

## Greater Iowa Chapter Newsletter

Published quarterly for caregivers, donors, volunteers, advocates and friends in the Alzheimer community

Winter 2007

www.alz.org/greateriowa  
1 800 272 3900



### Celebrations and Alzheimer's

Family and other celebrations can be a wonderful time to reconnect with friends, family and neighbors. It can also be a time of great stress for someone with Alzheimer's disease and caregivers. The Alzheimer's Association has information on activities, safety and gift suggestions for the caregiver and person with dementia (PWD) that can help make this special time the best it can be.

#### Preparing persons with Alzheimer's:

- Talk about and show photos of the people who are coming to visit.
- Have a "quiet" room in case things get too hectic and have a familiar person stay with them so they don't feel isolated or "left out".
- Play familiar music and serve favorite traditional holiday foods

#### Preparing visitors:

- Encourage them to visit, but to call ahead and arrange a good time to come.
- Familiarize visitors with behavior and condition changes of the PWD.
- Celebrate early in the day or have a luncheon rather than dinner, when everyone is tired and increased confusion is more likely.

*Celebrations...continued on page 3*

### Thurston's Generous Gift Advances Mission of the Association

Alzheimer's disease has touched Stan and Dotty Thurston in many ways.

Stan's father and two of his uncles lost their battles with Alzheimer's disease some time ago. Stan also saw the devastation of Alzheimer's disease on a professional level through his role as CEO of Life Care Services, a company that manages continuing care retirement communities across the country.

When Stan and Dotty Thurston began several years ago considering a substantial gift, the Alzheimer's Association was among their list of recipient organizations. As they gained a better understanding of the Association's dual mission to advance research and provide care and support for persons impacted by Alzheimer's, their choice became crystal clear.

Stan and Dotty were recently able to fulfill their philanthropic goals with a \$750,000 donation to the Alzheimer's Association. Their gift will be used to advance the mission of the Association in significant ways. First, \$500,000 of their will support to the Association's new Clinical Trials Initiative. This initiative focuses on enhancing recruitment and retention of volunteers in clinical trials of new medications for Alzheimer's disease. This initiative is viewed throughout the Alzheimer research field as imperative to accelerate the pace of clinical trial research and ultimately, the development of drug treatments. At the heart of this initiative is the effort to raise awareness of trials, improve the role and influence of physicians, and make it easier for individuals and families to join and remain in these vital research trials.

Stan's mother was a caregiver, so both Stan and Dotty understand the importance of programs and services for family caregivers impacted by the disease. They know the chapter is



*Generous Gift...continued on page 3*

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*Dear Friends and Supporters,*

In 2001 a merger of two smaller Alzheimer's Association chapters created the Greater Iowa Chapter, an organization that today serves 58 counties in Iowa and five counties in Illinois. Those Illinois counties – Carroll, Jo Daviess, Henry, Mercer and Rock Island – are home to over 250,000 residents, including an estimated 5,186 who have Alzheimer's disease.

We are pleased to collaborate with Alzheimer's Association chapters in Illinois to expand programs and service. During the upcoming months, two collaborative projects will get underway that will collectively reach thousands of individuals in our service area. The first project, coined IDEAS (Illinois Dementia Education Alternatives for Staff of Dementia Special Care Units) will provide training opportunities for staff in nursing homes with Alzheimer's units. This program is funded by the Illinois Department of Public Health and includes reduced registration fees and scholarships for nursing home employees. This project follows similar training programs for adult day service staff completed in 2007. Programs will be conducted during the first six months of 2008.

A second collaborative project targets family caregivers. Funded by the Illinois Department of Public Health through member initiative funds from Senator William Haine (D-Alto), it will offer educational programs for family caregivers, provide scholarships for Medic Alert/Safe Return registrations, expand the Chapter Ambassador program and raise awareness of services in rural areas. Programs and services for family caregivers will be available at no cost and will also occur during the first six months of 2008.

The chapter maintains two offices to assist individuals in Illinois. Residents in Carroll and Jo Daviess counties are served by staff in Dubuque, while residents in Henry, Mercer and Rock Island counties are served by staff in Davenport. These programs are supported, in part, by Memory Walks held in Savanna and Moline each year.

We express our gratitude to Governor Rod R. Blagojevic, the Illinois Legislature and the Illinois Department of Public Health for leadership in addressing the growing problem of Alzheimer's disease in Illinois. We are also grateful for the Greater Illinois, Central Illinois and St. Louis chapters who are our partners in serving residents of Illinois.

