

New Hampshire Newsletter

The Alzheimer's Association serves the entire state from Seacoast to Monadnock to the White Mountains

Fall 2007

www.alz.org/NH

24-Hour Helpline: 1.800.272.3900

Worrying about Alzheimer's Disease?

Rachel Hawk, Vice President, Education; MA Chapter

Life is mostly froth and bubble;
two things stand like stone:
Kindness in another's trouble,
courage in our own.

Adam Lindsay Gordon

Even then, the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease can only be "probable". Great strides are being made in the accuracy of testing and the treatments available; new predictor tests for those concerned about Alzheimer's are being researched.

Do you worry that you or your spouse or parent might have a memory loss problem? Do you keep trying to convince yourself that it's nothing, just your stress level or their stubbornness? There are clear warning signs for Alzheimer's disease and the related disorders. Memory loss is not always caused by Alzheimer's disease. It can be caused by other problems as well—like depression, drug interactions, dehydration, infections or other problems. It's so important to find out what is wrong. When people are experiencing memory loss sometimes they feel like they are going crazy.

Alzheimer's IS a disease, not normal aging

Only a thorough diagnostic evaluation can determine the cause of memory problems. There is no simple "test" but rather a combination of tests and examinations that yield pieces of the puzzle.



There is Help

The Alzheimer's Association works collaboratively with the medical and research communities as well as local resources and is committed to helping make the best of the challenges faced by those dealing with Alzheimer's.

The 24/7 Helpline answers calls every day from people who are worried about themselves or a family member. It can be hard to know

where to start because of the number and complexity of problems. Helpline counselors can assist in the daunting project of finding services and resources. Both in times of great difficulty or crisis and everyday guidance and information are available. Call 800.272.3900.

Getting Started: what you need to know if your family member has memory loss, a 2½ hour program, is offered at various

continued on page 6

Mark Your Calendars Now

Candlelight Vigil

Wednesday, Nov. 14

State House Plaza, Concord



alzheimer's association  **memory walk '07**
Taking steps to end Alzheimer's

See our next newsletter for full coverage

Call our **24/7 Helpline**
800-272-3900
for information you can trust.

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Sign-up Today NH Alzheimer's Association Events & E-News

Quick & Easy updates.

Delivered directly to your mailbox.

E-mail to sign up:

communications@alzmass.org

Or call 603.606.6590

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Bedford, New Hampshire 03110

www.alz.org/NH

24/7 Helpline

800.272.3900

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From the President

You are all champions! On a cold, wet and blustery day in mid September, 500 Alzheimer's champions participated in the New Hampshire Memory Walks to collectively help us realize our vision of a World Without Alzheimer's. We expect to meet or exceed our fund-raising goal of \$135,000 and we thank you!

And on November 14th at the State House in Concord and at various locations around the state we are celebrating Alzheimer's Awareness month with a candlelight vigil. We can only raise the visibility of this disease if we are willing to step out and urge the American people to join our cause. Become a New Hampshire Champion and join us on November 14th, details can be found on our web site at www.alz.org/NH.

You can't help but notice that we are in the thick of the presidential campaign, but did you know that the Alzheimer's Association has a growing group of volunteer Champions who are attending candidate events, wearing

Alzheimer's Association shirts and even asking questions, all to raise the visibility of our cause? If you want to learn more about how to get involved in this effort please contact Liz McConnell at our Bedford Office or e-mail Liz at Elizabeth.mcconnell@alz.org.

You will also notice that we have scheduled a number of educational and training programs, both for families and for professionals. Our Helpline has been busy and we are very active providing free care consultations to families. All of our services to families are free of charge. Please call our office, visit our web site or even stop by if you are near our Bedford office to learn more about our programs and services.

—James Wessler, President and CEO

james.wessler@alz.org

Volunteer!

The Alzheimer's Association counts on thousands of volunteers. Please join us. Visit our website at www.alz.org/NH for upcoming volunteer opportunities.

alzheimer's association®

Our 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.

Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's.

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Candlelight Vigil to Honor Alzheimer's Awareness Month

**Please join us
Wednesday,
November 14
State House
Plaza
Concord, NH
6pm – 7pm**



The Alzheimer's Association will hold a candlelight vigil to honor all those who have been affected by the disease, and in recognition of Alzheimer's Awareness Month. The vigil is set for Wednesday, November 14 at 6 pm at State House Plaza.

Alzheimer's disease affects approximately 20,000 people in the state of New Hampshire alone. That number does not begin to address the number of family caregivers who are also touched so deeply by this devastating disease process.

Beverly Remillard, a friend and supporter of the Alzheimer's Association is credited with the idea of this poignant ceremony to bring hope and light to those families who often feel so alone. She originally planned to hold a vigil at Greenbriar Terrace Healthcare in Nashua, but as she formulated her plans for this special program, it became clear that the event deserved a larger stage.

The Alzheimer's Association is calling upon families, professionals and all others who would like to help elevate the needs of those affected by Alzheimer's and related forms of dementia to a higher level of awareness. Join together at the State House to light candles in acknowledgement of the many lives that are touched by Alzheimer's.

For those unable to attend the State House vigil, the Association urges you to join in whatever way you can. Gather your family, gather your co-workers,

light a candle and step outside for a moment of unity at 6 p.m. on November 14.

"Even if you are a group of one, light your candle, and know that at this time, across our great state of New Hampshire, there will be a night sky filled with the light of hope," said Susan Antkowiak, Manager of Programs. "You are not alone."

For more information, call the New Hampshire office of the Alzheimer's Association at 603.606.6590.

