

alzheimer's association™

Minnesota-North Dakota Chapter Newsletter
Winter 2009

www.alz.org/mnnd
24/7 Information Helpline: (800) 272-3900



2008 Memory Walks Raise More Than \$790,000

This fall, the Association held 12 Memory Walks to raise both awareness of Alzheimer's and related diseases and funds for dementia programs and services benefiting those in Minnesota and North Dakota. More than 6,000 people walked and together they raised more than \$790,000. Thank you to everyone who participated as a walker, donor or volunteer.

Highlights of the Memory Walk season included a new Memory Walk in Dickinson, ND, which had more than 250 walkers and raised more than \$19,000. The 2008 Angel Sponsor Long Term Care Group engaged more than 160 employees and friends to raise more than \$32,000 at the Twin Cities Memory Walk.

To all the top teams and fundraisers throughout our region, thank you for your hard work and dedication to Memory Walk. Every dollar moves us closer to a world without Alzheimer's. Together, we can **MOVE** a nation.



MOVE our cause forward

OPEN minds

use your **VOICE**

ACT today

A CHAMPION IS **you**
find out how to get involved
at www.alz.org/mnnd

Your Help Is Needed!

Though the walks were successful, your help is still needed to meet the \$802,000 goal. With only \$12,000 to go, every dollar counts. If you were a walker, consider making an additional gift or contacting friends, family, neighbors or colleagues who didn't give to ask for a donation. If you didn't walk, there's still time to make a personal gift or ask friends or family to support the Association.

Please send any additional donations to: **Ashley Snell**, Alzheimer's Association, 4550 West 77th Street, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN, 55435. For more information about Memory Walk, contact **Ashley Snell** at (952) 830-0512 or ashley.snell@alz.org.

Minnesota Wins Prestigious Rosalyn Carter Leadership in Caregiving Award

Minnesota's Family Memory Care Initiative, the first translation of the groundbreaking New York University Caregiver Intervention (NYUCI), funded by the US Administration on Aging Alzheimer's Demonstration Grants to States, has been awarded the Rosalyn Carter Leadership in Caregiving Award. This award was presented to Minnesota's Project Director Donna Walberg; Dr. Mary Mittelman; the original researcher, Cynthia Epstein, NYUCI; and Kristine Dwyer, Carlton County Caregiver Coach at an awards ceremony

in Americus, Georgia, by former first lady Rosalynn Carter. This prestigious national award is presented annually by the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving.

The Minnesota Board on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota are partnering with Dr. Mary Mittelman and Cynthia Epstein to bring this evidence-based Alzheimer's disease spousal caregiver initiative to Minnesota.



Minnesota's Family Memory Care Initiative recipients receive the Rosalynn Carter Leadership in Caregiving Award. Pictured (left to right): Donna Walberg, Rosalynn Carter, Cynthia Epstein, Kristine Dwyer, Mary Mittelman

Please Don't Toss This Newsletter!

We encourage you to "recycle" your newsletter by sharing it with a friend, doctor's office, house of worship or club. Contact Carla Zbacnik at carla.zbacnik@alz.org or (952) 857-0526 if you'd like to be removed from our mailing list or would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail.

This newsletter is published twice each year by the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota, a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation.

Your newsletter comments and ideas are always welcome. Please send them to:

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According to Dr. Mittelman, "We know that this intervention has been demonstrated to lessen caregiver depression and burden, as well as delay nursing home placement of individuals with dementia an average of 18 months." Mittelman adds, "It's gratifying to see this intervention helping caregivers on such a large scale in Minnesota." The Family Memory Care program is modeled after a twenty-year research program at New York University with spousal caregivers which suggests that with intensive support, spousal caregivers were able to demonstrate a better understanding of Alzheimer's disease and feel more supported during the caregiving journey.

The Alzheimer's Association recently received a second grant from the Federal Administration on Aging to fund an additional 250 spousal caregivers and their families to participate in this initiative, which includes spouse and family meetings (six over four months), the ongoing availability of telephone support, and Alzheimer's support group participation and disease education.

If you are a spouse or a family member of someone with Alzheimer's disease in Minnesota and are interested in learning more about this family program, please contact **Heidi Haley-Franklin**, LGSW, Care Consultant Manager, at (952) 857-0527.



SAVE THE DATES!

