

Does GHRH improve cognition?

Local researcher leads NIA funded SMART Study



Dr. Michael V. Vitiello, Professor at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, is the principal investigator of the National Institute on Aging funded “SMART” (Somatotrophics, Memory and Aging Research Trial) Study. SMART is a five-year, 2.6 million dollar project funded by the National Institute on Aging. A total of 160 older men and women between the ages of 55 and 80 years old will be enrolled in this double blind, placebo-controlled randomized clinical trial of GHRH. As of this time, SMART has successfully recruited and studied 88 volunteer participants. Recruitment for the study is on-going.

“Previously, we studied the effects of GHRH (growth hormone releasing hormone) on cognitive function with very promising results,” Dr. Vitiello explained. GHRH is the brain’s natural chemical signal for the pituitary gland to secrete growth hormone. Vitiello and colleagues found

that GHRH treatment significantly improved the cognitive function of healthy older men and women, particularly tests of working memory, problem solving and psychomotor processing speed. Their data also showed that GHRH treatment might also be useful in treating individuals with impaired cognitive function, such as those with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) and Alzheimer’s disease (AD). Their findings were recently published in *Neurobiology of Aging* (1).

“The SMART Study is designed to greatly expand on our initial findings. We are studying healthy older adults again, but using much more elaborate and sophisticated cognitive testing procedures. And, perhaps more importantly, we are studying individuals with Mild Cognitive Impairment, MCI,” Dr. Vitiello explained. MCI is a clinical condition where an individual has cognitive impairments, typically in memory, exceeding those found in

healthy age-matched adults but that are not severe enough for a diagnosis of dementia. Having MCI is associated with an increased likelihood of continued decline towards a diagnosis of AD. Vitiello’s interest in MCI is driven by the assumption that GHRH treatment of older adults with MCI might prevent, or at least delay, cognitive decline towards AD.

“Delaying progression to AD would be of tremendous benefit to individual patients’ quality of life and lead to significant savings in health care costs,” says Vitiello.

More information about SMART is available at the National Institutes of Health Clinical Trials webpage www.clinicaltrials.gov or by calling the SMART Study at (206)685-6607. ●

1) Vitiello MV, et al. GHRH Treatment Improves Cognitive Function in Healthy Older Adults. *Neurobiology of Aging* 27(2): 318-323, 2006.

Executive Director's message



Nancy J. Dapper, Executive Director

At the beginning of a new year, I usually have a sense of relief that we have an opportunity for a new beginning. And this year it is particularly true. The economic hardship has been widespread and deep for many people in 2008. My wish for the New Year is that we will soon start to see signs of improvement that will lift all parts of our community.

We want to give special thanks to the many Memory Walk sponsors, donors, and volunteers who helped to make the 2008 season a success. Even with the flagging economy we managed to exceed the previous year's fund-raising totals; better yet, we had 1,000 more walkers and 67 more teams than the previous year, so we have a great base for 2009. And, we encourage our Memory Walkers and others to get involved in advocacy on February 10th in Olympia. This year it is more important than ever to make sure our state policymakers know what is important to people living with Alzheimer's disease.

Looking ahead we have the annual *Evening to Remember* gala and auction

set for March 28 at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel. The event will have a new look this year and some very exciting items. Watch the web site for more information. *Tasteful Evening* will take place June 11 at the Bell Harbor Center. This fun chefs' event has been such a hit and a sellout every year that we will double the size of the audience. Make sure to get your tickets early.

We are especially looking forward to the annual Education Conference on April 24th at the Washington State Convention Center. We are honored to have William Thies, Ph.D., the Chief Medical and Scientific Officer of the Alzheimer's Association, as the keynote speaker to present the most current review of the state of research in the field. Once again we will recognize those professional caregivers who do their jobs with professionalism and compassion to make life easier for people and families living with Alzheimer's disease. There are many opportunities for companies and businesses who want to reach this community to show their products and services at the vendor section of the conference.

