Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter. Don't forget to add bonnie.lingard@midlandsalz.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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Alzheimer's Association March '12 Perspectives

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Midlands Chapter Hosts 10th Annual Oscar Night Benefit Gala
by Alisha Palagi, Events Planner

The Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter joined the Hollywood stars on the red carpet with their 10th annual Oscar Night on February 26 at the DC Centre.

Over two hundred and fifty guests walked the red carpet and posed for pictures before enjoying a night of extraordinary silent and live auction packages, including trips to Mexico and Dominican Republic, autographed Hollywood and sports memorabilia, along with many other fabulous items.

"Vintage Vocalist" Michael Walker entertained the guests, taking the audience back to a time when the Rat Pack ruled Las Vegas and crooning was hot.
The evening was all about the Academy Awards as Duane J. Gross, PhD, President and CEO of the Midlands Chapter, spoke about the on-coming tidal wave of Alzheimer’s diagnoses as the Baby Boomer generation ages. 5.3 million Americans are currently affected by Alzheimer’s, with the number anticipated to double by mid-century.

The event chairs were Robin and Joe Donovan and Viv and John Ewing. The Donovans and the Ewings joined Duane to speak about the continued need to provide education, information, support, and care to families affected by dementia, even as work continues toward an eventual cure. Sponsors included Great Western Bank, Methodist Health System, The Scoular Company, Woodmen of the World, UNMC's Department of Psychiatry, US Bank, Right at Home and First National Bank. The evening raised nearly $80,000, and Dr. Gross was confident the evening will continue to grow as more families become aware about the impact dementia takes on their loved ones.

For more information about Oscar Night or to join the committee for the 2013 Oscar Night, please call Alisha Palagi at 402.502.4301

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Alzheimer's Association Releases 2012 Facts and Figures

The annual report released by the Alzheimer's Association, reveals the burden of Alzheimer’s and dementia on individuals, caregivers, government and the nation’s health care system.

Highlights of the 2012 Report include:

- According to the Alzheimer’s Association report, there are 5.4 million Americans living with Alzheimer’s disease, including 5.2 million people age 65 or older and 200,000 people under the age of 65.

- There are 106,000 Nebraskans and Iowans living with Alzheimer’s disease

- Every 68 seconds someone in America develops Alzheimer's.

- Alzheimer’s disease is the 6th leading cause of death. Alzheimer's

- With aging baby boomers and the nation facing unprecedented economic challenges, it is more important than ever for America to deal with the Alzheimer's crisis. The impact of Alzheimer's on Nebraska and Iowa cannot be underestimated, with as many as 106,000 living with the disease now and an estimated 121,000 living with it by 2025 - it is clear every effort must be made to address Alzheimer's disease today. ·

- The new report reveals there are 15.2 million friends and family members providing care for individuals with Alzheimer’s and other dementias, including 214,000 caregivers in Nebraska and Iowa

- Nearly 30 percent of people with Alzheimer’s and other dementias are on Medicare and Medicaid compared to 11 percent of individuals without dementia.

- While only 4 percent of the general population will be admitted to a nursing home by age 80, for people with Alzheimer’s, 75 percent will admitted to a nursing home by age 80, posing significant economic challenges to state Medicaid budgets.

- An estimated 800,000 individuals - 1 out of 7 - with Alzheimer's disease live alone. Up to half of these individuals do not have an identifiable caregiver.

The full text of the Alzheimer’s Association’s 2012 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures can be viewed at www.alz.org.
Volunteer Appreciation Open House

Join the Midlands Chapter staff as we say thanks, honor and celebrate our past, present and future volunteers!

Wednesday, April 18th - 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Refreshments, beverages and lots of appreciation will be served

Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter
1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 205
Omaha, NE

Please RSVP to Alisha Palagi at apalagi@midlandsalz.org or call her at 402-502-4301 by Monday, April 16th

