

alzheimer's association desert southwest chapter

December 2008 Public Policy Newsletter

We extend a warm welcome to those new members who have asked to become a part of the Desert Southwest Chapter's (DSW) Advocate email distribution list. As a result of the hard work and efforts by chapter staff and volunteers at this year's Memory Walks throughout the region we welcome 332 new advocates to help with our policy initiatives. Thank you for wanting to become a part of advocacy team!

As part of the Alzheimer's Association National Office 2009 Tactical Plan, locally we are welcoming the 111th Congress men and women back to office. Members of the Desert Southwest Public Policy Committee met with returning members of the 111th Congress's staff in person over the last few weeks. Our efforts were to introduce Chapter staff, volunteers and constituents of the organization to staff members in each Congressperson's office, along with providing information about Alzheimer's disease, state and local statistics and what programs and services our DSW Chapter offers. Our efforts are to make sure that the local Congressperson's offices and staff members had information to share with their constituents who might contact them with questions about Alzheimer's disease. The National Office requested that all chapters conduct these visits prior to Congress returning to Washington D.C. in January and to inquire about adding a link to our website on each of theirs. We currently are following up on this ask with those offices we visited in the last few weeks. Our goal is to ensure that every constituent that gets in contact with their Congressperson will have access to information about the Alzheimer's Association, our programs and services.

The Public Policy committee also has been working on "Advocate Training". The training program has been developed and is ready for implementation. The Central Arizona Region will be the first to host advocate trainings beginning in early 2009. Watch for dates and times of these trainings which will be held in Phoenix and Sun City area. Future trainings will be scheduled in all regions of the Desert Southwest Chapter. Advocate Trainings will include information on how to write, call and visit your local representatives; background on disease statistics; and how a bill becomes a law. The trainings will be interactive to ensure that volunteers feel comfortable advocating effectively for the issues that are important to them, their families, friends and community.

It is kind of quiet during the month of December, but in January the 111th U. S. Congress and the State Legislature will be back in session. We will be following what the U. S. Congress and State Legislature we will call on our volunteers and advocates to help with letter writing campaigns, email campaigns and telephone contact to ensure that funding for Alzheimer's disease research stays foremost on their minds. We thank you again for advocating with us! Watch for the next newsletter alert...coming soon!

On behalf of the Desert Southwest Chapter and the Public Policy Committee we wish you, a very happy holiday season and a joyous, healthy New Year!

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