

## To Cure Alzheimer's, Invest in Prevention

By Kate Mulgrew

(Condensed from [www.CNN.com/2009/OPINION/12/03/mulgrew.prevent.alzheimers](http://www.CNN.com/2009/OPINION/12/03/mulgrew.prevent.alzheimers))

After the Alzheimer's came, my mother could not know how shadows fell across our once ebullient family: our solidarity fractured, our tempers flaring in furious incomprehension, hearts breaking in mute despair.

None of us knew how to watch this woman disappear, her features slowly masked with blankness, her supple body rigid and wooden, her absolute vividness obliterated by the heavy fog of her disease.

Prevention. Cure. Hope. These are words seldom associated with

Alzheimer's disease. But groundbreaking scientific research and an opportunity for powerful collaborations could lead to discovery of the ultimate cure for Alzheimer's disease: its prevention.

My son, Alec, is an artist like his late grandmother. His paintings are large and uncompromising, stunning in texture, original in design. He's got the real thing. He's got 'it,' just as she had. But what if he also has something else, like the APOE-e4 gene, known to increase the

risk of Alzheimer's? What if he is in line to inherit this devastating disease?

What I could barely endure happening to my mother, I know I could not possibly endure happening to my son. So, I embrace prevention as the ultimate cure for Alzheimer's disease. Anything short of that is too risky.

So what's the holdup? Well, money, of course, and attitude, perhaps. According to Harry Johns, president and CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, "No other disease causes so much suffering, is so certainly fatal, affects so many and drives so much cost with so little spent to overcome it." Why is that? Johns names ignorance, age discrimination, stigma and denial as likely explanations.

My plea is deeply personal, but by 2050, Alzheimer's will affect as many as 16 million Americans, and none of us will be able to deny the reality. We must fight mightily now to prevent the shadow of this disease from darkening the lives of our children and grandchildren. We must invest today in research that will most swiftly lead to the ultimate cure: prevention. ■



*Kate Mulgrew is best known for her TV roles in "Star Trek: Voyager" and "Mercy", and is an Alzheimer's Champion.*

## Northern Utah Services For Those Worried About Memory Loss

In December 2007, the Alzheimer's Association Utah Chapter and the Bear River Area Agency on Aging (BRAG) joined together to establish the Northern Utah Alzheimer Association office in Logan, Utah, an Alzheimer's Dementia Care Service Center. Through the partnership, individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's Disease in Northern Utah have been able to receive information and referral services, care consultations, education, and respite care in their local community.

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*The Bear River Area Agency on Aging is the Chapter's primary dementia care collaborator in Northern Utah.*

### Inside this issue:

Meet Sylvia Brunisholz, LCSW



A Utah Prospective



Support From Utah's Health Leader



Memorials & Tributes



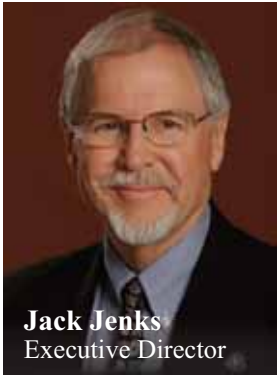
New Early-Stage Chapter Service



2010 Gala Event



# Meet Sylvia Brunisholz, LCSW



**Jack Jenks**  
Executive Director

*Dear Friends,  
In our last Utah Chapter newsletter, I referred to our "small but amazing staff". They truly are amazing as well as passionate about helping*

*people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. I would like you to get better acquainted with each member of our Utah Chapter "family" beginning with Sylvia Brunisholz, LCSW, CMC, our most recent staff addition. Sylvia is a licensed clinical social worker and geriatric care manager who is eminently qualified to lead our care consultation, support group and family counseling programs. She has already made a positive impact in the lives of many people facing the daunting challenges of Alzheimer's. I know you will enjoy reading her article (right).*

**"I know I love you, but I don't know why."**

What a poignant statement a person with Alzheimer's disease told his wife last week. The mission statement of the Alzheimer's Association revolves around providing Care and finding a Cure. I am excited to be part of the Utah Chapter team. My personal mission is to help facilitate this cause by enhancing the quality of life for our care recipients and caregivers. My goal is to help families including the person with Alzheimer's disease create a care plan unique to their needs and wishes through care consultations. I believe in centering care on the individual and family strengths to create positive interaction with care giving. Empowering clients to grow and function better personally, at work and in family relationships, is vitally important to me.

