



Alzheimer Society

SAULT STE. MARIE & ALGOMA DISTRICT



Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2007
Volume 20, Number 3

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**Manulife
Walk for
Memories**
Join us at White Pines
on January 27.
See P. 7 for details.

Message from the President & Executive Director

Mark Zorzit, President
Carolyn Cybulski, Executive Director

Thank you to everyone who helped to make Coffee Break™ 2007 such an incredible success. With your support, we were able to surpass our goal and raise an amazing \$41,000 for local Alzheimer services.

We would also like to thank the many people who attended our two free public education events held this fall. Over 60 people attended the Alzheimer's Disease Update with guest speaker Dr. Frank Ianni held on October 16, and over 130 people were in attendance for the November 1st workshop by Daniel Kuhn titled "Tough Decisions in Dementia Care". Feedback from the sessions was very positive.

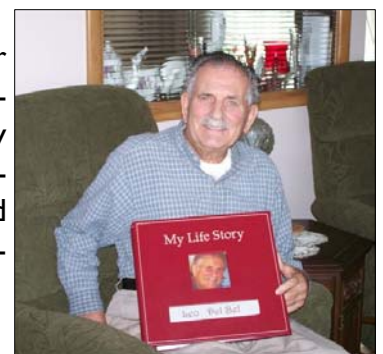
On the heels of the busy holiday season comes an equally busy Alzheimer Awareness Month in January. The theme for this year is a continuation of last year's theme, "Heads Up! For Healthier Brains!". Please see Page 7 for a listing of awareness activities.

On behalf of the board and staff of the Alzheimer Society, we would like to wish you a very enjoyable holiday season.

New Horizons Project in Final Phase of Completion

We are delighted with the success of the "Preserving Our Past...Enhancing Our Lives" project funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors program. By the end of the project, 35 Life Stories will have been completed by volunteers, people with Alzheimer's disease, and their families. Thanks to all who assisted with this important project.

Pictured at right is project participant Leo Del Bel with his completed book.



Alzheimer Education Conference Scheduled for March 28, 2008

We are pleased to announce that our 7th annual Alzheimer Education Conference will focus on the theme of Communication and Relationships in Dementia Care. Featured speaker will be communication specialist Dr. J. B. Orange. Dr. Orange has been conducting research in the area of cognitive-communication disorders for many years, with a special emphasis on communication of individuals with dementia and their family caregivers. Other guest speakers that will address the theme of relationships and communication include Mary Ellen Szadkowski, Alana MacIntyre, and Deborah Antonello. Cost is \$40 and includes lunch and refreshments. Please call 942-2195 to register.



News & Information



Satellite Corner

News from the East Algoma Satellite Office
By Carolyn Ross

Thank you to everyone who supported our Coffee Break events in the East Algoma area. Many people worked very hard to ensure the success of their events. The creativity of host sites is impressive, with events ranging from school activities to bake sales. Pictured at left is the signage for the Coffee Break event at First Baptist Church in Elliot Lake.



Elliot Lake held its first Coffee Break kick-off on Thursday October 6 at Huron Lodge. Among the people in attendance were Mayor Rick Hamilton, MPP Mike Brown, and other distinguished members of the community. Thank you to everyone.

On behalf of the East Algoma office, I would like to wish a happy festive season to everyone. I hope that your year ahead will be filled with peace.

Please note that effective January 2, 2008, the East Algoma satellite office will be open Tuesday to Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Hello The following poem was written by Kerry Van Daele as a tribute to her Nana, Evelyn Nolet, 1918 - 1997.

Hello do you hear me
It's me your mom wife lover
Where am I
Where are you
In the distant recess of my mind
I smell the oatmeal cooking
And hear the chatter at the table
As you all hustle out the door
LOVE YOU MOM!

Hello do you hear me
It's me your mom nana wife lover
Where am I
Where are you
The children are all older
The smells are still the same
Oatmeal in the morning
And the chatter at the table
Sometimes it's of school, dates and work
But the end reply is always the same
As you all hustle out the door
LOVE YOU MOM!

