

alzheimer's association™

Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter Newsletter

Spring 2004

Your local voice for Alzheimer's news and information.

By the Time You're Old, Alzheimer's Could be Just a Memory

The Alzheimer's Association nationally has launched a targeted awareness campaign addressing brain health and healthy aging, called "Maintain Your Brain." While there is no single "proven" method to prevent

Alzheimer's disease, maintaining brain health is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

The Association's awareness campaign focuses on three components:

- (1) understanding how much has been accomplished in the fight against Alzheimer's and why there is hope;
- (2) taking care of your brain; and
- (3) getting involved, advocating, and donating.

Most of what we know about Alzheimer's disease we have learned during the past fifteen years. During this exciting time, medical researchers have uncovered many secrets of Alzheimer's; in many ways, the disease is no longer a mystery.

The Alzheimer's Association believes it is important for Americans to understand that healthy aging is a process that should begin sooner in life rather than later, in order to remain healthy in body and mind for as long as possible. More research is necessary, especially in the form of prevention



trials, but there is increasing evidence that healthy lifestyle habits Americans are familiar with today contribute to healthier aging and may also decrease the risk for Alzheimer's.

Take steps now to take care of your brain.

Manage your numbers. Lower your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar levels, and body weight to stay healthy as you age.

Exercise both your body and brain. Work out, take a class, converse with others, read, play cards, or work on crossword puzzles.

Feed your brain with nutrients. Eat food high in vitamins E and C. Take a multivitamin that includes folic acid. Include salmon, mackerel or other foods high in omega-3 fatty acids in your diet.

Though the Alzheimer's Association's goal of delaying the disabling symptoms and eventually preventing Alzheimer's disease now appears to be a feasible scientific objective, your help is still needed on the national and local level. Help us nationally to increase America's commitment to improving techniques that can enable us to identify the disease sooner, and to increase funds that result in increased clinical trials of drugs that show the most promise in prevention.

On the local level, help us to increase America's commitment to those with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. We must continue to provide support for those with Alzheimer's and we must also advocate for those who have yet to be affected.

Our New Logo

As you can see from this newsletter's masthead, the Alzheimer's Association has a whole new look! On February 12, 2004, the Association released its new branding campaign. In the new logo, the words "Alzheimer's" and "Association" are given equal weight and emphasis. This distinguishes us from other organizations that have the word "Alzheimer's" in their names. It also points to the importance of the people who form the Association and make our work possible.

The "dual mission symbol", seen in the middle of our new logo, represents people and science. It resembles a human head in profile and a laboratory beaker, corresponding to the Association's dual mission of support and research.

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RESEARCH

Diabetes Increases Risk of Poor Cognitive Performance

A study published online by the *British Medical Journal* (bmj.com) finds that women with type 2 diabetes suffer greater cognitive decline and worse cognitive function than women without diabetes. The researchers consider cognitive decline an intermediate stage prior to dementia. Women not using any medication to treat their diabetes had the greatest odds of poor performance compared with women without diabetes.

“The Alzheimer’s Association Maintain Your Brain program recommends that everyone, especially baby boomers, pay attention to their benchmark health numbers, including body weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and blood sugar,” comments William H. Thies, Ph.D., Alzheimer’s Association Vice President, Medical and Scientific Affairs. “This study is another convincing addition to the body of evidence on which our Maintain Your Brain program is based.”

On average, women in the study had been diabetic for about 12 years. Those who were diabetic for 15 or more years showed even greater risk of poor performance. The cognitive function of the diabetic women also appeared to be related to the type of treatment they were receiving. Those who were taking oral medications to control their blood sugar functioned about as well as women without diabetes, while

those not receiving any treatment fared the worst. Those receiving insulin injections also fared poorly.

Data was collected as part of the Nurses’ Health Study, a major epidemiological investigation of risk factors for major chronic diseases in women. Study results are based on the women’s own reports of whether they had diabetes and how it was being treated. In Type 2 diabetes, blood sugar levels rise because the body fails to respond properly to insulin, a hormone that under normal circumstances helps move sugar from the bloodstream into cells, where it is converted to energy. The condition is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease as well with an increased risk of dementia.