*Continued on page 9*



**Sylvia Brunisholz, LCSW, CMC**

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# Support Groups: SUPPORT & EDUCATION GROUPS THE ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION – UTAH CHAPTER

Support and education groups are forums for caregivers, family members, and friends to express feelings and concerns, share practical techniques, gain education and network with others about Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Groups are free and open to the public. Check our website for updates: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)

## BOUNTIFUL

**Orchard Cove Assisted Living**  
484 East 500 South  
Meet: Every Thursday at 3 P.M.  
Contact: Randy Lewis at (801) 299-4888

## BRIGHAM CITY

**Brigham City Senior Center**  
24 North 300 West  
Meet: 2nd Thursday at 6 P.M.  
(RSVP, light dinner is served) General Group  
Meet: 2nd Wednesday from 10 AM – 2 P.M.  
Free on-site respite is provided. AD Group  
Contact: Vickie Wright at (435) 723-3303

## CEDAR CITY

**Emerald Pointe Assisted Living**  
995 Regency Road, Second Floor  
Meet: 2nd Friday at 1 P.M.  
Free on-site respite avail. w/ 1 week notice  
Contact: Josh Edwards at (435) 867-0055

## CLEARFIELD

**Chancellor Gardens**  
1425 South 1500 East  
Meet: 3rd Saturday @2 P.M.  
Contact: Jean Weinberger at (801) 779-0798

## COALVILLE

**Denise's Homeplate**  
Main Street  
Meet: 4th Thursday at 1 P.M. Free Respite  
Contact: Linda Morrison at (435) 640-2690

## COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS

**Neighborhood House**  
1580 Vine Street  
Meet: 1st & 3rd Thursday at 10 A.M.  
Contact: Patsy Balwin at (801) 277-3264

## The Coventry

6898 South 2300 East  
Meet: 2nd Tuesday at 1:30 P.M.  
Contact: Monique Larkin at (801) 943-5858

## DRAPER

**Wentworth at Draper**  
11631 South 700 East  
Meet: TBA  
Contact: Robin Childs at (801) 523-9393

## HEBER CITY

**Wasatch Senior Center**  
"Caregivers Night Out"  
465 East 1200 South  
Meet: 2nd Thursday each month at 4 p.m.  
Contacts: Linda Morrison (435) 783-5708

## HOLLADAY

**Mount Olympus Senior Center**  
1635 East Murray - Holladay Rd.  
Private conference room  
Meet: 3rd Thursday at 9:30 A.M.  
Contact: Christine Cramer at (801) 424-2200

## Garden Terrace

1201 East 4500 South  
Meet: 4th Tuesday at 2 P.M.  
Contact: Kathryn Bennett at (801) 261-3664

## Sunrise at Holladay

4650 South Highland Drive  
Meet: 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Cheryl Salas at (801) 424-2200

## Silverado Senior Living

1430 E. 4500 S.  
Meet: 3rd Thursday at 6:00 P.M.  
Contact: Lindsay Rozier at (801) 272-8000

## HURRICANE

**Hurricane Rehabilitation Center**  
416 North State Street  
Meet: 2nd Monday at 2 P.M.  
Contact: LaTonya Heaton at (435) 635-9833

## LOGAN

**Cache County Senior Center**  
240 North 100 East  
Meet: 1st & 3rd Tuesday at 10:30AM  
Contact: Debbie Crowther at 435-752-7242

## Bear River Association of Gov't

**Brain Builder Group**  
170 North Main  
Meet: 1st Wednesday from 7-8PM  
Contact: Allison Richman at (435) 752-7242

## MIDVALE

**Canyon Creek**  
7235 South Union Park  
Meet: 2nd Thursday at 5:30 P.M.  
Contact: Brandon Peterson at (801) 568-9909

## MILFORD

**Milford Senior Center**  
410 North 100 West  
Meet: 2nd Tuesday at 10 A.M.  
Contact: Scott Symond at (435) 387-2698

## MURRAY

**ABC's of Memory Loss**  
855 E. 4800 S. Ste. 100  
Meet: Call for more information  
Contact: Kathy Moran at 1-800-272-3900

**Latino Dementia Caregiver Support Group**  
855 E. 4800 S. Ste. 100  
Meet: TBA  
Contact: David Larsen at (801) 529-8238

**Dementia Care Professionals Support Group**  
855 East 4800 South, Ste. 100  
Meet: Last Friday of the month at 2 P.M.  
Contact: Nick Zullo at 801-265-1944

**Maintain Your Brain Classes**  
855 East 4800 South, Ste. 100  
Meet: 4th Wednesday at 5 P.M.  
Contact: Sylvia Brunisholtz at (801) 265-1944

**Murray Memory Builders**  
855 East 4800 South, Ste 100  
Meet: 2nd & 4th Wednesday at 1:15 P.M.  
Contact: Maurice Wells at 801-572-1306