*Carol L. Sipfle*

*Celebrations...Continued from page 1*

**Selecting activities:**

- Decorate cookies.
- Stuff, seal or stamp holiday cards.
- Set table and fold napkins.
- Polish silver.

**For those in a care facility:**

- Don't expect loved ones to participate in their old roles.
- Read holiday stories, play music or sing carols.
- Join in with the facility's scheduled activities.

**Safety issues at home:**

- Don't use blinking lights.
- Avoid using decorations that look edible.
- Create a clear path for walking; avoid wires, cords or throw rugs.

*Generous Gift...Continued from page 1*

a vital link to caregivers and wanted to help expand programs and services to underserved areas of the state. The remaining portion of the gift, \$250,000, will be used to expand services in Fort Dodge and southwest Iowa through new branch offices. Their gift will also support staffing for the chapter's growing public policy and advocacy efforts.

"We hope our gift will inspire others to give and support this important cause," Stan commented. Dotty added, "We understand the day to day challenges of caregivers and want to make it possible for them to have support in their journey of caregiving."

"Stan and Dotty Thurston's donation is the largest ever received by the chapter. It will truly transform our ability to serve families and advance our mission," said Carol Sipfle, executive director of the Greater Iowa Chapter. Harry Johns, national CEO added, "This gift is a terrific example of the commitment and generosity of our supporters to the full mission of the Alzheimer's Association."



## Care Initiatives

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**Care Initiatives is the proud statewide sponsor of the Alzheimer's Association Memory Walks!**



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We wish to thank the hundreds of volunteers who helped plan, promote and put on the 2007 Memory Walk. We couldn't do these events without your time and talents!

**Top Fundraising Individuals and Teams**

**Ames-\$24,500**

Individual: Kathy Bair  
Family Team: C.A.T. Team  
Corporate Team: Iowa Veteran's Home

**Bedford- \$1,349**

Individual: Joann Simpson  
Family Team: Bedford Bulldogs  
Corporate Team: Bedford Nursing & Rehab

**Burlington- \$32,000**

Individual: Kathy Wilkerson  
Family Team: Uniquely Yours Personal Training  
& Fitness Education Team  
Corporate Team: GRMC Klein Center

**Clinton- \$33,000**

Individual: Don Krambeck  
Family Team: Losses Hurt Dreams Work  
Corporate Team: Mercy Medical Center

**Des Moines- \$127,037**

Individual: Thomas W. Cross  
Family Team: W.L.Y.S.  
Corporate Team: Pioneer HiBred

**Dubuque-\$111,920**

Individual: Joni McKay  
Family Team: Domeyer/Helle Team  
Corporate Team: Mt Carmel/Sisters of Charity

**Fort Dodge- \$4,000**

Individual: Diane Rollins  
Family Team: Pete's Pride  
Corporate Team: Friendship Haven

**Humboldt- \$5,000**

Family Team: McBurney Family  
Corporate Team: Humboldt Care Centers

**Maquoketa- \$6,134**

Individual: Anita Pleiser  
Family Team: Stop CRS  
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**Mason City- \$8,089**

Individual: Linda Severson  
Family Team: Bob's Babes  
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**Quad Cities-\$70,374**

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Voice of Muscatine

*Below: Walkers and  
volunteers at 2007  
Memory Walks*



## Research Update

### Exelon Skin Patch Approved

Exelon is a medication for people with mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's that aims to increase levels of the brain chemical acetylcholine and improve memory functioning. Although some people do benefit from the medication, side effects of nausea, diarrhea or vomiting can occur.

Exelon also needs to be taken twice a day, which can be inconvenient or difficult to remember. To remedy some of these problems, Novartis Pharmaceuticals (the maker of Exelon) has created a 24-hour skin patch that can allow a smoother, more continuous dosing of the medication. A new skin patch is applied each day

and eliminates the need to swallow a pill twice a day. The patch lessens side effects and has been better tolerated than the pill form of the medication. Care partners also report that the patch is easier to use when helping their loved one manage medications.

### Alzhemed Trial is Inconclusive

Over the past few years, there has been some publicity about Alzhemed, a promising drug under investigation that aims to lower levels of the damaging amyloid protein in persons with Alzheimer's. In late August, the drug company Neurochem Inc. announced that the results of its

much-anticipated large North American trial of the drug were inconclusive due to problems with analyzing the study data. The drug continues to be tested in European Union countries.