Maintain Your Brain Resources

See: www.alz.org/maintainyourbrain/overview.asp Type 2 Diabetes Risk Questionnaire

See: diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/riskfortype2/index.htm MedlinePlus Diabetes Section

See: www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/diabetes.html Nurses’ Health Study

Teleconference to Focus on Living with Grief

The Association is collaborating with the Hospice Foundation of America (HFA) to co-host its annual teleconference, *Living With Grief: Alzheimer’s Disease*, on **April 28, 2004 at 12:30 p.m.** The program will explore better ways to care for individuals with dementia in the late stages of the disease and is open to the community at several local sites listed below. Please call the contact listed below to RSVP, verify time, and obtain directions.

Host: TxPEC and Alzheimer’s Association

Contact: Alzheimer’s Association
Location: Hilton Conference Center
 at University of Houston
Phone: 713-266-6400

Host: Silverado Senior Living

Contact: Charlotte Wilson
Location: 1221 7th St., Sugarland
Phone: 281-277-1221

Host: University of Texas

Medical Branch
Contact: Julia Barragan
Location: UTMB, 301 University
 Blvd., Galveston
Phone: 409-747-6911

Host: Hospice Brazos Valley

Contact: Joan Serber
Location: 502 W. 26th St., Bryan
Phone: 979-821-2266

Host: Hospice Brazos Valley, Brenham and Alzheimer’s Association

Contact: Celia Ponder
Location: 795 S. Austin, Brenham
Phone: 979-277-9525

Host: Hospice of South Texas

Contact: Donna Rodriguez
Location: 1908 N. Laurent, Ste. 430,
 Victoria
Phone: 361-572-4300

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**713/266-6400 or
800/272-3900 (24/7)**

"The Forgetting" Spurs Overwhelming Response



On January 21st, the Alzheimer's documentary *The Forgetting* aired on HoustonPBS. Thirty volunteers and staff members were kept busy answering a record number of calls. Nearly 1,000 concerned family members and friends called in during the broadcast to request an information packet be sent to them.

Due to the extraordinary response received, HoustonPBS has scheduled a rebroadcast of *The Forgetting* on Wednesday, June 16, 2004 at 7:00 p.m., with the show airing in Spanish on the SAP track. Volunteers will be on hand again to answer calls and fill requests for free information packets.

In addition to the 90-minute documentary *The Forgetting: A Portrait of Alzheimer's*, two specially produced follow-up shows will also be shown. Patricia Gras, Channel 8's award-winning medical reporter, will moderate the first, *Hope and Help for Alzheimer's Families in Houston*. The second will be hosted by actor David Hyde Pierce, who watched both his grandfather and father suffer with Alzheimer's disease and knows first-hand the challenges of dealing with the disease.

For more information, or to download a copy of the Viewer's Guide, visit *The Forgetting* website: www.pbs.org/theforgetting or the Chapter's website: www.alztex.org. Thanks to our community partners HoustonPBS and TxPEC, who will be joining us again for the rebroadcast on June 16.

Thank You

St. Luke's Episcopal Health System • Kelsey-Seybold
The Brown Foundation, Inc. • HCRManorCare • HFMA
Isla Carroll Turner Friendship Trust • Pfizer • Hamman Foundation

The Texas Partnership for End-of-Life Care (TxPEC) is sponsoring a daylong workshop titled: *Comfort and Palliative Care for Families Touched by Alzheimer's Disease*. The morning session will focus on advanced care planning, patient advocacy, and pain management for late stage Alzheimer's patients. The Hospice Foundation of America's teleconference (see related article on page 2) will be broadcast in the afternoon. The all-day April 28th workshop will be held at the Hilton Conference Center on the U of H campus and is open to professionals and caregivers. The workshop registration fee is \$15 and includes lunch. For those desiring CEU's (nurses, social workers, etc.), it will cost an additional \$25 payable at the workshop. For additional information or to obtain a registration brochure contact: Terri Petrucci-Coley at 713/201-7926 or email: gcpec@texpec.org.

Mission Statement

To eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research and to enhance care and support for individuals, their families, and caregivers.

FUNDING OUR MISSION

HP Houston Marathon – a RUNaway Success!

An outstanding group of 67 runners ran for a reason in the HP Houston Marathon—to raise money for the Alzheimer's Association. On January 18, dedicated runners hit the streets of Houston to challenge themselves by running the Marathon, Halliburton Int'l Half-Marathon or Houston Press/METRO 5K. Not only did they take on one of these monumental tasks, they also committed to raising funds for the Alzheimer's Association. Our runners raised over \$23,000 for the Chapter! We are extremely proud of all of our runners and thank them for their amazing accomplishments, especially board members **Heidi Davis** and **Mike Padon**. Mike and his son **Matthew Padon** raised over \$12,000 and were the top fundraising individuals for the entire HP Marathon.