## OAKLEY

**Elk Meadows**  
400 West 4200 North  
Meet: 3rd Thursday at 4 P.M.  
Contact: Linda Morrison at (435) 640-2690

## OGDEN

**Emeritus Estates (North end of Ogden)**  
1340 North Washington Blvd.  
Meet: 2nd Tuesday every other month at 6 P.M.  
Free on-site respite available- RSVP  
Contact: Lillian Feller at (801) 737-1230

**Mountain Ridge Assisted Living**  
1885 E. Skyline Drive  
Meet: 2nd Wednesday at 6:30 P.M.  
Free onsite respite available- RSVP  
Contact: Monica Swander at (801) 475-5111

**Golden Hours Senior Living**  
650 25th Street  
Meet: 3rd Tuesday at 7 P.M.  
Contact: Donna Onstott-Birch at (801) 399-5230

## PAYSON

**Payson Senior Center**  
439 West Utah Avenue  
Meet: Last Wednesday of the month at 1 P.M.  
Contact: Judy Reynolds at (801) 465-5215

## PRICE

**Active Re-Entry**  
10 South Fairgrounds Road  
(Alzheimer's and general caregiver group)  
Meet: Last Wednesday of the month at 1 P.M.  
Contact: Lisa Perla at (435) 637-4950

## PROVIDENCE

**Cache Valley Assisted Living**  
233 North Main  
Meet: Call for Date & Time  
Contact: Kathy Voit at 435-792-4770

## PROVO

**Courtyard at Jamestown**  
3352 North 100 East  
Meet: 3rd Wednesday at 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Mindy Hill at (801) 377-3730

**Provo Eldred Senior Center**  
270 West 500 North  
Meet: 1st & 3rd Tuesday at 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Mountainland at (801) 229-3800

## SALT LAKE CITY

**Brighton Gardens**  
76 South 500 East  
Meet: 4th Wednesday at 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Alicia Hadley at (801) 359-0050

## SANDY

**Sunrise at Sandy**  
"Family Gathering"  
2130 E. 9400 S.  
Meet: 4th Thursday at 6:30 P.M.  
Contact: Debbie Highsmith at (801) 453-9600

**Sandy Senior Center Frontal Temporal Dementia**  
9310 South 1300 East  
Meet: 2nd Wednesday at 10 A.M.  
Contact: Bonnie Shepherd at (801) 231-3442

**Wentworth at Willow Creek**  
8325 South Highland Drive  
Meet:  
Contact: Carolyn May at (801) 833-6363

## SOUTH JORDAN

**South Jordan Senior Center**  
10778 South Redwood Road  
Meet: 2nd Tuesday at 2 P.M.  
Contact: Lisa Long at (801) 918-5046

**Legacy House of South Jordan**  
1517 West Temple Lane  
Meet: TBA  
Contact: Rose Draper at (801) 254-0373

## ST. GEORGE

**Cliff View Senior Living**  
134 West 2025 South Circle  
Meet: 2nd Thursday at 2 P.M.  
Contact: Maria Bailey at (435) 628-1117

# Calendar of Events

**March 6, 2010**

**Morning: Professional Education Symposium**  
**Evening: Alzheimer's Association Gala**  
Salt Lake City Marriott Downtown  
West Temple, Salt Lake City, Utah

**March 8, 2010**

**Gerontology Conference**  
Brigham Young University

**April 19 & 20, 2010**

**Generations Conference**  
**19th: Foundations of Dementia Care Training for Professionals**  
**20th: Multi-Cultural Conference for Elder Care Professionals**  
Salt Palace Convention Center  
Salt Lake City, Utah

**May 2010**

**"Making Sense of Alzheimer's"**  
A special Activities Month with Utah Symphony performances for persons with dementia and caregivers.

**Visit [www.alz.org/utah/](http://www.alz.org/utah/) for calendar details and updates.**

**Kolob Care & Rehab**  
178 S. 1200 E.  
Meet: 3rd Thursday at 12 P.M. Free Lunch  
Contact: Travis Hoopes at (435) 688-1207

## TAYLORSVILLE

**Legacy House of Taylorsville**  
6305 South Gold Medal Dr.  
Meet: 2nd Thursday at 6:00 P.M. – RSVP  
Contact: Michele Cockayne at (801) 327-8400

## Legacy Village Memory Care

5472 South 3200 West  
Meet: 3rd Tuesday at 3:00 P.M.  
Contact: Dave Egbert at (801) 613-4650

## TOOELE

**Tooele Senior Citizen Center**  
Meet: 3rd Tuesday at 2:30 P.M. (No meeting in June)  
Contact: Frank Reed at (435) 843-4107

## TREMONTON

**Bear River Valley Senior Center**  
510 West 1000 North  
"The Breakfast Club"  
Meet: Tuesdays at 9:30 AM  
Contact: Marian Layne at (435) 257-9455