A new year and we are ready to go. We look forward to working with a terrific team of volunteers and supporters to make 2009 a better year for the many families in our state who struggle with caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease. ●

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Nancy J. Dapper, Patricia Hunter, Liz McNeil and Ellia Ryan

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Supporting the Resilient Mind: The 24th Annual Alzheimer's Regional Conference

Save the Date! On April 24, we will host our 24th Annual Alzheimer's Regional Conference. Dr. William



Dr. William Theis

Theis, Vice President for Medical and Scientific Relations at the Alzheimer's Association, will provide a dynamic keynote address. Dr. Theis has worked to

unite the world's dementia researchers with the clear goal of fostering communication and maximizing advancement. Dr. Theis will share this unique world research perspective and answer questions from the conference audience in an open forum.

Here is a sample of some of the accomplished faculty that will be presenting at the conference:



Joanne Rader

• Joanne Rader, author of *Bathing without a Battle*, esteemed founder of the Pioneer Network and national educator, anchors our

conference faculty. She will share bathing secrets as well as strategies for implementing best practices.

- International search and rescue expert, educator, and author, Robert Koester will offer a profile of people who wander and will share evidence-based search and rescue strategies.
- Gail Goeller, author of *Coming of Age with Aging Parents: the Bungles, Battles,*

and Blessings, will help guide family caregivers through challenging family dynamics.

- Ann Morrison, Ph.D., of John Hopkins University, will facilitate a series of advanced practice workshops to help professionals work with family caregivers.
- Daniel Christensen, M.D. returns again this year with three new video case studies that will challenge your assessment skills.
- Local expert Wayne McCormick, M.D. shares palliative care practices for managing end stage dementia.
- Laura Baker, Ph.D. helps professionals to identify Mild Cognitive Impairment.

This year's conference offers several learning tracks: direct care providers, health and human services professionals, activities specialists, researchers, home and community based workers, volunteers and family caregivers. Our conference workshops are evidence-based, innovative and focus on increasing practical skills. The agenda is designed to meet the needs of everyone who has a connection with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Given these difficult economic times, we have rolled back our registration fees to 2006 rates! In addition, we are offering free continuing education units for activity professionals, social workers, counselors, guardians, nursing home administrators and case managers.

Special Preconference: Mental Health and Dementia Symposium April 23, 2009

On April 23, we are offering four different advance practice workshops: exploring domestic violence and dementia, assessing capacity, identifying sexual predators in elder care, and assessing co-occurring disorders.

Dr. Susan Wehry, geriatric psychiatrist, national speaker and advocate from Vermont will anchor our symposium along with a series of local experts Ken Ryan and Page Ulrey. Our pre-conference workshops are three and a half hours in length and a great value at \$50 per workshop, and this includes continuing education units for selected professions.

Through the expertise of leading professionals, conference attendees will learn new approaches, explore current research trends, and focus on increasing practical skills. In the end, conference attendees will leave with a variety of resources that will help support the resilient mind.

Excellence in Caregiving Award— Honor a caregiver

Each year the Chapter recognizes exceptional individuals who care for people with dementia. The Excellence in Caregiving Award is presented to a nursing assistant, home care aide, or any lay caregiver who is working in a home, residential, or day care setting.

- Nominations must be made by family members
- Nominees must provide direct care to someone with Alzheimer's or other related dementia
- Family caregivers, owners, or licensed professionals are not eligible for this award

Inspiration Award— New this year

Nominees for the Inspiration Award will have used their lives to move the cause forward and should inspire others to use their lives to make a difference in the fight against dementia

Continued on page 4

Join us at the 2009 Auction and Gala

Benefit Auction Chairs Electa Anderson and Jack Tonkin invite you to join them in raising funds and awareness for the Alzheimer's Association at the 9th annual *An Evening To Remember* Gala and Auction. The event will take place in Seattle at the Fairmont Olympic Hotel on March 28th, 2009. Electa and Jack are pleased to have Marcella McCaffray and Lon Robinson join them as Honorary Chairs of this event.