A MEETING OF THE MINDS DEMENTIA CONFERENCE 2009

March 28, 2009

RiverCentre, St. Paul, MN

REMEMBERING OUR STARS GALA

April 25, 2009

Marriott City Center, Minneapolis, MN

ONLINE AUCTION

March 28 – April 5, 2009

Visit www.alz.org/mnnd

MIND MIXERS

April 25, 2009

Heritage Hjemkomst Interpretive Center,
Moorhead, MN

May 1, 2009

Somerby Golf Club, Byron, MN

Visit www.alz.org/mnnd or call
(952) 830-0512 for more information.

Thank You to the Following Memory Walk Sponsors and In-Kind Donors



- Bruegger's Bagels
- Colleen Kruse and FM107
- Dave Ryan and KDWB
- Dunn Bros Coffee
- Epsilon Sigma Alpha, International – Minnesota State Council
- Forest Pharmaceuticals
- General Mills
- Kwik Trip Stores
- Lighthouse of Barnum and Cloquet
- LTCG
- New Horizon Academy
- Order of Red Men No. 31, Red Wing
- Sunrise Senior Living
- Sunrise Cottages of Rochester
- St. Benedict's Senior Community
- The Academy of Holy Angels Dance Team
- The Thro Company
- Westwood Terrace

Minnesota Man Walks 18 Hours Straight to Support Alzheimer's Research

John Weber took a very long walk, hoping every step would lead to greater awareness and even a cure for Alzheimer's disease. For 18 hours, from September 18 to 19, the Savage, MN, resident walked the streets of Shepherd's Path Intergenerational Campus in Prior Lake, MN.
(Continued, page 5)



Purple Pride

Where have you
worn your
Champion shirt?

To order Champion
t-shirts, go to
www.alz.org/mnnd.

E-mail photos to
Carla Zbacnik at
carla.zbacnik@alz.org.



A New and Easy Way to Give Without Spending a Penny

If you're looking to donate to the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota in an easy and FREE way, consider searching the Internet. GoodSearch is a search engine which donates 50 percent of its revenue to the charities and schools designated by its users. It's a simple and compelling concept. You use GoodSearch exactly as you would any other search engine. Because it's powered by Yahoo!, you get proven search results. The money GoodSearch donates to your cause comes from its advertisers — the users and the organizations do not spend a dime.

In 2007, GoodSearch was expanded to include GoodShop, an online shopping mall. Each purchase made via the GoodShop mall results in a donation to the user's designated charity or school—averaging approximately 3% of the sale, but going up to 20% or even more.

To start giving while you search the Internet, visit www.goodsearch.com and designate "Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota" as your charity of choice.

Caller's Connection

INSIDE THE INFORMATION HELPLINE

QUESTION: While visiting my family during the recent holidays, I noticed a change in my mom. She's always seemed a little forgetful, but at this visit, she seemed to be repeating herself more and it was more difficult for her to fix the holiday meals which she has always been able to do with ease and pride. Do you think I should be worried?

RESPONSE: Starting a new year is the perfect time to make a resolution to gain awareness about memory loss and other cognitive changes and to offer involvement and support to your family. We know the importance of getting an early diagnosis and because you are noticing two of the 10 warning signs, I would suggest you follow these tips:

- Check with your mom and other family members to gain their perspective about any changes they may have noticed.
- Encourage your mom to see her doctor and offer to go with her. Use a kind and gentle approach suggesting that many things may be contributing to the changes she has been experiencing, and you'd feel better just knowing she got it checked out.
- Prepare for your mom's doctor visit by writing down the changes you have seen, and when and how frequently they have been noticed. You may then share that with the doctor. If your mom does not want you to accompany her to the doctor or if you feel awkward about bringing up your concerns, you may send a letter to her doctor for it to be read in advance.
- Take notes during the doctor visit, especially if you are given a referral to a dementia specialist, or call the Information Helpline.
- Be supportive and reassuring to your mom that the changes may be due to any number of things, that it's really good to get it checked out, and that you will be there to support her, whatever the outcome.
- If a diagnosis of Alzheimer's or another form of dementia is given, get connected with the Alzheimer's Association for education, support and planning.
- Give yourself credit for facing the problem and taking action to support your family.

To receive an informational packet or to talk with an expert about your situation, contact our 24/7 Information Helpline: (800) 272-3900.

Reading Rainbow National Young Writers and Illustrators Contest Honors Walhalla Student



Kenzie Carson, a first-grade student from Walhalla, ND, has placed at the national level in the 14th annual Reading Rainbow Young Writers and Illustrators Contest. Her story was entered after she won first place in the local competition sponsored by Prairie Public Broadcasting.