## UTAH COUNTY NORTH

**Utah County Lunch Bunch**  
Monthly Location TBA  
Meet: 2nd Wednesday at 11:30 A.M. – RSVP  
Contact: Linda Morrison at (801) 229-3814

## UTAH COUNTY SOUTH

**Utah County Lunch Bunch**  
Monthly Location TBA  
Meet: 3rd Thursday at 12 P.M. – RSVP  
Contact: Linda Morrison at (801) 229-3814

## WEST HAVEN

**Peachtree Place Assisted Living**  
4607 South Midland Drive  
Meet: 4th Wednesday at 7:00 P.M.  
Contact: Jenny Francis at (801) 686-3678

## WEST VALLEY CITY

**Pioneer Valley Hospital** ask desk help  
3460 S. Pioneer Pkwy  
Meet: TBD – Younger Onset Group  
Contact: (801) 964-3100



*Dedicated to Hope, Healing and Recovery*

# To Cure Alzheimer's, Invest in Prevention: *A Utah Prospective*



**Norman L. Foster, M.D.**  
Director, Center for Alzheimer's  
Care, Imaging and Research,  
University of Utah

**K**ate Mulgrew, a stage, film, and television actress best known for her TV role in "Star Trek: Voyager" and currently on the NBC series "Mercy", posted to CNN.com on December 3, a perspective on Alzheimer's disease. (<http://www.cnn.com/2009/OPINION/12/03/mulgrew.prevent.alzheimers>). She makes the case that our nation must commit money and attention to developing a way to prevent Alzheimer's disease. In support of her argument, she described the tremendous emotional, social, and economic burdens of Alzheimer's disease facing the United States:

- 5.3 million Americans are living with Alzheimer's disease
- A new case develops in the United States each 70 seconds
- 1 in 8 people age 65 and older has Alzheimer's and the risk is even higher for those over age 85
- 9.9 million people are caring for a family member with Alzheimer's
- Alzheimer's and other dementias cost Medicare, Medicaid, and businesses \$148 billion annually

This message is even more pertinent to those of us living in Utah:

- 32,000 Utahns are living with Alzheimer's disease
- Over the next decade the number of people with Alzheimer's will increase more rapidly in Utah than in any other state, nearly 130%
- By 2020 there will be 50,000 Utahns with Alzheimer's and 30,000 with other dementias
- Utahns live longer than residents of almost every other state, putting them at greater risk of Alzheimer's
- Utahns tend to stay in the state when they retire and many move here for retirement
- Alzheimer's and other dementias will cost the state government of Utah billions through Medicaid and less state income tax from caregivers' lost employment

Utahns should invest in prevention. How we handle care for Alzheimer's can determine its emotional, social and economic costs. Early, accurate, and specific diagnosis of memory problems allows us to initiate treatment and helps to avoid wasting money on the wrong drugs. With an early diagnosis, families can plan ahead and avoid expensive crises. Spending money for adult day-care and assistance can keep people at home longer and out of expensive nursing facilities.



Ultimately however, preventing Alzheimer's disease is the most cost effective approach. We know that keeping mentally active, being socially engaged, getting regular physical exercise, and treating medical illnesses are effective in decreasing dementia risk and improving the function of those with Alzheimer's. Even with this knowledge, we aren't doing a very good job taking these inexpensive steps.

Hope of prevention also depends upon further research. Utahns can volunteer to be in research studies. Simply join the research registry at [www.utahmemory.org](http://www.utahmemory.org) or call the Memory Study Line at 801-587-7888. Studies of aging and memory loss are ongoing. You don't have to have a memory problem to participate. In fact, learning more about normal aging and memory is one of the best means we have of developing preventive measures. Finally, participating in the Gift to Life autopsy program is one of the best ways the next generation will have to assess their own risk and determine whether they should receive preventative drugs that are likely to be available in the future. Information about this program is available through Kathy Moran at 801-585-9924.

Finally, supporting the Alzheimer's Association and urging Congress to increase funding for Alzheimer's research is critical. Why has research funding for Alzheimer's disease been flat for the past decade when the problem is only accelerating? We decide through our lawmakers. You can influence these decisions by contacting your lawmakers at the state and federal level and telling them more research funding is needed. Together we Utahns can determine our own future. We can overcome the challenges of Alzheimer's. Time is critical. ■

# To Cure Alzheimer's, Invest in Prevention: *Support from Utah's Health Leader*



**David N. Sundwall, M.D.**  
Executive Director  
Utah Department of Health

**K**ate Mulgrew's personal account of her painful experience with Alzheimer's disease, featured on the front page of this newsletter, is becoming far too commonplace in our society. Her insistence that prevention is the ultimate cure for this debilitating disease is spot on, and her passion in making prevention a reality is admirable.