Electa and Jack were impacted by Alzheimer's disease as caregivers for their loving spouses, Norm and Donna. Norm and Donna were diagnosed in their fifties and taken by Alzheimer's disease in their sixties. As caregivers, Electa and Jack caught a glimpse of the terrifying future of a disease that will effect many



Steve Olsen, Benefit Chairs Jack Tonkin and Electa Anderson, and Bonnie Brough Keeney attend the first 2009 dinner auction committee meeting at the Inglewood Golf Club, hosted by Jack Tonkin.

generations to come. Because of their personal experience with Alzheimer's disease, Electa and Jack are committed to the success of this important fundraiser. As co-chairs, they have gathered together an extraordinary group of committee members whose time, talent and energy will produce a fundraiser that is filled with fun, excitement and hope.

www.alzwa.org to view some of the exciting live auction items such as a party for 20 aboard the famous trawler, "Seastar," with Captain Larry Hendricks of the popular Discovery Channel program *Deadliest Catch*. Also, \$25 remembrance raffle tickets for the 2009 Masters Golf Tournament are available for purchase by calling Elise at (206)363-5500, ext. 241. All proceeds from raffle ticket sales support *An Evening to Remember*.

Please check our website www.alzwa.org to view some of the exciting live auction items such as a party for 20 aboard the famous trawler, "Seastar," with Captain Larry Hendricks of the popular Discovery Channel program *Deadliest Catch*. Also, \$25 remembrance raffle tickets for the 2009 Masters Golf Tournament are available for purchase by calling Elise at (206)363-5500, ext. 241. All proceeds from raffle ticket sales support *An Evening to Remember*.

Anyone interested in reviewing sponsorship opportunities, receiving an invitation to the event, or finding out more information about *An Evening to Remember* is urged to contact Elise Ricci at (206)363-5500, ext. 241 or elise.ricci@alz.org. For more information about memorializing or honoring a loved one by contributing to *An Evening to Remember's* Tribute Book, please contact Liz McNeil at (206)363-5500, ext. 243 or liz.mcneil@alz.org.

It's never too early to reserve your place at this extraordinary event!

All proceeds from ticket sales benefit the Alzheimer's Association. ●

Regional Conference

Continued from page 3

- Nominations can come from anyone
 - Nominees can be of any age
- Winners will be honored guests at the 24th Annual Alzheimer's Regional Conference in Seattle on Friday, April 24, 2009, at the Washington State Convention Center.
- Nominations must be received by **February 27, 2009**
 - Forms are available at www.alz.org/alzwa or by calling 1(800)848-7097 extension 245. ●

24/7 HELPLINE

Remember that we're here for you 24/7 when you have questions or need information. Call us at (206) 363-5500, 1 (800) 848-7097, or visit us online at www.alzwa.org. Just click on Helpline On-Line under Resources to send an email message to Helpline.



alzheimer's  association
memory walk'08®

Nationally presented by
Genworth Financial 

Dear Memory Walk participants and supporters,
Another walk season has come and gone and, once again, we continue to be amazed at the outpouring of support and enthusiasm from the local community. Walkers turned out by the thousands, rain and shine, and together we broke our previous records and raised more than \$580,000! We thank you for all you've done and all you continue to do as we MOVE the Alzheimer's cause forward.

Memory Walk is about more than raising funds—it's also about raising awareness in the local community. You've helped us further awareness, both of the Alzheimer's cause and of the free programs and services offered by the Alzheimer's Association. You can feel proud in knowing that your support directly contributes to our ability to provide services such as the 24 hour Helpline, support groups, care consultations and educational classes, just to name a few.

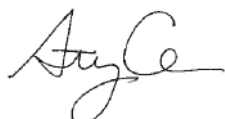
One of our favorite things about Memory Walk is that it's a community-driven event at its core. Memory Walk is about families, friends and communities coming together and uniting around a common cause. It's about celebrating the lives of those individuals touched by this disease and looking toward the future for a cure. It's about a network of support & hope. We thank you for being one of the many people who helped make this year's event another celebration of community.