Carson is one of only 12 authors selected from more than 45,000 contest entrants nationwide. Carson wrote and illustrated “Grandpa and Me,” a charming story of a granddaughter understanding as her grandfather is developing Alzheimer’s. “We’re so proud of all the writers who advanced to the national level and all the young writers who participate in the contest,” said Morgan Jenkins, Prairie Public’s community engagement coordinator. “We knew when we read Kenzie’s story that it had a good chance of winning at the national level — the story is so moving.”

Carson’s story, which took third place nationally in her grade level, can be read on the “Reading Rainbow” web site at pbskids.org/readingrainbow.

SmartAlex Raises \$8,600

The SmartAlex 5K and 10K Run took place on Sunday, June 8, at Hidden Falls Park in St. Paul and raised \$8,600. Now in its ninth year, the race has raised more than \$44,000 to benefit the Alzheimer’s Association.

The Alzheimer’s Association and the SmartAlex 5K and 10K Run wish to thank the 2008 SmartAlex Sponsors:

- Augsburg Physician Assistant Program
- Breadsmith
- Brewberry’s
- Kowalski’s Grand Market
- Mississippi Market
- St. Paul Corner Drug
- Taho Sportswear
- Whole Foods Market

If you are interested in learning more about organizing your own benefit fundraiser for the Alzheimer’s Association, please contact **Ashley Snell** at (952) 830-0512 or at ashley.snell@alz.org.

18 Hour Walk *(Continued)*

His mother, Connie, resides at McKenna Crossing, a senior living community that is part of the campus. Although only 68 years old, she was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s six years ago after getting lost on her way to visit her sister. “Never in a million years would I have thought I would be dealing with this,” confesses John. “My Mom was so healthy and vibrant, she was working full time, and she had a very active spiritual and personal life. She moved here from Chicago 10 years ago to spend time with her grandkids and share their lives. Now, she can’t remember our names.”

“I wanted to come to a place of acceptance; taking this very long walk helped,” he explains. “Yes, it was physically

challenging, especially when the sun rose and I realized I wasn’t even halfway done yet. But it was spiritually cathartic. As the day wore on, I embraced the idea of enjoying her, and everyone I love in my life, as much as I can, while I can.”

John’s marathon walk was part of the Rock and Walk benefit, hosted by McKenna Crossing for the Alzheimer’s Association of Minnesota-North Dakota. The events raised more than \$9,700 and included a benefit concert at Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church by the local rock band Tamarak, and a walk the following day, where John was joined by his family, Prior Lake Mayor Jack Haugen and more than 400 other people.

Long Term Care Group Receives Alzheimer's Association Angel Award

Long Term Care Group (LTCG), the nation's largest administrator of long-term care products, was honored by the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota with the Association's first-ever "Angel Award." The award was presented at the Association's annual meeting in November.

The Alzheimer's Association's "Angel Award" recognizes those companies or organizations who have made a significant commitment to support individuals and families in Minnesota and North Dakota facing Alzheimer's and related diseases. By locally sponsoring the Association's gala and Memory Walk, matching employee contributions and forming an employee Memory Walk team with more than 160 members, Long Term Care Group raised and donated more than \$45,000 in 2008 to support dementia education and support services, advocacy and research.

"Supporting the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota gives Long Term Care Group employees the chance to work together as a team to make a significant personal



Board Chair Bob Karrick (left) and Executive Director Mary Birchard (right), present Ted Duley (center) with the Angel Award on November 13 at the Alzheimer's Association Annual Meeting held in Minneapolis.

difference in the lives of people facing Alzheimer's and related diseases," said C. Ted Duley, Senior Vice President, Northern Operations of Long Term Care Group. "We are able to go above and beyond our business activities of providing support for our clients who suffer from the disease. These activities also contribute to positive morale and help further our ongoing education about Alzheimer's disease. Long Term Care Group is proud of its employees' efforts and its sponsorship of the Alzheimer's Association Minnesota-North Dakota."

Association Wins \$1.5 Million for Early Detection Efforts

The Alzheimer's Disease: Early Detection Matters campaign has been voted as the top campaign in the American Express Members Project®. American Express Cardmembers voted the project the one they most wanted to fund, and the Alzheimer's Association will receive \$1.5 million to begin an education campaign highlighting the importance of early detection among the general public and physicians. Thank you to everyone who voted in Minnesota and North Dakota.