As Kate mentions, Alzheimer's is a disease that impacts millions of people every year in our country – and untold millions more who care for those suffering from the disease.

The cost, both emotional and financial, can be crippling.

As executive director of the Utah Department of Health, I am charged with overseeing the state's Medicaid program – a program that provides health insurance for the poor and disabled. While tracking spending directly attributable to Alzheimer's is difficult, I can report that last year our Medicaid



program spent more than \$5 million alone on drugs that are used to treat Alzheimer's. This figure doesn't take into account the astronomical costs associated with full-time nursing home care for Alzheimer's patients – which can be many thousands of dollars per month per patient.

During these difficult economic times, when budgets are tight and spending is being reigned in, funding research that may lead to decreased costs associated with Alzheimer's is certainly a wise investment.

At the end of the day, sparing the Medicaid budget the costs of treating Alzheimer's pails in comparison to sparing individual patients, and their family members, the emotional costs of coping with the disease.

I applaud, and will do all I can, to support the efforts of the Alzheimer's Association in finding a cure for this disease. ■



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Donations from October 23, 2009  
Through December 31, 2009

*We express sincere appreciation for these generous donations. With people like you, there is hope for the world without Alzheimer's disease, but until then, there is hope and support for those coping with this devastating disease.*

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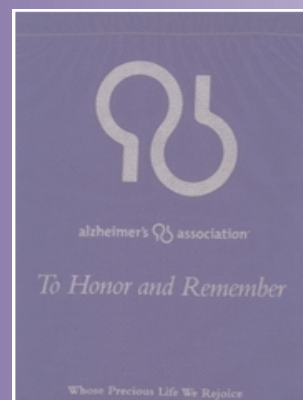
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# Memorials & Tributes –

October 23, 2009 Through December 31, 2009



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ROBINSON HULBERT**

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John & Jody Erickson  
Johnson Point  
Homeowners Assoc.  
Melissa Cluff Roberge  
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Leland Blankenship  
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Charles Beach  
Perry Altshule  
Michael Mealey  
Scott Kurnit  
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Kirk & Jodi Mascaro  
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Dave & Anne Zaccaria  
David Spillman

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Xi Alpha Gamma Omicron  
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Please send your email address to [utah.chapter@alz.org](mailto:utah.chapter@alz.org). Otherwise, you will continue to receive the Newsletter by mail. Also, please let us know if you ever wish to discontinue the Newsletter. We do not provide email or mailing addresses outside the Chapter office.

**Thank you for your help in this effort.**

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James & Marla Spear

# Southern Utah Area Conference on Essential Tools for Dementia Care Supported Caregivers, Professionals and “Personhood” of the Dementia Patient

On January 25, the Southern Utah Area Conference on The Essential Tools of Dementia Care was held with 140 caregivers and professionals in attendance. Norman L. Foster, M.D., gave the conference keynote address on “Early Intervention Benefits through Diagnosis, Risk Assessment and Treatment Planning.” Troy Andersen, LCSW, spoke on “Proactive Care Planning to Improve the Patient’s Quality of Life.” Dr. Foster is the Director of the Center for Alzheimer’s Care, Imaging and Research, and Troy Andersen is the Social Worker at the Center.

Guidance on dementia treatment was given in a question and answer period entitled: “Ask the Doc’s” in which Dr. Foster was joined by local physicians John G. Schmidt M.D., Luciano De Saibro, M.D., and Joseph