Hello do you hear me
It's me your mom nana wife lover
Where am I

Where are you
There are grandchildren now
The smells are still the same
Oatmeal in the morning
And there's chatter at the table
Of new things changing times
The grandchildren run outside
LOVE YOU NANA!

Hello do you hear me
It's me your mom nana wife lover
Where am I
Where are you
Well Dad passed away this morning
After many years of life
And he's not here to help me now
There are no smells of oatmeal cooking
No chatter at the table
No one to say I LOVE YOU MOM!

Hello do you hear me
It's me your mom nana wife lover
The doctor says I'm failing
And my health it's not so good
I should go to the hospital
So they can look after me

I can't remember to look after myself
I don't know where I am
Oh please help! Help me!

Hello do you year me
It's your mom nana wife lover
Where am I
Where are you
I am lying in this place
Wondering where you are
You dad he's at the end of my bed
I run to him with open arms
I smell the oatmeal cooking
And hear the chatter at the table
And as we walk away I turn
I'm lying on my bed
Wait! You're all there I wasn't alone...

Hello do you hear me
It's your mom your nana
I LOVE YOU!





Education & Research Update

By Linda Sullivan, Education Coordinator

Blood Test for Alzheimer's Disease on the Horizon?

In a study published in *Nature Medicine* in October, 2007, a global team of researchers identified 18 cell-signaling proteins in blood plasma that could predict with 90% accuracy whether an individual will develop Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. Jack Diamond, Scientific Director of the Alzheimer Society of Canada, makes the following comments:

"The authors of this brief report compared blood plasma from people without symptoms with that of people with early Alzheimer's disease (AD). The researchers focused on 120 known proteins in blood plasma that act as chemical "messengers", carrying important information between blood cells, brain cells, and cells in the immune system. They found that levels of 18 of these proteins were abnormal in people with early AD, as well as in people who later went on to develop AD.

"The correlation was not 100%, which would have meant that ALL those with abnormal levels of the 18 proteins would have gone on to develop the full blown disease, but was approximately 90-91%. This percentage is similar to the percentage of people diagnosed by conventional memory and cognitive testing as having AD, who later had the diagnosis confirmed by more sophisticated techniques, including post-mortem examination of the brain.

"So although the new tests may prove a useful addition to present diagnostic protocols, they do not represent an approach that doctors would readily wish to apply.

"What we must remember, however, is that advances like these almost always add to our understanding of what exactly is going on in AD, and in that sense, are always of great potential interest."

Exercise and the Prevention of Dementia

As the burden of age-related diseases increases, healthcare professionals look for ways not just to treat Alzheimer's disease (AD), but also to prevent cognitive impairment. Preliminary clinical trials suggest that regular exercise can improve cognition in as little as one month. They also indicate that people who exercise have lower rates of AD and other dementias and have slower rates of cognitive decline.

Even if some degree of cognitive decline is inevitable with aging, dementia does not appear to be. Some people avoid dementia despite extreme old age. A number of lifestyle factors, including education, leisure activity, and diet are associated with a reduced risk of dementia. Research studies included patients from a variety of countries and age groups with different definitions of exercise, and concluded that people who exercise are at a lesser risk of developing dementia.

Of note, it does not seem to matter whether people exercise at a young or old age. Physical activity is associated with reduced rates of cognitive decline in people of all cognitive abilities. Regardless of diagnosis, those people who are physically active seem to have better cognitive function and slower cognitive decline than those who are sedentary.

The specific type of activity does not seem to matter, though it appears that an exercise program including a variety of activities and social engagement may offer the greatest reward. In general at least 30 minutes of physical activity, at least 3 times a week, at intensity greater than walking, seems to decrease the risk of dementia.

Middleton, L., Rockwood, K. (2007) *Exercise and the Prevention of Dementia* STA Communications Inc. (*The Canadian Review of Alzheimer's Disease and other Dementias*, Vol. 10, No. 3)



Family Support Information

By Vicky Roy, Family Support Case Worker



The Placement Decision

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia (ADRD) can be a very rewarding experience yet also a very stressful one. Caregivers often promise, with the best of intentions, to look after their loved one at home and never to "place" him/her in a long term care home. This promise, however, is often unable to be kept due to the nature of cognitive impairment and the enormous demands that are placed on the caregiver.