Matthew Padon

Runners:

Carlos Amero	Hilary Essex	Daniel Lawrence	Joan Propp
Alvaro Barrios	James Gardiner	Mike Lloyd	Jayaram Ramdas
William Blount	Connie Golden	Deborah Love	Leigh Ann Ranslem
Allison Branan	Daisy Gomez	Wes Lovelace	Debbie Rathburn
Heather Briscoe	Daniel Green	Debra Lyons	Carmen Rivera
Tina Burgos	Patrick Griggs	Steven Nolan	Angie Romero
Armando Caceres, Jr.	Gayden Gullede	Peter O'Connor	Elaine Russum
Cindy Carnine	Todd Hahn	Steve Ortiz	Duncan Skinner
Paul Carnine	Patrick Hale, Sr.	Barry Overcash	Danielle SoRelle-Miner
Doug Craddock	Emily Harris	Michael Padgett	William Spijkerman
Rebecca Cross	Lee Hayden	Matthew Padon	Mark Strug
Lawrence Culpepper	Richard Husseini	Mike Padon	Matthew Weaver
Heidi Davis	Stacy Janecek	Kelly Parsons	Roarke Wells
Mark Davis	Laura Joost	Patricia Philpott	Brandon Wonnacott
Amanda Devine	Mitra Kiani	Eduardo Potter	Jason Wonnacott
Janet Doty	Tom King	Brad Poynter	Meghan Wood
Sandra Erb	Kristine Kozar	Angie Pratt	David Work

Our Supporters and Community Partners

GHBA Benefit Homes Project



CEO Richard Elbein and representatives from the Greater Houston Builders Association, Land Tejas Development, and Pulte Homes broke ground for the 2004 Benefit Home to be built by Pulte Homes in the Legends Ranch Subdivision. Proceeds from the sale of the home benefit the Chapter and Texas Children's Hospital.

Community Health Charities Campaign



Development Officer Maria Magee accepts award on behalf of the Chapter from CHC Board member Charles Childs.

Dr. Robert Reichlin honored with Chapter's Harry E. Walker Award

On March 10, the Chapter honored Robert E. Reichlin, Ph.D, with the 2004 Harry E. Walker Award at a wine tasting reception at the J.P. McGovern Museum of Health and Medical Science. Dr. Reichlin's dedication to individuals with Alzheimer's and their caregivers, as well as his years of service to the Chapter, made him the ideal recipient. The award, named for the Chapter's co-founder, is bestowed upon individuals dedicated to facilitating the Chapter's growth.

The reception was enjoyed by all. The Chapter is grateful to Darcee Grice, Director of Winestock Marketing, for donating her services to lead the wine-tasting; to Fresh Foods Catering for partially underwriting the hors d'oeuvres; and to Best Cellars.

For over ten years, Dr. Reichlin has been the lead facilitator of the Chapter's Early Stage Peer Group, pioneering this unique program that supports people in the early stages of Alzheimer's and their caregivers. Dr. Reichlin has also served on the Chapter's Board and Family Services Committee and currently holds appointments in the Department of Medicine (Geriatrics) at Baylor College of Medicine, and the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at UT Health Sciences Center-Houston. He is a licensed clinical psychologist who has been in private practice for twenty years.

In a moving acceptance speech, Dr. Reichlin spoke about three kinds of "illness stories": stories of temporary setbacks followed by recovery; stories of chronic illness that try to minimize suffering or focus on return to health; and stories of chronic illness in which the ill person acknowledges that life has changed, finds meaning in what has happened, and shares their wisdom with others. In Dr. Reichlin's words: "what

underlies the mission of the Association is the third type of illness story- the search for ways to hear others, hear their suffering, and provide a voice to what may be only faintly heard. This search is never complete. Each interaction, no matter how mundane, is a reaching out and a promise to be a witness to suffering; to make it mean something."



Dr. Robert E. Reichlin (left), recipient of the 2004 Harry Walker Award, with Chapter co-founder Harry E. Walker

He described families he has met and been inspired by: "We have stood together, through hours of tears and rage, frustration and grief, and sometimes even humor, to find on the other side a sensibility rarely spoken; namely, a belief that in dementia, while there is considerable, often profound loss, there is no loss of human dignity if we choose to see it that way. People remain adults despite their impairments, even when they need help with basic activities hard won in childhood. In our groups, the folks with the diagnosis show a maturity few credit. Group after group, year after year, I have seen affection, respect, support, spirituality, and understanding."