Your support of Memory Walk and the Alzheimer's Association is deeply appreciated. Please know that you are making a difference in the fight against Alzheimer's. We value your participation, and we look forward to walking with you again next fall.

Best,



Melissa Soules
Memory Walk Coordinator



Stephanie Chacharon
Asst. Memory Walk Coordinator

**Congratulations to our Memory Walk
2008 top fundraisers**

**Thanks to your hard work and support, we raised
over \$580,000**

The fundraisers listed below were recognized based on totals received on the Walk day. Numbers may vary based on donations received after the Walk.



*Thousands of individuals from
across generations turned out for
Memory Walk 2008!*

**South Sound-August 23
Total Raised: \$126,600**

- Corporate*
First: Franciscan Health System \$9,245
Second: Wesley Walkers \$6,210
Third: Lakewood Walkers \$5,092
- Family*
First: Real Fine \$4,342
Second: Hudson-Ripley \$4,284
Third: Bonnie One \$2,620

- Individual*
First: Jill Karon \$3,385
Second: Yvonne Gilmore \$2,095
Third: Dick Lundgren \$1,600
Fourth: Cary Webber \$1,220

**North Sound-September 6
Total Raised: \$41,399**

- Corporate*
First: Accu-Med Services of Washington \$5,658
Second: Bellingham Healthcare \$2,161
Third: Country Meadows \$1,300
Fourth: Merrill Gardens of Stanwood \$1,244

- Family*
First: Memory Warriors \$2,355
Second: Stanwood-Camano Striders \$1,300
Third: MD19 Lions \$1,240
- Individual*
First: Morry Denton \$3,249
Second: Ginna Sloan \$2,971
Third: Jenny Hrubesky \$1,455
Fourth: Cathy Faulkner \$1,450

**Pacific Northwest-September 14
Total Raised: \$342,710**

- Corporate Team*
First: King 5 Home Team \$8,765
Second: Highgate Yakima \$6,328
Third: Aegis of Kirkland \$3,822
- Corporate Group Team*
First: Aegis Living \$16,221
Second: Alzheimer's Association Staff, Family & Friends \$11,944
Third: Alzheimer's Association Board Teams \$9,550

- Family*
First: The Bray Team \$16,216
Second: The Harold W. Busch Walkers \$16,000
Third: Cook Out \$8,590
- Individual*
First: Deb Bray \$8,365
Second: Claudia Dodel \$6,800
Third: Linda Busch-Pfiefle \$5,419

**Olympic Peninsula-
September 20
Total Raised \$65,191**

- Corporate*
First: Canterbury Manor \$5,826
Second: Life Care Forget Me Nots \$4,566
Third: Big Blue \$4,029
- Family*
First: Dowling Darlins \$2,965
Second: Bremerton Caregivers Support Group \$1,290
Third: Walking for Early Onset \$860
- Individual*
First: Sue Tucker \$2,110
Second: Cyd Wadlow \$1,851
Third: Robin Murphy \$1,750

Thank you to our generous Memory Walk 2008 sponsors

This year's record success wouldn't have been possible without the support of our corporate and community partners.

National Presenting Sponsor

Genworth Financial

National Platinum Level Teams

Brookdale Senior Living
Genworth Financial
Home Instead Senior Care
Kindred Healthcare

National Member Level Teams

Evercare
Parrot Heads in Paradise
Sigma Kappa Foundation

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www.Maui-Condo.net

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Hearthside Manor
Home Instead Senior Care
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MultiCare Health System
Patriot's Landing
Regency at Tacoma
Sandra Jerke & Associates, Inc.
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Sound Options, Inc.
Tacoma Lutheran Retirement Community
The Disclaimers
The Northwest Veteran & Fort Lewis Ranger
The Weatherly Inn
TRA Medical Imaging
Vintage at Narrows Glen
Wesley Homes