Neuropsychological Evaluation of Dementia

by Sarah Viamonte, PhD, MSPH
Clinical Neuropsychologist

A neuropsychologist is a licensed clinical psychologist who has specialized training in how brain disease affects brain functions. By assessing brain functions like thinking skills, behavior, mood, and personality, a neuropsychologist can diagnose impairments in brain functioning or the presence of brain disease. During an evaluation, a neuropsychologist will ask about current symptoms, medical history, mental health history, and social background. This helps the neuropsychologist learn about possible factors that may be contributing to the patient's current symptoms. Patients will also complete standardized tests to measure various thinking skills, such as attention, language, visual skills, learning, memory, mental speed, reasoning, and problem solving. The tests provide objective information about the patient's cognitive abilities. These types of tests are not "pass" or "fail," but rather the scores are compared to other people of similar age. In this way, the neuropsychologist can assess the patient's strengths and weaknesses and determine if the results are consistent with what is expected for someone of similar age. The neuropsychologist looks at performance on individual tests, as well as the overall pattern of the results. After the evaluation, a diagnosis might be determined and recommendations will be made. Recommendations are suggestions from the neuropsychologist that are intended to maximize independence while at the same time addressing safety concerns and providing ideas for improved quality of life. Recommendations might include a referral to another type of provider, such as a neurologist. Other recommendations might include suggestions about how mental health could be improved, how behavioral concerns might be managed, or how daily activities may be modified to assist the patient in working around his or her cognitive difficulties.
Neuropsychologists evaluate a wide variety of patients who have different types of cognitive complaints, brain disease, or brain injury. One of the most common complaints is memory loss. If the cognitive test results reveal memory impairment, it is possible that a dementia may be present. Dementia is a general term for cognitive impairment, including memory loss, that is substantial enough to affect everyday living skills. Although Alzheimer disease is the most common type of dementia, there are many others. By looking at all the scores from the neuropsychological testing and considering the patient's current symptoms and background information, the neuropsychologist can diagnose a specific type of dementia. It is important to know what type of dementia is present, because different diseases develop at different speeds and in different ways. Understanding this information can help with medication recommendations, behavioral management recommendations, and planning for future care needs. Additionally, a neuropsychologist can incorporate information about the patient's strengths and weaknesses to determine capacity for complex decision making and what type of supervision or assistance might be beneficial for daily activities.

The Midlands Chapter turns 30 years old this year—please help us celebrate! Take a stroll down Memory Lane with us as you read the tidbits of information below on how and when the Chapter was formed. Watch for more memories next month!

- **July 30, 1982** the Chapter became incorporated and named Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association of Omaha
- **1984** Helpline established in partnership with UNMC and the Eastern NE Office on Aging (ENOAA)
- **1986** Connie Kudlacek was hired part-time as Executive Director
- **1988** Chapter joined CHAD and received a grant for in-home respite services in partnership with the Senior Companion Program of ENOA

[Support the Chapter](#)

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Support the Midlands Chapter

We Listen!
by Connie Keck, Development Director

Thoreau wrote in his journal: "I've had the most wonderful day of my life. Someone listened to me."

The Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter staff is known for its collective gift of listening.

Every day, we hear from families and friends of people with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia who want us to listen to them; to understand their grief and concerns; to help guide them through the maze of choices and decisions to make regarding their family member or friend.

One only has to listen for a short while to know the pain and anguish family members and caregivers experience during this time. It is our mission to assist individuals and families to find solutions that will fit their particular situation. With the many services and programs we have available we are able to provide the support network you may need to help you through this difficult time.

The Midlands Chapter provides ongoing support and education for those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias, their families and caregivers. The following listing is just some of the support services we provide: 24/7 Helpline; Caregiver Support Groups; Caregiver Educational Presentations; Lunch and Learn Presentations; Resource Lending Library, Care Consultation Program; MedicAlert + Safe Return Program and TrialMatch Clinical Trial Locator.

Because of generous donors like you we are able to sustain and grow the services and programs we offer on a regular basis. A gift to our educational program series will go along way in helping us to enhance the important work and support we provide to individuals and families throughout our fifteen country service region which includes Eastern Nebraska and Southwest Iowa.

We truly appreciate your support through the many gifts you provide to us with your time, talent and treasure. Please send a gift to us today. Please contact me at ckeck@midlandsalz.org or call 402-502-4301.

Thank You!

Wellness Wisdom
by Rosalie Shepherd, Program Staff
Eating and Adequate Nutrition

In the end stages of Mom's life, we would put food in her mouth and she would say, what do I do with it? "You swallow it Mom." That didn't mean anything to her because the part of her brain that controls automatic functions like breathing and swallowing was affected by brain cell death due to Vascular dementia.