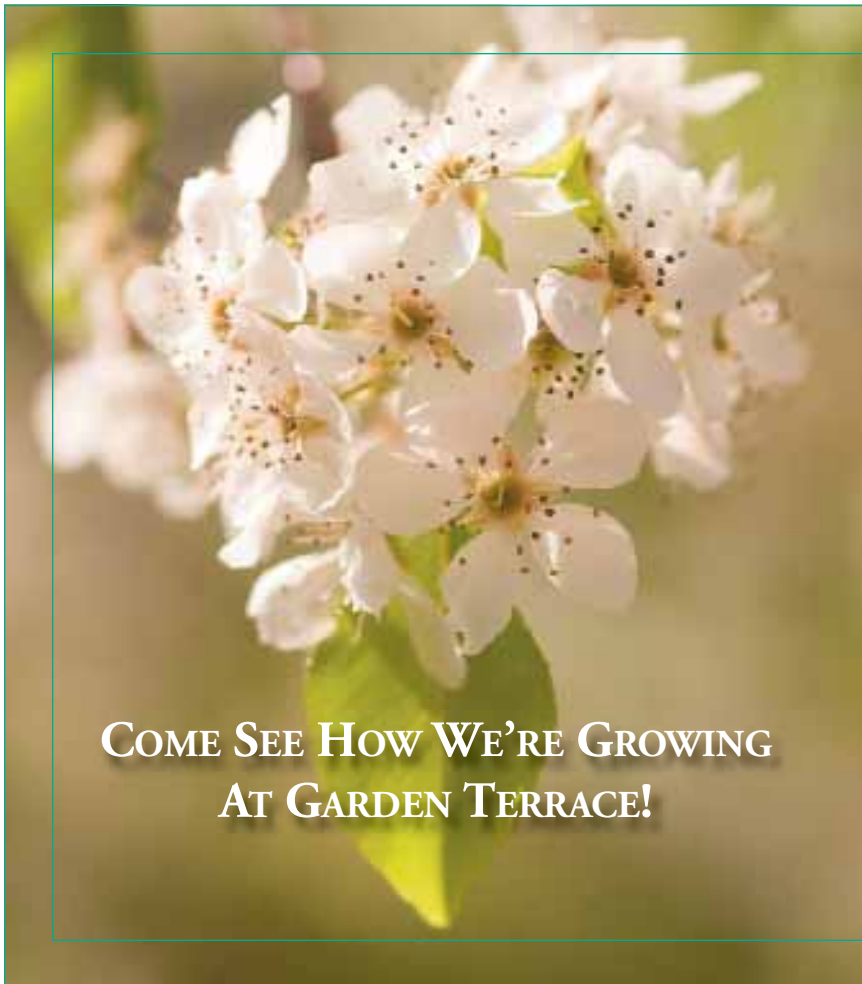
H. Woolley, M.D. The physicians acknowledged the importance of building a care team and supporting families and caregivers in their complicated and tireless role as primary caregivers. Emphasizing this point, Dr. Foster said, “Non-pharmacological care is a primary remedy while medication is a last resort.”

A panel of resource experts then responded to more than a dozen additional questions

from the audience on the following topics: local resources (Carrie Schonlaw from Five County Aging Services), statewide caregiver support (Sonnie Yudell of the Utah State Division of Aging and Adult Services), conservatorship and guardianship (Laura Owen of the State of Utah Human Services Department), dementia education and caregiver coaching (LuAnn Lundquist of the local Alzheimer’s Chapter), long term care resources (Anita Stiens, RN and Care Manager with Equitable Life & Casualty), and responding to difficult behavioral issues (Nina Ferrell of Salt Lake Regional Hospital’s Behavioral Unit and Senior Clinic).

Shifting focus to legal and financial concerns, especially in a difficult economic environment, Kendall Surfass, Vice Chairman and

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## Southern Utah Area Conference

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General Counsel of Equitable Life & Casualty, provided details on resources and alternatives that can support family decision-making in selecting and coordinating care of a loved one with dementia.

The conference concluded with a presentation by Nick Zullo and Sylvia Brunisholz on essential tools for communication and response to early stage persons with Alzheimer's. They then introduced Leonard and Kathryn Romney and each spoke briefly from their perspective as a caregiver and person with Alzheimer's respectively. Kathryn Romney was diagnosed recently with Alzheimer's which came as a shocking event along her once seemingly perfect life path. Leonard Romney is her devoted companion in this new journey. They spoke of the tremendous family support they have received and the positive effect this has had with their new Alzheimer's challenges. They humorously referred to each other as Mr. "Plaque" and Mrs. "Tangle" alluding to the plaques and tangles culprits behind the cause of Alzheimer's disease. At the conclusion of their remarks, the audience responded with a standing ovation. ■

