First and foremost, thank you to Kelly Breuer and Rochester Woman Online for the opportunity to reach out to our community in this monthly column to spread awareness of Alzheimer’s disease and provide information and support to all those who are living with the disease, their caregivers, and those who are concerned about the future.

Currently, in the United States, more than 5 million people are living with Alzheimer’s and over 15 million individuals are serving as their unpaid caregivers. As the prevalence of Alzheimer’s continues to grow, the cost of care is escalating into the hundreds of billions, and it’s destroying our families, our finances and our future. This disease is relentless—but so are we. Alzheimer’s has disrupted our lives, and now it’s time to fight back.

The Alzheimer’s Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Its mission is to eliminate Alzheimer’s disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. As Chapter Executive of the Alzheimer’s Association, Rochester and Finger Lakes Region, I share in the vision of a world without Alzheimer’s disease.

Our local chapter is one of 81 across the country providing services to our local community and we serve 10 counties in Upstate New York. We provide a 24-Hour Helpline offering reliable information and support to people with memory loss, as well as caregivers, health care professionals and the public. Our professional staff helps families navigate the journey with Alzheimer’s disease through care consultations. We offer free community education courses, support for local Alzheimer’s care, support and research. We host events in Canandaigua, Elmira and Rochester. Funds raised locally from this Walk will help make care and support services available to more than 30,000 residents and their caregivers in our service area currently living with Alzheimer’s disease, while also contributing to advance critically-needed research.

This is more than a Walk. Participants can learn about Alzheimer’s disease and how to get involved with this critical cause—from advocacy opportunities to support programs and services. In addition to the exercise, participants will enjoy entertainment and a special tribute ceremony representing their promise to remember, honor, care and fight for those living with Alzheimer’s disease and their caregivers.

The Rochester Walk to End Alzheimer’s is on October 21 at Frontier Field. It is presented by Wegmans and will be hosted by WBEE’s Steve Hausmann. Join us by starting a team, registering to participate or simply making a donation. You can do that online at alz.org/walk.

Things don’t slow down next month, as November is National Family Caregivers Month and National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month. We are hosting several special programs for caregivers.
On Saturday, November 4, in Livingston County, we are partnering with Noyes Health for a Caregiver Retreat at the Celebrate Family Church in Leicester. Popular international author and speaker Elaine W. Miller will serve as keynote speaker offering encouragement with her talk “Sink or Swim (SOS): Three Things You Will Never Change About Your Life and Ten Things You Can.”

On Thursday, November 9 in Chemung County, we will join the Horseheads Elks Lodge in hosting the 5th Annual Southern Tier Caregiver Retreat in Horseheads. Vicky Ruppert and Ann Henderberg will speak about their journey with husbands who battled the disease and how they supported each other through it.

Then in Monroe County on Tuesday, November 14, we will partner with the VA, St. Ann’s Community, Blue Star Mothers and Lifetime Care to host Caregiver Appreciation Day Retreat and Conference. Along with wellness education, the day will offer yoga relaxation techniques, massage therapy and some pampering. Each of these events are free for caregivers and will feature a complimentary lunch, but space is limited. To get more information or to register, please visit alz.org/rochesterny or call us at 800.272.3900.

The message I want to leave you with is that you are not alone in this journey. We are here to support you on your journey. I look forward to the upcoming weeks in bringing you some interesting information on research in the field, tips for navigating the holidays with Alzheimer’s disease and other information on our path to the first survivor.

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JOIN US FOR THE WALK TO END ALZHEIMER’S

More than 5 million people have had their lives disrupted by Alzheimer’s—but no one should walk alone. It’s time to fight back.

Call 1-800-272-3900 or visit alz.org/RochesterNY/walk to register.

OCTOBER 7
Granger Homestead, Canandaigua

OCTOBER 21
Frontier Field, Rochester