In Mid-stage, persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia, may begin having problems eating due to many factors, including forgetting the purpose of eating, loss of appetite and not recognizing hunger cues as in my mother's case. Eating and adequate nutrition are vital to maintaining health. Therefore, it is important to notice early warning signs that can be considered a marker for inability to live alone.

- Weight loss
- Spoiled or uneaten food in the fridge or freezer
- Difficulty remembering how to make familiar foods.
- Increased assistance required during grocery shopping
- Change in eating habits

Encourage the person to eat by:

- Serving meals in a quiet environment away from television and confusion
- Keeping table setting simple with only the utensils needed for eating
- Offering one food item at a time - too many food choices may be overwhelming.
- Providing visual or verbal cues so the person may mirror eating behavior.
- Serving foods that the person prefers.
- Serving finger foods that may be easier to pick up and eat.

Knowing well the person for whom you are caring will help you to identify other potential eating problems for example, sores in the mouth or ill fitting dentures. Physical and medical problems and medication side effects may also play a part. Many people in the middle to late stage will have some communication/comprehension difficulties. Some will have visual spatial problems, and not recognize the food or have trouble when eating from a plate with flowers or patterns.

Other suggestions that may help your loved one to get the necessary nutrition are to give nutritional supplements, such as Ensure, Boost, smoothies or eggnog as well as any vitamins the doctor would recommend. Also have low calorie snacks available, such as fruit, carrots, etc. when appropriate.

For more information on sundowning and other conditions related to Alzheimer's and other dementias, visit our website www.alz.org/midlands or call 712.322.8840 or 800.272.3900.
Spotlight on Support Groups
by Betty Chin, Program Staff

Do you have a loved one or know someone with dementia? There are more than thirty (30) caregiver support groups in a 15-county territory in northeast Nebraska and southwest Iowa available to serve those in need. Listed are a few "spotlights."

1. The Ralston Senior Center, 7301 Q Street, Suite 100, Ralston, NE, meets on the 1st Monday of the month at 9:30 AM. The next one is April 2. Designed for caregiver.

2. Maple Crest, 2824 N. 66th Avenue, Omaha, meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM. The next one is April 19. Designed for caregiver.

3. New Cassel Early Stage, 900 N. 90th Street, Omaha, meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 PM. The next one is April 11. Designed for caregiver and loved one with early stage dementia, older than 65 years.

4. Younger Onset meets on the 3rd Saturday of the month at Swanson Library (Omaha) from 10:00 AM-11:30 AM. Designed for caregiver and loved one with early stage dementia, younger than 65 years. Registration is required. Contact Betty for details.

5. Memorial Community Hospital, 810 N. 22nd Street, Blair, NE, meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 PM. The next one is April 9. Designed for caregiver.

6. Careage of Wayne, 811 East 14th Street, Wayne, NE, meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 4:30 PM. The next one is April 11. Designed for caregiver.

Check our website at www.alz.org/midlands for a complete list. Contact Betty K. Chin at 402-502-4301 with any questions.

Join the Young Alzheimer's Advocates

As young people wanting to make a difference in the quest to end Alzheimer's, we are organizing a brand new "under 40" committee. Whether you know someone with Alzheimer's or just want to be an advocate, this is an opportunity to get involved with the group from the ground level. Our focus is on awareness, education, and public service. Find us on FaceBook or for more information e-mail us at yaiza.midlands@gmail.com

You may also find us on the blogs listed on the left-hand column of this e-newsletter.
- Portable flip chart and stand
- Digital camera
- Frequent Flyer Miles for staff
- A vehicle for staff travel
- Financial Support for the Respite Care Reimbursement Program
- Financial Support for the Community Education Fund

Please Share Our e-Newsletter

Please forward or share our monthly e-newsletter Perspectives. Click on the "Forward e-mail" link at the very bottom of this e-mail to share Perspectives with friends and families and invite them to receive our newsletter each month or to get involved. They can click the "Join Our Mailing List" link in the left column and receive Perspectives each month, along with helpful tips, advice, and updates on Chapter events and programs.

Join Us On

Stay up-to-date with the latest events and activities at the Midlands Chapter!
Follow us on Facebook TODAY!

Stop by our brain gym
Exercise your brain and test your skills.
Solve today's puzzle ➤➤