North Sound

Ashley Gardens at Mt. Vernon
Bankers Life & Casualty Co.
Birchview Memory Care
Cascade Mall
Elder Law Offices of Barry M. Meyers
Haggen, Inc.
Home Place Special Care Center

Josephine Suites
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Maggie's Fury
Merrill Gardens at Cordata
Merrill Gardens at Stanwood
Senior Guidebook
Skagit State Bank
Skagit Valley Publishing Co.
Western Hearing Aids

Pacific Northwest

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Digital Reprographic Services, Inc
ElderHealth Northwest
FX McRory's
Garden Terrace of Federal Way*
Home Instead Senior Care
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Magna Cûm Latté
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Northwest Prime Time
Overlake Terrace
Panera Bread*
Retirement Publishing
Safeway*
Scrips LTC Pharmacy
Spiritwood at Pine Lake
Spring Estates Senior Living Community
Starbucks Coffee*
Stratford at Maple Leaf
Sunrise Senior Living
Talking Rain*
Visiting Angels

Olympic Peninsula

Abiding Home Care
Canterbury Manor
Claremont East
Costco Wholesale
Crista Shores
Debbie Macomber, Inc
Emeritus Oaks of Silverdale
Harbor House at Liberty Shores
Harrison Medical Center
Hit Sensation
Home Instead Senior Care #616
Hospice of Kitsap County
Kitsap News Group
Life Care Center of Port Orchard
Marine Courte
Martha and Mary Health Services
Richard C. Tizzano, Attorney at Law
Silverdale Beach Hotel

*indicates a multi-walk sponsor

Memory Walk 2008 steering committee recognition

Memory Walk is a community-driven event and wouldn't be possible without our wonderful volunteer committee members who give their year-round time, dedication, leadership and energy. We thank them for their enthusiastic support!

South Sound Steering Committee

Walk Chair:

Vicki Judge, Judge Advertising

Carmen Helle-Doud, Franciscan Health Systems

Cindie Sorenson, Aegis Living

Cynthia Dedrick, Expressions at Enumclaw

Debbie Baker, The Weatherly Inn

Dick Lundgren, Community Advocate

Frank Rainsberger, NurseCall Northwest

Jan Olson, Kindred Healthcare

Jeni Jones, Brookdale Senior Living

Karen Reed, Home Instead Senior Care

Kim Peterson, Pierce County Aging & Long Term Care

Laura Runkle, Franke Tobey Jones

Lisa Marshall, Brookdale Senior Living

Lynessa Tinglum, Advanced Health Care

Melissa Martin, Brookdale Senior Living

Michelle Apodaca, Expressions at Enumclaw

Peter Adams, Cascade Park Communities

Robina Loken, Olympic Alzheimer's Residence

Therese Brown, Woodmark at Steel Lake

North Sound Steering Committee

Debbie Allen, City of Sedro-Woolley

Denise Irely, Community Supporter

Faith Martian, Community Supporter

Jennifer Gudmundson, Community Supporter

Kevin Lloyd, Bankers Life & Casualty Co.

Marilyn Boyd, Community Supporter

Roger Holbrook, Josephine Suites

Roxie Crawford, Brookdale Senior Living

Roy Leshner, Lion's Club

Terry Steckler, Josephine Suites

Pacific Northwest Steering Committee

Walk Chairs:

Charles Booth, SeattleHomeCenter.com

Evan Perrollaz, Kirkland Lodge at Lakeside

Barbara Waseway, Community Supporter

Carol Richardson, Genworth Financial

Derek Sandbeck, Stratford at Maple Leaf

Eileen Alexander, D.A. Davidson & Co.