When is the right time for you, the caregiver, to THINK about the placement process? The answer is: as soon as you are able to. This doesn't mean that you have to put your loved one on a waiting list as soon as a diagnosis of ADRD is made. It does mean that it's helpful to take tours of the long term care homes in this area, with your loved one if possible, to determine what the best "fit" will be. You can contact the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) - 949-1650 in Sault Ste. Marie. The CCAC can give you information about the placement process, what services are provided by long term care homes and how much these services cost. The long term care homes can be contacted directly by you to arrange tours in order to help you decide which one best suits the needs and lifestyle of your loved one with ADRD. Contact the CCAC when you are ready to initiate the placement process

When is the right time for you to initiate the placement process? This is a very complicated question and the answer must take into consideration many different factors.

Usually a caregiver has a scenario that will define in his/her mind when the "right" time will be (when she becomes incontinent; when he's no longer able to recognize me; never). Often times, though, the caregiving role ends up being different than expected and the loved one must be placed before the anticipated scenario comes to pass. Again, many different factors regarding not only your loved one but also you as a caregiver must be taken into consideration when thinking about initiating the placement

process. Do you have health problems that impose on your ability to look after your loved one? Are you getting enough sleep every night to have enough energy the next day to care for your loved one? Does your loved one exhibit responsive behaviors that are difficult to deal with? Do you lack important resources needed to assist you in your role (friends, family, or neighbors) that can help in some way, not enough in-home services, lack of transportation especially in rural areas? Does your loved one have special needs that complicate the situation (impairments with vision, hearing, walking, problems swallowing, falls...)? Are you getting upset over things that were once minor, crying a lot, feeling helpless or have other signs of depression? Was your caregiver role taken on voluntarily or is it done out of a sense of duty? Are there safety issues? Can your loved one effectively seek help in an emergency if needed? Is your situation made more complex by troubling family dynamics?

No one person copes with caregiving demands in the same way. Every situation is different! It's healthy to speak to other caregivers, to share your experiences and gain valuable support and insight. It's NOT healthy to compare your abilities as a caregiver to the abilities of others and place unrealistic expectations on yourself. We would all like to think that we have "super powers" and can handle any kind of stress that is thrown our way but this just isn't the case. Know your limits (we all have them!), try to be introspective and ask yourself how much longer you'll be able to continue in the caregiving role. You don't want to wait until you're completely overwhelmed before you put your loved one's name on the list for a long term care home. Placement in times of crisis is never pleasant and can make it harder for you to resolve any feelings of guilt you might have about what needs to be done.

So, when is the time to think about placement? Now. When is the time to initiate placement? When you feel it's time after taking into consideration the many factors that affect your unique situation. Even after considering all the issues that are

(continued on page 5)



Great Leisure & Recreation Ideas

By Amy Bird, Recreation Therapist

Music Therapy: A Fun & Beneficial Winter Activity

One of the challenges, associated with caring for an individual with dementia involves finding fun and achievable activities to occupy that individual's time. Now that the warm summer weather has left us, and winter is approaching, the number of fun and beneficial activities has decreased. We are now faced with the difficult task of finding activities to do with our loved ones indoors. One great activity that is beneficial in many ways is music therapy.



Music is a very powerful medium that has the capacity to bypass many of the communication deficits related to ADRD. An interesting aspect of ADRD is the client's continuing ability to appreciate and respond to music and rhythm and therefore has the capacity to bring pleasure to the client as well as the caregiver.

Music is a great tool to help an individual reminisce about past joyful experiences and emotions and to relive these happy times. Through the use of singing, musical instruments and dance, music therapy has been proven to aid with memory loss, decrease agitation, encourage emotional expression and to provide an opportunity for social interaction.