*Carol Sipple, Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Iowa chapter, presents a plaque honoring CTI employees who were instrumental in finding Mr. Hernandez this September.*

Potential tragedy was averted recently in the Des Moines area when Luis Hernandez, 61, was found by volunteers after being missing for three days. Mr. Hernandez walked away from a social gathering Friday, September 15th and did not return to his senior living apartment. Extensive media coverage enabled employees from Johnston company CTI Redi Mix to positively identify Mr. Hernandez as someone they had contact with Monday, September 16. The next day management and workers from CTI formed search parties and found Mr. Hernandez.

The Alzheimer's Association met with area first responders and discussed the issues facing people with Alzheimer's, with special emphasis on wandering. The Greater Iowa chapter will also conduct significant trainings for area police departments in 2008.

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Ray Lounsberry  
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Dale & Denise Yeazel

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Mary & Robert Fraser

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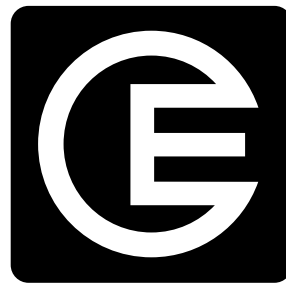
**Memorials, honorariums and donations listed are \$25 and above. Every attempt is made to ensure correct information, but if there is an error, please contact the Alzheimer's Association at 515.440.2722.**



**Internet Resources Available**

Information on local education programs, events and advocacy efforts may be found on the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Iowa website, at [www.alz.org/greateriowa](http://www.alz.org/greateriowa). There viewers will receive regularly updated information on upcoming education programs, special events and fundraising opportunities.

There are links to statewide polls and valuable caregiving information, and updates on research, available 24 hours a day.



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*We would like to thank everyone involved in the  
 2007 Dubuque Alzheimers Memory Walk for  
 helping to make it a success.*

## Wandering....A Significant Safety Issue

Alzheimer's disease destroys the ability to recognize familiar faces and places. Many persons with the disease are unable to remember their names or addresses and become lost even in their own neighborhoods. It is easy to understand why wandering places persons with Alzheimer's at great risk for their personal safety and creates challenges for caregivers.

Even though people with Alzheimer's appear to move about in ways that are aimless, wandering is often purposeful. Wandering can occur because of physical or psychological needs that are not being met, or in response to issues in the surroundings.

Examples of unmet physical needs might include being hungry, tired or needing to go to the bathroom. Boredom, loneliness or concerns about fulfilling past obligations to a job, family member or role like parenting illustrates psychological reasons for wandering. Conditions such as new, unfamiliar people or places, noises or crowded areas may trigger wandering.

There are steps that caregivers can take to prepare for and prevent wandering behavior. The Alzheimer's Association works with caregivers to reduce the risks of serious injury or death due to wandering.

- For safety and peace of mind, enroll persons with Alzheimer's in Medic Alert + Safe Return (see article at right).
- Keep a list of places where the person may wander to, like past jobs, former homes, a church or restaurant.
- Provide opportunities for exercise and activity. Walking, gardening and household chores like vacuuming, doing dishes and folding laundry can provide opportunities for persons with Alzheimer's to feel useful and decrease boredom.
- Ask neighbors, friends and family to call if they see the person alone or dressed inappropriately.

## Medic Alert + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return

November 1, 2007 marked the launch of a partnership between the Alzheimer's Association and MedicAlert, with the new Medic Alert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return.®

In addition to the ongoing benefits of the Safe Return program including connection law enforcement and local chapter support, enrollees can maintain a detailed personal health record. During an incident, medical information can be provided to emergency health providers. This partnership will mean more people will be aware of the program and enroll loved ones.

For information about MedicAlert + Safe Return, call the Alzheimer's Association at 1.800.272.3900.



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## Volunteer Recognized

Jessica Stakey, a dedicated volunteer for the Alzheimer's Association, was honored as the Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy at Central Iowa Association of Fundraising Professionals annual Philanthropy Day celebration November 16 in Des Moines. Jessica was chosen by a committee of volunteers that included community leaders, philanthropists and previous Philanthropy Day honorees.

Even though she is just 17 years old, Jessica has reached impressive milestones with her fundraising for the Ames Memory Walk. In just four years, her team has raised over \$13,000! Jessica also has created a display on Alzheimer's for 4-H, written letters to Congress requesting increased support for research funding, and participated on the Memory Walk Planning Committee.