We are honored that Dr. Robert Reichlin is part of our story. For the complete text of Dr Reichlin's award speech go to www.alztex.org.

Select Underwriters

Ms. Candice Depauw
The Forum at Memorial Woods

Vintage Underwriters

Belmont Village
Excel Diagnostic Imaging Clinics
Forest Laboratories

Silverado Senior Living
Helen and Roy Cordes
Andrew and Aileen McCormick

AWARE Membership: Renew or Join!

Houston and Fort Bend AWARE membership drives are in full swing. Houston AWARE membership coffee: April 14 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Fort Bend AWARE membership coffee: April 26 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. For information, contact Alexis Montle at 713-266-6400, x 121.

Upcoming Women's Event

When: May 6, 2004

Where: Neiman Marcus - Town and Country

Featured speaker: Image Consultant Annie Cater

VIP Reception: 6 - 7 p.m. **Presentation:** 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$100 **VIP Tickets:** \$250

Corporate Sponsorships available.

For more details, contact Alexis Montle at 713-266-6400, x 121.

LEGAL/ADVOCACY

Senior Texans Should Prepare for Improved Medicare Benefits

Low-income seniors get significant prescription drug benefits starting in June

AUSTIN - Texas Health and Human Services Commissioner Albert Hawkins is encouraging senior Texans - especially low-income seniors - to learn more about improved federal Medicare benefits, including prescription drug discounts. Starting in less than 90 days, Medicare-endorsed drug discount cards good at most Texas pharmacies will be available to all Medicare participants.

"The new federal Medicare law provides significant benefits for Texas seniors who need prescription drug discounts," Hawkins said. "For low-income seniors, the new Medicare law could make the difference between rationing or going without needed medicine and being able to afford full prescriptions."

Starting in June 2004, and lasting until the comprehensive Medicare drug coverage begins in January 2006, drug discount cards good at most pharmacies will be available to all Medicare participants. The cards will offer all Medicare enrollees discounts of 10 to 25 percent off the retail price of prescription drugs and will provide added benefits for low-income seniors.

In addition to the discounts, low-income seniors can use their cards to get \$600 a year in direct Medicare assistance with drug purchases in 2004 and 2005. This new benefit does not require a new application or enrollment fee. The direct federal assistance is applied to qualified seniors' prescription bills when they present their discount cards at the pharmacy. The federal government pays the discount card enrollment fees for low-income people.

For this program, low-income is defined as individuals having incomes less than \$12,123 and \$16,362 for a couple, and who have no prescription drug coverage from Medicaid or a private source. Seniors who meet the income requirements will not have to pay the monthly insurance premiums charged to other participants in the prescription drug insurance program. Low-income seniors will never make more than a \$5 co-payment for any prescription, and may pay as little as \$2 for generic prescriptions.

For more information about Medicare benefits, including prescription drug discounts, visit <http://www.medicare.gov/MedicareReform> or call 1-800-MEDICARE 1-800-633-4227.

Advocacy Survey

The Alzheimer's Association Coalition of Texas (AACT) is seeking your input to shape the 2005 legislative platform. Your own experiences in dealing with Alzheimer's disease, whether as the diagnosed person, the caregiver, or an interested party, is needed to make changes in Texas' laws and regulations. Please help in the fight against Alzheimer's by completing the short survey of 5 items that you can rank based on what is most important to you at our web site www.alztex.org or www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB2E4RT9CAU.

If you have any questions, contact Grace Jackson at 713/266-400 ext.140.

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VIEWPOINT

They Are Glad They Caught it Early. Am I?

By Richard Taylor, Ph.D.

I have talked with dozens of people in their 30s and 40s who have been diagnosed with early-age, early onset Alzheimer's disease. I was 58 when I was officially diagnosed. After hearing the diagnosis, I cried every day for about three weeks. My neurologist told me 95% of the people he diagnoses with Alzheimer's are not even tested. The patients, most of whom are in their mid to late 70s, would not be able to understand the instructions, let alone answer the questions in a reliable manner. I was tested for a year. I understood everything that was going on. I still do. Right now, I just forget a lot.