John Shoemsmith, Mithun

Juanita Washington, Community Supporter

Juli Garzon, Wattenbarger Architects

Katie Engebretson, Aldercrest Health &

Rehab Center

Kimberly Hastings, Faerland Terrace

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Lauren Berntsen, Community Supporter
Mary Watkins, Sunrise Brighton Gardens
Nancy Werner, Transitional Marketing Services
Pat Minden, Community Supporter
Rachael Byer, Seattle Association for Jews with Disabilities
Roxie Crawford, Brookdale Senior Living
Valerie Foster, Faerland Terrace

Olympic Peninsula Steering Committee

Walk Chairs:

Jerry Graham, Community Supporter
Kay Pursey, Harbor House at Liberty Shores

Amber King, Orchard Pointe
Barbara Seiber, Home Instead Senior Care
Carl Johnson, Abiding Home Care
Cindi Wadlow, Crista Shores
Cynthia Lee Pealstrom, Canterbury Manor
Debi Thomas, Community Supporter
Gail Bosch, Hospice of Kitsap County
Janelle Mitchell, Orchard Pointe
Janet Presley, Ashley Gardens
Jessie Schmidt, Harbor House at Liberty Shores

Meghan McPherson, Marine Courte
Stephanie Low, Merrill Gardens
Nina Lilyquist, Life Care Center of Port Orchard
Pierre Cappuccino, Amitra LLC Senior Move Management

Honorary Chairs

The Memory Walk Honorary Chairs serve the Alzheimer's cause in both title and action. We would like to thank the following individuals for their dedication & commitment:

Kenneth Alhadeff
 Lifetime Chair and local philanthropist

Brad Goode
 King 5 news anchor and Board of Directors member

Jean Smart
 Emmy award winning actress, *24* & *Samantha Who*

Debbie Macomber
 New York Times Best Selling Author

Memory Walk 2008 prize donors

Our many prize donors allow us to reward our top fundraisers, participants and raffle winners at Memory Walk. Thank you to the following individuals and companies for helping us thank those who deserve it most! A full list of prize donors were listed in the respective walk programs; prizes valued at \$75 or more are listed below.

South Sound

Biella by Ruth Michelle
 Franke Tobey Jones
 Great Car Care Center
 HCR Manor Care of Gig Harbor
 Party Lites
 Sooji's Day Spa
 Storaasli Family
 Tacoma Philharmonic
 Team Best in the West
 Woodmark at Steel Lake
 Yardley Clinic
 YMCA of Gig Harbor
 Krispy Kreme
 Sysco

North Sound

Camano Roasters
 Lincoln Theatre
 Clare Bridge at Silver Lake
 Terry Steckler
 Wells Nursery

Pacific Northwest

Acme Bowling
 Alhadeff Companies (Majestic Bay Theatre)
 All Star Fitness
 Argosy Cruises
 Beecher's Handmade Cheese
 Bray Bros
 Cougar Mountain Zoo
 Diva Espresso
 Ellia Ryan
 Fuzzy Buddy's Dog Daycare
 Hoodspout Winery
 Jillian's
 John Shoesmith
 Law Offices of Julianne Kocer, P.S.
 Linda Rethke
 My Pop Tops
 Paule Attar Salon & Spa
 ReMax Mutual
 Seattle Fire Department

Spectrum Dance Theatre
 Stewart Hopkins Photography
 Transitional Marketing Services
 Faerland Terrace
 Krispy Kreme
 GLY Construction
 West Seattle Thriftway

Olympic Peninsula

Amitra LLC Senior Move Management
 Crista Shores
 Finger Tip Touch Massage Therapy
 Peninsula McDonald's Restaurants
 Silverdale Beach Hotel
 Yardley Clinic
 Jerry & Michelle Graham
 Karen McKinley
 Ed Hannifan
 Lou Ann Lauborough

Congratulations to the Memory Walk 2008 raffle winners

1st Prize Winner

Mary Jo Alexander of Alexander's Cousins Team

7-day Holland America Line Fall Caribbean or Mexico cruise for two. Valued at \$2,098.

2nd Prize Winner

Jeff Rang of Orting

1-week Kihei, Maui condominium & \$400 air-fare voucher. Valued at \$1,250.