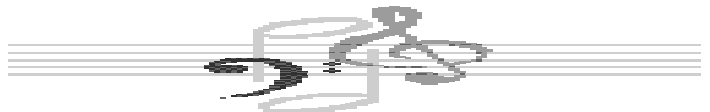
Using music therapy while caring for an individuals with ADRD can help them to call upon memories of past events, feelings and emotions. This activity may cause a link to a specific moment in an individual's life or may encourage the individual to reminisce about an entire period of their life. When the outcome of music is the reliving of positive memories, it can result in a time of peaceful relaxation and comfort and a retreat from feelings of agitation.

To begin music therapy with your loved one, it is important to use music that is meaningful to that individual. Generally, music that is most meaningful is music that comes from the period of time when

the client was in their mid-teens and twenties. To encourage participation, you may start to sing along, gently take the persons hands and begin to sway to the music, tap your feet to the beat, or take their arm to encourage familiar dancing moves.

Music can be used to maintain function and to improve quality of life in many different ways. It can provide pleasure and occupation for the mind, promote sleep or relaxation, reduce isolation and anxiety, build self esteem, and more. Using dance as a part of this activity may also help to restore the emotional closeness between spouses that is often lost. Every caregiver should take advantage of the benefits of music therapy. So, when you are looking for a beneficial activity to carryout with the individual you are caring for, try music...you may be surprised!

Klassen, Joel (2007) Music Therapy: Meeting Alzheimer's disease head-on. Stride Magazine. Lawton, P. Rubinstein, R. (2003) Interventions in Dementia Care: Toward Improving Quality of Life. Springer Publishing Co. (Alzheimer's Care Guide)



The Placement Decision

(continued from page 4)

impacting on your situation you still might not know the answer or you might know the answer deep down inside you but find it too painful to act upon. The decision is never an easy one!

There are many people who can help you to make the decision, such as your family doctor, other health care professionals, your family and friends. The Alzheimer Society of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District is always here to help you through the journey! We offer education, support groups, individual and family support, advocacy and referral to other resources that might help you. All of our services are free of charge and are provided in a supportive and confidential manner. Please call us 942-2195 or 848-8145 to discuss your specific situation and what services are right for you.

~ Adapted and printed with permission from the Alzheimer Society of Greater Simcoe County.



Fundraising News

By Bea Fioramanti, Coordinator of Volunteers & Special Events

Coffee Break™

Thank you to all of the supporters of this year's CoffeeBreak™! With the support of over 300 host sites, Coffee Break has raised Alzheimer awareness and over \$41,000.00. Thank you for taking time out of your busy days to host a coffee break at home or at work. Coffee Break kicked off to a great start in the lobby of Rome's Independent Grocer, and Collegiate Heights Retirement Residence once again generously hosted the annual Forget-Me-Not Tea.



We would like to extend special thanks to the many dedicated volunteers whose help is greatly appreciated and to our sponsors: Sault Star, KPMG, Penny's Pets, and the Co-operators on Northern Ave.

The following restaurants served up their Coffee Break specials: Thank you to: Boots and Saddles Roadhouse, Buttermilk Alpine Ski Village, Fire Side Inn in Elliot Lake, Joey Calzone's, LoneStar Café and Bar, Los Mexicanos, Lakeview Restaurant, Amici's Ristorante, Uncle Gino's Café, and Vincenzo's.

Coffee Break decals adorned the windows and walls of these community minded stores: Absolutely Delicious, Dinelle's Country Market, Canadian Tire, Foodland and Bob's No Frill's in Elliot Lake, Mitchell's IDA, Pennington's, Pino's Get Fresh, Subways, Bulk Barn, and A Taste of Scandia.

This was the fifth year that the Annual Golden Coffee Cup Award was presented to the host sites that gathered the most donations. Congratulations to the 2007 winners:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Care Facilities.....Ontario Finnish Resthome | Industrial/Construction...Algoma Steel |
| Elementary Schools.....Tarentorous Public School | Churches/Assns/Clubs...Community of Christ Church |
| Secondary Schools.....Central Algoma Secondary | Financial/Insurance.....Northern Credit Union - 2nd Line |
| Post Secondary.....Algoma University | Government Offices.....Great Lakes Forestry Centre |
| Retail/Commercial.....Zellers | Community Agencies.....NE Community Care Access Centre |
| Decal Location.....The Bulk Barn | Eateries.....Country Style Donuts |
| Home Parties.....Deloris Caughill, Marlene Trussler, Kay Koskenoja | |

Algoma Fall Craft Show

Thanks to Gerlinda Haeffele and all of the artisans who donated a craft to our Silent Auction Table and to everyone who attended this event.