I now feel a sense of accomplishment when an hour goes by and I am not made aware of my illness by someone correcting me, or asking me a question I cannot answer. However, soon there is old Dr. Alzheimer with his pitcher of ice water to throw in my face and remind me it was the illness that caused me not to lock the front door at home, or leave the dog in the yard for almost a day, or forget to do this or that. I now almost never stop being aware of the illness. What was an occasional disruptor became a bother, is now a constant companion and reminder of my journey down the road less traveled (especially at my age).

I was in a group with patients all older than I was. Most of them denied they had the disease because I believe they could not conceptualize it, and since they didn't understand it, why should they believe others who told them they had something they couldn't see, feel or conceptualize? The group leader encouraged us to tell each other how we felt. Most all of them felt okay. They were a little irritated that they could not drive, etc., but life was mostly on track.

For those of us who "caught" it early, and in whom it was diagnosed early in the progression of the disease, we know what is going on. We still from time to time entertain meta-perspectives on behavior, our minds, or ourselves. For us "early-agers", we know that we are off life's track. We know we are wandering farther and farther away from the crowd, our families, and ourselves.

My neurologist may be happy he made the diagnosis early on in the course of the disease. I am not so sure it was such a blessing.

Editor's Note:

This article is the sixth of a series of articles authored by Richard Taylor, Ph.D. All of Richard's articles are posted on our website: www.alztex.org.

Education Calendar 2004

These programs have been designed for specific target audiences. Please check our website at www.alztex.org or call 713/266-6400 for more details. A minimum donation of \$5.00 is requested at all education programs.

Alzheimer's: More Than Memory Loss*

Target Audience: Recently diagnosed persons and their care partners

May 22, 2004 (10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.)

Location: Bryan Public Library

May 22, 2004 (2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.)

Location: College Station Public Library

June 9, 2004 (10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon)

Location: Alzheimer's Association

August 11, 2004 (10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon)

Location: Alzheimer's Association

May 19, 2004 (12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.)

Brown Bag Presentation

Does Your Staff Have the Right Stuff?

Target Audience: Administrators

Location: Belmont Village Assisted

Living (2929 West Holcombe Blvd.)

Presenter: Grace Jackson, MA, LPC.

May 25, 2004 (6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)

Dementia/Respite Aide Continuing

Education (Interactive Care Strategies)

Target Audience: Direct Care Providers

Location: St. Dominic Village

(2409 East Holcombe Blvd.)

July 21, 2004 (12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.)

Brown Bag Presentation

Decisions, Decisions: Alternative

Dementia Care Options

Target Audience: Family Care Partners

Location: Hearthstone at Braeswood

(2555 South Braeswood)

Presenter: Janet Jackson, MA, President,

Jackson Care Management

August 17-27, 2004 (6:00 p.m.- 9:00 p.m.)

Basic Dementia Care Training

Target Audience: Respite Aides, In-Home

Care Staff, and Family Care Partners

Location: Bayou Manor

(4141 South Braeswood)

September 8, 2004 (12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.)

Brown Bag Presentation

Understanding Behavioral Changes

Associated with Alzheimer's Disease

Target Audience: Health Care

Professionals

Location: Clarewood House

(7400 Clarewood Drive)

Presenter: Carole Ashendorf, LMSW-

ACP, Geriatric Associates

***Please RSVP at 713/266-6400.**

Remembering a Visionary - Al Malyn



Were it not for Albert "Al" Malyn, the Alzheimer's Association Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter would not exist. Together with Harry Walker, Al started the Chapter as a grassroots initiative in 1980. On January 30, 2004, Al passed away at the age of 91 - leaving behind three children, four grandchildren, and a lasting legacy.

Al's wife Tillie lived with Alzheimer's disease as a resident at Seven Acres Nursing Home for close to ten years. During this time, Al faithfully visited Tillie twice a day, helping to feed and care for her. This personal encounter with Alzheimer's motivated him to help organize the Houston Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. We are deeply grateful for Al's vision and dedication.

Ellen MacDonald Receives Women of Distinction Award



The Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America unveiled the ABC-Channel 13 Women of Distinction at a gala at Saks Fifth Avenue, on October 22, 2003. Among those celebrated Houston women was the Alzheimer's Association's own Ellen MacDonald.

Ellen has been a long-time supporter of the Alzheimer's Association, which submitted her nomination for this award. In addition to her service to our Chapter, where she recently completed her second term as board chair, Ellen also recently completed her term as chair of the Alzheimer's Association Coalition of Texas. Ellen continues to make meaningful contributions to The Seniors Place and Care for Elders Program. We are proud of Ellen's work on behalf of seniors across Texas.