Raffle prizes sponsored by Kirkland Lodge at Lakeside, www.Maui-Condo.net, Holland America Line, D.A. Davidson & Co. and SeattleHomeCenter.com.



2007 raffle winner & walk participant Kathy Liechty spends some time ashore during her cruise north to Alaska.

Champion Fundraisers

Support for Memory Walk 2008 was strong throughout the state, as people of all ages, races and geographic locations turned out by the thousands. Mayor Nickels and his family led participants on the scenic course at the Pacific Northwest walk.



Above left: The Harold W. Busch walkers raised \$16,000. They've contributed more than \$67,000 since 2005.



Above right: Team Captain Judy Cook & the rest of Team Cook Out raised \$9,040 in their first year.

Right: The Bray Team, 38 walkers strong, raised more than \$16,200 this year! In two years, they've raised over \$33,000.



Proud sponsor of Memory Walk 2008

Aegis Living
We're the people who make life better.

BARTELL DRUGS
Washington's Own Drugstores

K5
THE HOME TEAM



Above left: The Highgate Senior Living team travelled all the way from Yakima and raised over \$7,200.

Above right: Aegis of Kirkland raised \$5,897. As the top fundraising group, Aegis Living raised more than \$17,000!

Right: Evonne Tersiisky & the King 5 Home Team secured first place with \$8,285.



National advocate comes to Seattle



Electa Anderson with Meryl Comer at the 2008 ICAD meeting in Chicago.

Board member **Electa Anderson** attended both the National Alzheimer's Association Conference and the Alzheimer's Association 11th International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease in Chicago this past July. During an ICAD reception, Electa had the opportunity to meet **Meryl Comer**, a long time hero to Electa for her continued commitment to raising awareness and funds for Alzheimer's disease and for her important work as an advocate for the disease. Electa lost her husband, Norm, to early onset Alzheimer's disease when he was 63, after caring for him for 8 years. Meryl is a veteran caregiver for her physician husband, who was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's over 14 years ago, and is now taking care of her mother who also has the disease. They both live at home with Meryl as she continues to give so much of her time and talent to help change our world's view of Alzheimer's. Electa and Meryl are now looking forward to working on a project together and Electa is planning an event with Meryl to be held next year in Seattle. ●

*Note: **Meryl Comer** is an Emmy Award winning broadcast journalist who, for 18 years, hosted "It's Your Business," a nationally syndicated panel program, and served as vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce from 1986-1997. She is a Board Member for the National Alzheimer's Association and a member of the recently-formed and very prestigious Alzheimer's Study Group (ASG) including such distinguished members as **Newt Gingrich** and **Sandra Day O'Connor**. Meryl has testified before the Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease during the Association's Public Policy Forum.*

VOICE

Voice your opinion in support of those with Alzheimer's. Speak and be heard. It's time to make some noise.

2009 ALZHEIMER'S ADVOCACY DAY

When: February 10, 2009

Where: State Capitol in Olympia

Join advocates from across the state to educate legislators about the issues important to the Alzheimer's community.

Advocates will be placed into teams to attend legislative appointments scheduled by the Chapter.

Talking points, handouts and a brief training will be provided.

For more information or to register contact Patricia at 800.848.7097 or patricia.hunter@alz.org or visit our website: www.alzwa.org

\$1.6 Billion

The economic value of unpaid care provided by Alzheimer's family caregivers in Washington.

154 Million

The hours of unpaid care per year provided by Alzheimer's family caregivers in Washington.

178,787

The number of Alzheimer's family caregivers in Washington.

104,000

The number of Washingtonians living with Alzheimer's disease.

71 seconds

The amount of time between each new Alzheimer's diagnosis.

1 in 10

The number of people who have a family member living with the disease.

1 in 3

The number of people who know someone with the disease.

Now is the time to act! Become an Alzheimer's Champion today!

Telephone support group provides access and convenience

Sharon looked at the clock and realized she had 15 minutes to get Harold settled down in his easy chair to watch “Oklahoma,” his favorite musical, and then get to her support group meeting. Fortunately for Sharon, her meeting was just a phone call away.