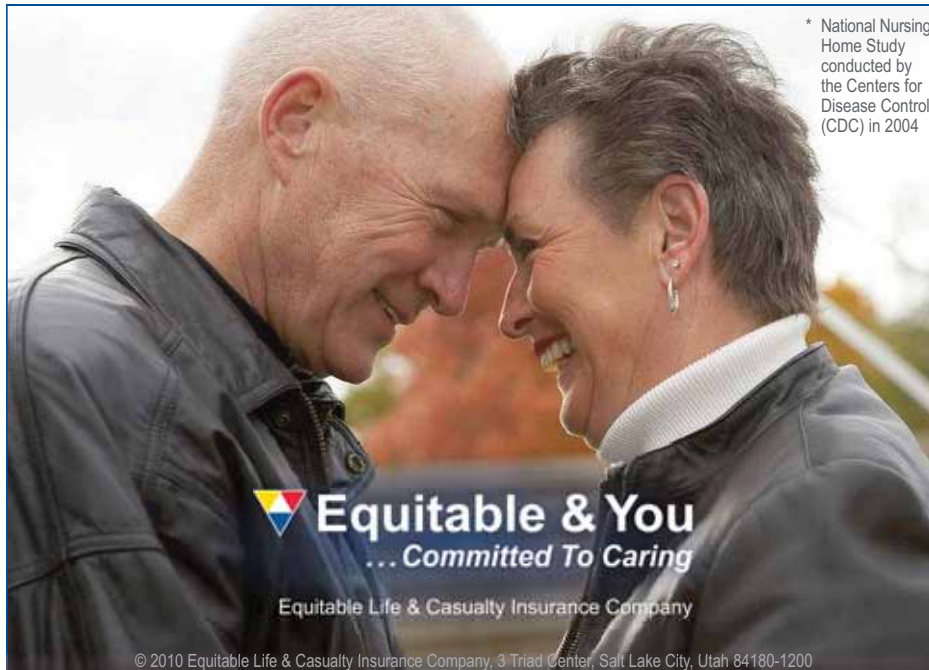
## Meet Sylvia Brunisholz

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My experience, education and training, both in life and as a therapist, have given me the tools to successfully help my clients overcome challenges, encourage personal growth and implement change. Change can create a more successful, focused life with better relationships and communication.

The services the Alzheimer's Association provides are varied and extensive without cost to the client. We provide education on Alzheimer's and related dementias through Referrals to community resources providers, care consultations, 24/7 toll-free helpline, early stage programs, respite care, Safe Return+MedicAlert® Program, support groups, chapter website and the newsletter. Additionally, the Chapter now offers fee-for-service counseling with licensed professionals. Joining us in this effort are: Kathy Barnett, Ph.D, clinical psychologist, providing assessments, care plans and counseling, and Sheila Bittle, Ph.D, APRN, BC, providing medication assessments and counseling, among others.

In your journey with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, we are here to support you. That is our promise as we seek to provide Care and find a Cure. ■



\* National Nursing Home Study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in 2004

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# Counseling Alzheimer's Patients: New Early-Stage Chapter Service

Counseling for people with dementia is really in its infancy. Counseling persons with dementia when in the process of obtaining a diagnosis and in periods of distress can benefit their disease course and support their caregivers as well. It may be difficult to find a counselor for persons with dementia; therefore, the Alzheimer's Association Utah Chapter now provides licensed counseling. Counseling for persons with dementia, caregivers and family members is the Chapter's first fee-for-service program. Persons may call to schedule counseling, which may also be covered by insurance plans and Medicare. Care Consultation and all other Chapter services will always continue to be provided free of charge.

Leading the Chapter's counseling program is Sylvia Brunisholz, LCSW, CMC. Most of the Chapter's counseling is with caregivers and families. Contact Sylvia Brunisholz for an appointment. Alzheimer's families are encouraged to partner with their primary care physician and referred for diagnoses and clinical trials. Affiliated with the Chapter's innovative counseling program are Kathy Barnett, Ph.D, Clinical Psychologist; Sheila Bittle, Ph.D, APRN, BC; Mina Koplun, CSW; and Karen Cone-Uemura, Ph.D.

Why counsel people with dementia? "Why not?" responds Nick Zullo, Chapter Program Director and a Certified Professional Counselor who specializes in counseling persons with dementia. "Talk therapies have a positive effect on reducing feelings of depression, anxiety, grief, loss, and isolation. New neural pathways can be encouraged. Wouldn't we want to offer counseling to people with dementia if they would like it?" he said. As with other Chapter services for persons with early-stage Alzheimer's disease, screening for appropriate services is conducted. Counseling can be provided at the counseling office, at home or in assisted living communities.

What is the counseling about? Specifically focused interaction during a sustained and uninterrupted hour over a number of weeks can open the heart of the person with dementia. The approach is to support the personhood of these men and women. The goal is to de-pathologize

dementia and emphasize those aspects of self that are yet unaffected by the disease process. Thus, the focus in counseling shifts to residual strengths rather than apparent weakness.

The other goal for the counselor is to be with and alongside the Alzheimer's client from his or her own central place of experiencing. The early stage Alzheimer's client deserves to be heard and to have a voice in his or her future plan of care. The Chapter hopes such counseling can become a model of best practice in validation techniques and person-centered care for those who love and care for people with dementia. Counseling early on in the disease trajectory can help identify triggers and perceptions that underlie problematic behaviors and add to caregiver burden later on. Thus, direct counseling for persons with dementia can support the health and well-being not only for the individual with dementia, but also, for those who care for them. ■

**For more  
information  
or to schedule  
a session, call  
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## Northern Utah Services

Continued from page 1

In 2009, services were expanded to include early intervention services funded by the Alzheimer's disease Supportive Services Program of the U.S. Administration on Aging and the Utah Division of Aging and Adult Services. Eligible participants completed individual assessments and set goals to track progress in areas of better health and nutrition, memory, and decreased feelings of depression. Participants also enjoyed several interactive Brain Builder activities and monthly Maintain Your Brain workshops held in Logan and Brigham City.

