheimer Coffee Break. It can be as simple as brewing a pot of coffee and inviting co-workers, clients, suppliers, colleagues, friends, family, and anyone else to enjoy a "cup for a cure". Everyone who attends is asked to make a donation of his or her choice. The idea is to have fun while raising money and increasing awareness of Alzheimer Disease. No need to stick to coffee...add munchies and other beverages and watch the donations "pour in". You could even "blend" your Coffee Break with another event, such as a party or luncheon. To get you started, we will deliver a Coffee Break kit to you with some promotional material, donation box, and information on how to host a successful Coffee Break. Call Bea if you are interested in hosting a Coffee Break at work or at home.

The official Coffee Break day this year is Wednesday, September 21, to coincide with World Alzheimer Day. But you can choose any day in September if another day is more convenient for you.

The **Golden Coffee Cup Challenge** is entering its third year, and we are pleased to say that restaurants will now have their own category. Host sites raising the most money in each of the 13 categories will win the coveted Golden Coffee Cup Award and earn the right to display this trophy in their location for the next year.

Dessert and Coffee Combos: Please support the following restaurants who will be offering scrumptious combos or unique specials, with a portion of the sale being donated to the Alzheimer Society: A Thymely Manner, Bridges Restaurant (Holiday Inn), Giovanni's Family Restaurant, Joey Calzones Italian Eatery & Bar, Vincenzo's Ristorante & Bar, North 82, Uncle Gino's Cafe, U Betcha Tap & Grill, and the Wawa Motor Inn.

Coffee Break Decals: Please visit the following locations that will be selling Coffee Cup decals in support of the Alzheimer Society in the month of September: Absolutely Delicious, A Taste of Scandia, Canadian Tire (SSM), East Street Coffee Shop, Subway, Joe's No Frills, Pino's Get Fresh Foods, Dinelle's Country Market (Echo Bay), and Elliot Lake IGA.

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