Last spring, recognizing that some caregivers found it a challenge to access traditional support groups, the Chapter launched its first toll-free telephone support group. The group provides the same benefits of a traditional face-to-face support group without the need to leave home.

Participants may be isolated from a support group due to distance, physical illness, or special factors related to Alzheimer’s caregiving that confine them to their homes. Others may like the anonymity this type of group offers. Confidentiality is maintained due to the geographical diversity and only first names of participants are used during the telephone sessions.

Support groups provide a consistent, safe and caring place for group members to discuss the challenges and problems of caregiving. They also provide a haven to share their feelings and find emotional support as well as exchange information and educate themselves about Alzheimer’s disease. Telephone support groups possess the same qualities.

The common experience of caring for a loved one with dementia provides a bond for participants that many describe as essential to the caregivers’ emotional health and well being. Caregivers have reported using the telephone support group as innovative, relevant to their circumstances and well organized. They strongly felt that their involvement in the telephone group was worth their time.

Support groups are only as effective as its leader is skilled. The toll-free telephone group is facilitated by Barbara Bridges, RN, MSN. Barbara has over 40 years of registered nursing experience, is a member of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers, is a long time caregiver support group facilitator, and brings a wealth of experience through call-in radio programs, internet chat rooms and message boards. Plus, she has had hands-on caregiving experience with both of her parents, who developed dementia as they aged.

Support groups are offered at no-charge. For additional information, and simple call-in instructions, please contact Linda Whiteside at 800.848.7097 or linda.whiteside@alz.org.

Music can help caregivers hit the right note

Caregivers sometimes struggle to relate to a loved one with Alzheimer’s. Music is one way to connect.



“People with Alzheimer’s often respond to music when they respond to nothing else,” Suzanne Hanser, chair of music therapy at Berklee College of Music in Boston, told *Time* magazine.

Music can help with memory recall and reminiscing and positive changes in mood and emotions. It can also help the caregiver and person with Alzheimer’s reduce anxiety and stress.

When you use music to interact with someone with Alzheimer’s, be sure to:

- Identify music that’s familiar and enjoyable to the listener.
- Use live music, tapes or CDs rather than radio programs with commercials.
- Use music to create the mood you want.
- Use photographs along with the music to help stir memories.
- Encourage clapping or dancing with the music.
- Eliminate competing noises by shutting windows and doors and turning off the television.

For more information on music therapy, visit the American Music Therapy Association’s Web site: www.musictherapy.org.

African American Caregivers Forum has something for everyone

by Rowena Rye

This year's forum, held on October 25th at the Northwest African American Museum, emphasized a holistic approach to providing caregiver support. The forum was designed to nurture mind, body and



Dr. Mark Snowden discusses the consequences of a stroke in the basilar artery.

spirit, with informative and motivational presentations, exhibits featuring a variety of community resources and a 'caregiver pampering' room, replete with a team of massage therapists at the ready, who stayed busy throughout the day.

This year's forum featured keynote speaker Mark Snowden, M.D., M.P.H. Dr. Snowden is an Associate Professor in the University of Washington School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences; and medical director for geriatric psychiatry services at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, and in this capacity provides and supervises geriatric psychiatry services to several community-based nursing homes and clinics; as well as inpatient treatment and consultations at Harborview Medical Center. Dr. Snowden's address is entitled *Dementia Care Overview: What Caregivers Need to Know*. Massage Therapists provided stress relief through soothing massages. While all of these activities were taking place, *StoryCorps* (in an improvised on-site recording studio), rounded out the day, conducting broadcast-quality oral history interviews of the life stories of local elders and of family caregivers.



Forum participants experience the relaxing benefits of hands-on care through the healing touch of massage.

StoryCorps is the first born-digital audio collection at the Library of Congress. Placement in the Library will make it possible for the great-great-great grandchildren of participants to listen to high-quality recordings of their ancestors' voices and stories. ●

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