The BRAG Caregiver Program sponsors three support groups for caregivers and individuals with memory loss in Cache and Box Elder Counties. In addition, the Caregiver and Memory Loss Resource Center at the BRAG office features a variety of information and resources for caregivers and people suffering from memory loss. Our agency offers services and support through local, state and federally funded programs. Alzheimer's education is available for families, care facilities and church groups caring for someone with memory loss. Let us know how the Northern Utah Alzheimer Association office can help you! Call Allison Richman at 1-877-772-7242. ■



*The Area Agency on Aging staff coach persons in early stage Alzheimer's on brain fitness methods to stay active.*



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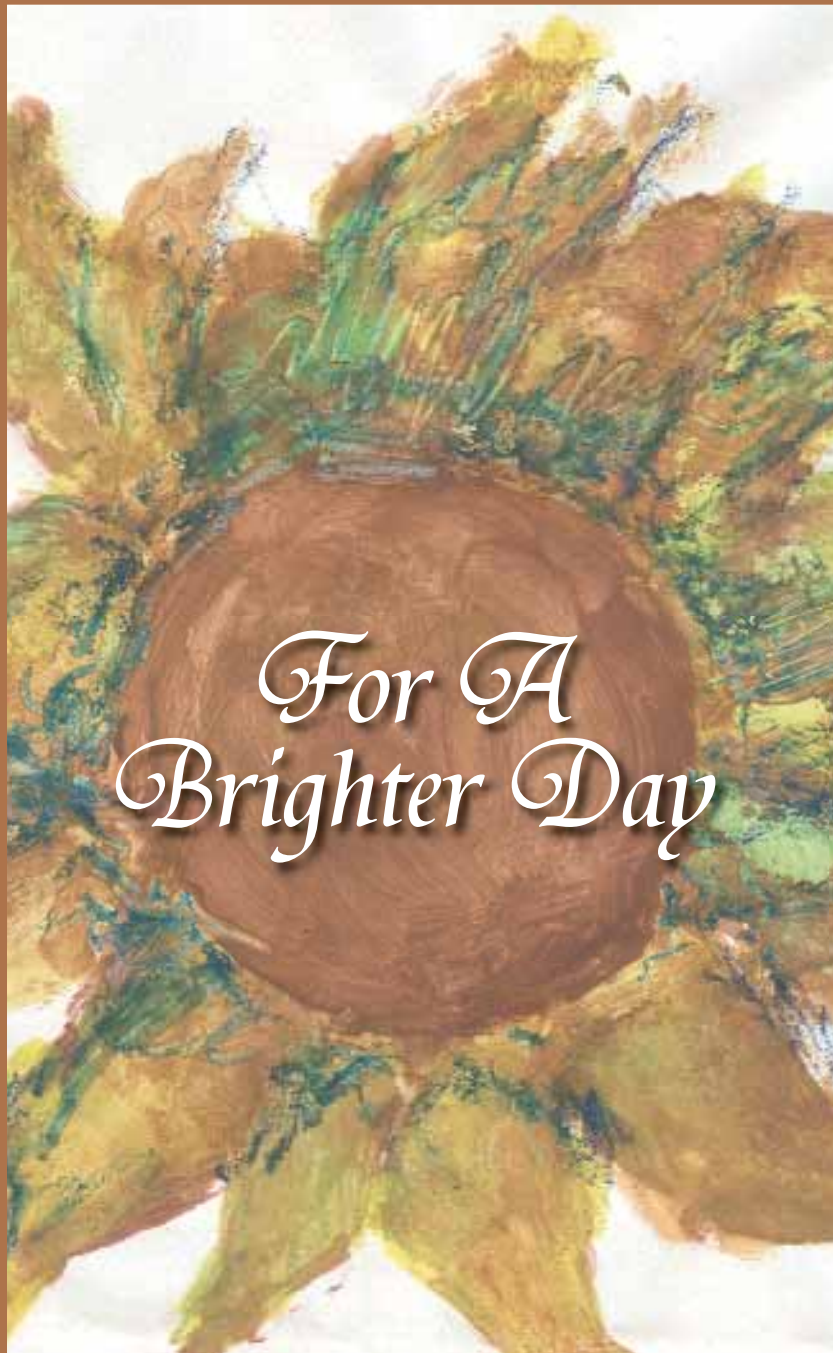
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