**Jessica Stakey with her customized award. All Philanthropy Day winners received personalized artwork from students in the Roosevelt High School Advanced Art Class.**



Jessica was just a young girl when her grandfather, Marvin Stakey, was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. According to her grandmother, Shirley Stakey, she has always been sensitive to the needs and concerns of others, and she soon became keenly aware of her grandfather's situation. She would help him out of the car, take his hand, and assist him if he seemed lost.

Jessica's grandfather passed away in October 2006. She is passionate about helping other families still living with the disease. She says that philanthropy is important to her because "it's always good to give back for the good of others." And she enjoys raising money and speaking out, especially for a cause that she holds so close.

*Congratulations to the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Iowa Chapter  
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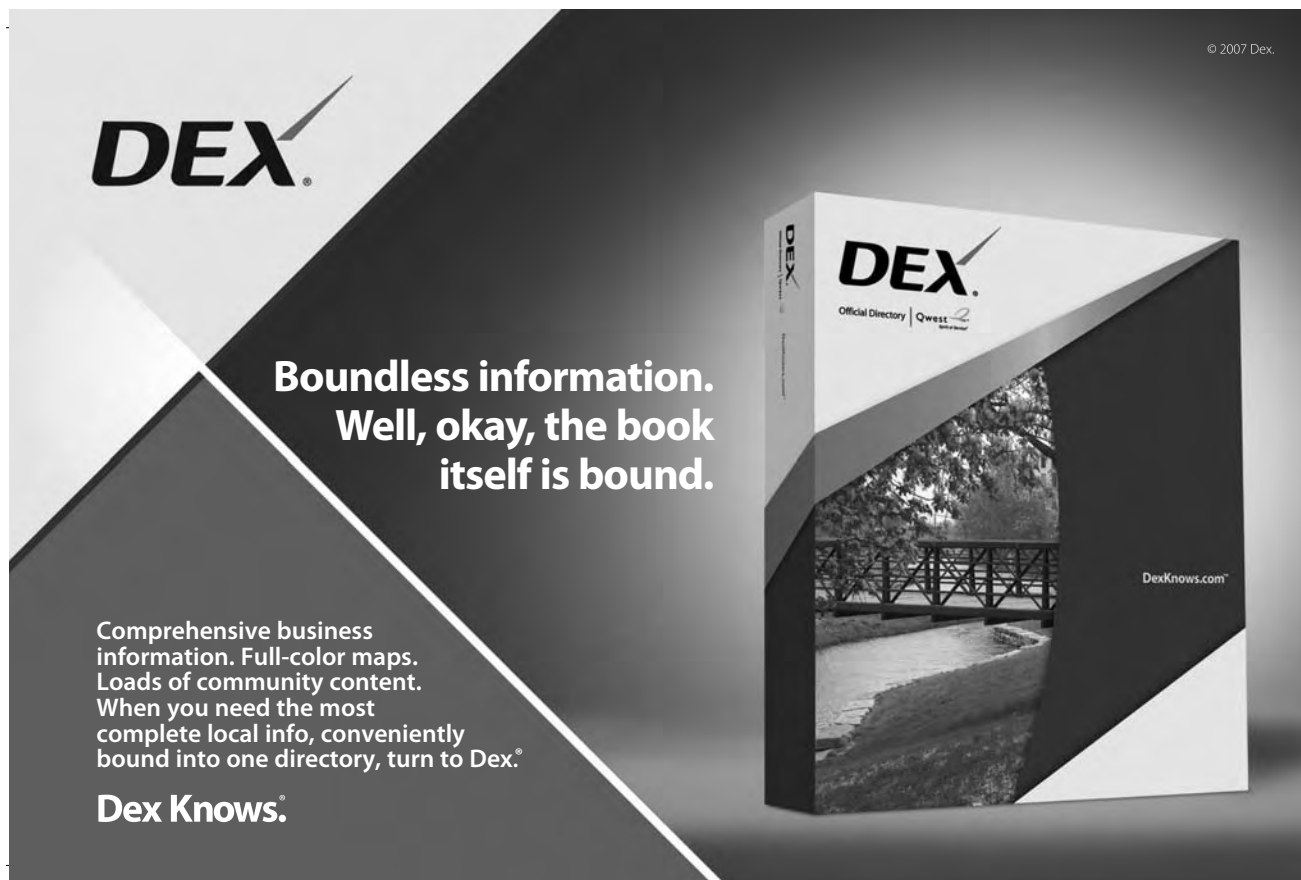
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