Wild Game Dinner

Thank you to the Knights of Columbus Council #11608 for inviting the Alzheimer Society to once again partner with them on this event. Thank you also to everyone who donated wild game and silent auction items, and to all who attended. Proceeds will be shared between our two organizations.

Half Life

The Sault Theatre Workshop will be presenting a touching drama by John Mighton and has invited the Alzheimer Society to benefit from a one night preview performance on March 4th. All ticket sales will be donated to the Alzheimer Society. See this moving drama about two nursing home residents that meet and fall in love, rekindling what might have been a wartime romance. Tickets are \$17.00 and available at the Alzheimer Society Office. A great stocking stuffer!

Ongoing thanks is extended to Station Mall Drug Mart for their support with Nevada ticket sales.



January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

Making the Commitment to Better Brain Health

For many Canadians, eating healthier foods, committing to an exercise program and reducing stress are three common goals for the start of every New Year.

This January, as we recognize Alzheimer Awareness Month and the kick off of the 2008 **Heads Up! For Healthier Brains!** campaign, the Alzheimer Society is encouraging Canadian families to keep to their resolutions by challenging people of all ages to *make the commitment* to better brain health.

“Even with the best intentions, we all know how difficult it can be to keep on track with our resolutions. Starting this January, the Alzheimer Society is providing both support and motivation to people by offering a variety of on-line incentives,” says Scott Dudgeon, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Canada (ASC). “These include everything from the launch of ‘Brain Booster’, our new brain gym, to a contest in conjunction with Homemakers magazine that will encourage people to make their commitment to better brain health, and draws for chances to win some great prizes.”

Making the commitment is easy, and can include things like eating brain healthy food, staying socially connected, adopting an exercise program, protecting against concussions, and challenging your mind.

“Research is showing that by improving your brain health, you can help to reduce your risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease,” says Dr. Jack Diamond, scientific director for the ASC.

Starting Jan. 2, people are encouraged to visit www.alzheimer.ca to learn more, as well as sign up with their individual commitments. The website will also feature stories from other Canadians, highlighting their triumphs and challenges as they implement their own healthy brain pledges.

Awareness Month Activities

Proclamation of January as Alzheimer Awareness Month at various Algoma municipalities.

Awareness displays: Visit us at the following locations at various times throughout the month of January:

- Civic Centre
- Cambrian Mall
- Senior’s Drop-In Centre, Bay St.
- Station Mall

Thank you to the above locations for your support.

Alzheimer Society Open House on January 2 & 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. in Sault Ste. Marie. Meet our staff, tour our office, review our educational information, and have some goodies!

Distribution of volunteer-made cuddle bears to area long-term care homes.

Annual door-to-door campaign: Our hardy legion of volunteers will be out canvassing area streets for donations to support people with dementia. Please give us a call if you are interested in canvassing.

Manulife Walk for Memories

Join us for a fun-filled family event at **WHITE PINES SECONDARY SCHOOL** on Sunday, January 27th.



Log on to www.walkformemories.ca to register yourself as a participant or as a team member. You can then send emails to friends and family to boost up your pledges to reach your goal, and you’ll have immediate online access to check your progress.

T-shirts will be given to all participants raising \$100 or more, and there will be all the usual prizes including a chance to win a 7-day tropical vacation. You are also eligible for the early bird prize if you raise \$250 on-line by December 20. For contest guidelines, visit www.walkformemories.ca.

Alzheimer Society

SAULT STE. MARIE
& ALGOMA DISTRICT

Contact Information

Main Office:

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Fax: 705-256-6777

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Elliot Lake, ON P5A 3T1
Phone: 705-848-8145
Fax: 705-848-1306

General Email:

info@alzheimeralgoma.org

Website:

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
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Anna Cartmill, Director
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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