The prize money will enable the Association to increase public education about early detection, engage people with Alzheimer's to become advocates and empower those who suspect they may have Alzheimer's to find the hope and help they need.

Jay Smith submitted the project in honor of his wife Patty, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at the age of 51. "It took more than two years for my wife to obtain a correct medical diagnosis, so we decided to do everything we can to increase early detection of Alzheimer's, stop the progression of the disease and help others along the way," Smith said.

Many Americans don't know the 10 warning signs that signal memory loss might be a serious medical problem. The Early Detection Matters campaign was designed to educate people about the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's along with the importance of an early diagnosis.

Progress on Early Detection Matters activities will be available at www.actionalz.org/membersproject.

New Resources Help Relieve Caregiver Stress

More than 40 percent of the 10 million American unpaid caregivers rate the emotional stress of caregiving as high or very high. Additionally, caregivers for someone with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia are more likely than non-caregivers to report that their own health is fair or poor.

As the leader in the fight against Alzheimer's, we offer a number of resources to help you deal with caregiver stress:

- **Caregiver Stress Check**, a first-of-its-kind, interactive quiz that helps caregivers identify their symptoms of stress and provides them with a tailored list of helpful referrals and resources.
- **Two new, best-in-class, topical videos for caregivers and people with dementia:** 1) "Understanding Alzheimer's: An introductory guide for people with dementia and their caregivers" and 2) "Alzheimer's and Safety: A guide to planning and preparation." Aimed at increasing understanding, building skills and empowering people with dementia and those in their circle of care, these leading videos feature essential information on dementia basics, care, and home and transportation safety delivered by individuals with dementia, family caregivers, physicians and care experts.

In addition, Alzheimer's Association **CareSource™** is an easy-to-use, one-stop online resource for everything you need to plan for care for a person with Alzheimer's, including:

- **Lotsa Helping Hands**, an interactive calendar that allows anyone involved in care or support to organize caregiving activities.
- Alzheimer's Association **Senior Housing FinderSM**, powered by SNAPforSeniors® is the first online nationwide database for locating dementia care.
- Alzheimer's Association **CareFinder™**, which helps identify dementia care options to best meet an individual's needs and preferences.

Learn more about caregiver stress and all of the helpful resources available to you by visiting www.alz.org.

Landmark Proposed Legislation in North Dakota

New legislation on dementia care services, developed by the Long Term Care Interim Committee, will be presented to the North Dakota Assembly in 2009. If passed, this legislation will bring a much-needed dementia care service program to each Department of Human Services region throughout North Dakota. The dementia service program would include:

- A dementia specialist, who will provide information to law enforcement, medical professionals and the general public regarding the symptoms of dementia, the benefits of early detection and treatment and the services available.
- Care consultations, which will be available for individuals and their caregivers to help them understand the disease process.
- Dementia needs assessment for individuals and their families including behavior management techniques, appropriate activities, preparation for the future, care options and end-of-life treatment.
- Services provided to all individuals and families regardless of income.

This legislation complements existing services currently provided by the state, county and healthcare system and will provide much needed assistance to the rapidly aging population, particularly in more rural and frontier areas of North Dakota.

North Dakota residents will have an opportunity to add their VOICE to advance this exciting legislation at an Alzheimer's disease rally on January 15, 2009, in Bismarck.

If you'd like to receive advocacy updates like this, consider becoming an e-advocate at www.alz.org/mnnd.

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ONLINE AUCTION

March 28 – April 5, 2009
Visit www.alz.org/mnnd

Vulnerable Adult Justice Project

The Alzheimer's Association of Minnesota-North Dakota has chosen to lead an initiative, the Vulnerable Adult Justice Project, in response to issues surfacing in nursing homes in Albert Lea and Montevideo, MN. In addition to the Alzheimer's Association, this new coalition includes organizations such as the ElderCare Rights Alliance, Care Providers of Minnesota, AARP, the Minnesota Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care, and Aging Services of Minnesota.

These leaders are strengthening their commitment to preventing elder abuse and are working together to urge Minnesota legislature to reform the Vulnerable Adult Act

during the upcoming legislative session. In addition, these unfortunate situations highlight the need for improvements in employee training and in procedures for reporting suspected abuse.

The primary goal of the Vulnerable Adult Project is to raise awareness of elder abuse and to launch a campaign across Minnesota and North Dakota to bring strategies to family members, friends and clergy to help protect the aging and vulnerable in our society. If you have questions or concerns about elder care abuse, contact our Information Helpline at (800) 272-3900.