Alzheimer's Association Advocates Being Seen and Heard

The job is simple: speak out about how access to affordable, quality, and long term healthcare impacts those affected by Alzheimer's disease. Presidential Campaign Advocates for the Alzheimer's Association are doing this job by being seen and heard on the campaign trail, on NH Television and Radio. You may have seen or heard us on WMUR, NHPTV, or WKXL. Advocates have attended events for eight presidential candidates, and hope to cover the whole field of candidates before the end of the presidential primary.

If you are interested in politics, and see the process as a way to influence policy decisions that affect those with Alzheimer's disease – join our advocacy program! The current political climate provides an excellent opportunity to elevate the issues of healthcare solutions to the forefront of political debate on the part of all candidates. Becoming an advocate can be a great experience. Political priorities can be changed by adding your voice to that of millions of Americans affected by Alzheimer's disease.

helpline corner

By Lindsay Brennan, Helpline Coordinator

Q: Our family has finally reached the tough decision to place my aunt in an Assisted Living Facility – on the Special Care Unit. How do we move her there without too much stress and confusion?

A: After choosing the right care facility for your loved one you are now faced with the emotional task of actually moving the person to the facility – this can be difficult. There are a few simple things you can do to try to make the move successful: (1) Try to set up the Assisted Living apartment ahead of time and make it homelike, filled with items that will be familiar to your aunt – try to do this without disturbing her current home too much. (2) Work with the staff at the Assisted Living to educate them about your aunt – her likes, dislikes, personality and life experiences. This knowledge will allow them to connect with her. (3) Develop a plan for the day of the move; try to make it a positive and special day, perhaps taking your aunt to her favorite restaurant for lunch. (4) Validate any emotional reactions she experiences, understanding that she may be confused or sad. (5) Ask the staff to point out one or two other residents at the Assisted Living who your aunt will be able to connect with, someone for her to have meals with or go to an activity program with. (6) Lastly, consider having a Visitor's Guest Book in her room so that people can write a message about their visit with your aunt and she can look back and know she is well loved and her family and friend know where she is.

fall calendar

Caring for People with Alzheimer's Disease: Train the Trainer

Professional education program designed to teach participants to become trainers within their community agencies or facilities. Enables trainers to teach Habilitation therapy. Call 603.606.6590 for brochure. Fees apply; space is limited; and registration is required.

Laconia: Laconia Public Library, 695 Main Street. Presenters: Debra Katt-Lloyd and Susan Antkowiak. **Tuesday, November 6, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.**

Getting Started: What to Do When Your Family Member Has Memory Loss

Designed for family members of people with memory loss, this program provides information about how to get a diagnosis, understanding and addressing difficult behaviors and communication problems and how to find/what to expect from local resources. Group size may be limited. Free of charge; pre-registration required. Call 603.606.6590 for more information or to register.

Nashua: Milette Manor, 72 Vine Street. Presenter: Susan Antkowiak **Friday, November 2, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Alzheimer's Disease: Legal and Financial Issues & Answers

For people in any financial situation, 1.5 hour presentation by an elder law attorney covers wills, durable power of attorney, health care proxy, and what Medicare and Medicaid do and do not cover. Too many people wait until it's too late before learning about these important issues. This program is not intended to substitute for a personal appointment with an elder law attorney. Pre-registration is necessary; space limited. Offered at various times and sites throughout the year.

Nashua: Milette Manor, 72 Vine Street. Presenter: David R. Craig, Esq. **Friday, November 9, 10:00 a.m.-11:30 p.m.**

Maintain Your Brain®

A one-hour workshop featuring scientifically-rooted nutritional and lifestyle advice, interactive exercises and activities and materials to take home for further reading. For adults who want to learn more about staying fit from the neck up! Call 603.606.6590 to register.

Londonderry: Londonderry Senior Center, 535 Mammoth Road. Presenter: Susan Antkowiak. **Tuesday, November 13, 12:15 p.m.-1:15 p.m.**

Be an Advocate!

Whether it's fighting for increased research funding from the federal government or bringing our message to the presidential hopefuls or assuring quality care for people with Alzheimer's, there are opportunities for all kinds of advocates. All it takes is the desire to make positive change happen.

Family members, people with early stage Alzheimer's, health care professionals and concerned community members each have a unique point of view about the effects of Alzheimer's. Find out more about ways that you can be a voice for Alzheimer's: contact Liz McConnell at Elizabeth.McConnell@alz.org

Safe Return®
888.572.8566

6 in 10 people with Alzheimer's will wander and become lost

Wandering is one of the biggest challenges caregivers face. And it is life threatening. If not found within 24 hours, up to half of those who wander risk serious injury or death. Safe Return® is a nationwide identification and support program working at the community level. Safe Return provides assistance 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, whether a person becomes lost locally or far from home.

The Alzheimer's Association is leading the way in the fight against Alzheimer's with groundbreaking research, innovative prevention techniques and support programs like Safe Return. For safety and peace of mind, enroll your loved one today. Contact Safe Return directly at 888.572.8566.

alzheimer's  association®

Clinical Trials Defined and Updated

Clinical trials are conducted in phases, each with a different purpose. Phase I tests an experimental drug or treatment in a small group of people (20-80) for the first time to evaluate its safety, determine a safe dosage range, and identify side effects. Phase II studies a larger group (100-300) to see if the drug or treatment is effective and to further evaluate its safety. Phase III studies even larger groups (1,000-3,000) to confirm effectiveness, monitor side effects, make comparisons to commonly used treatments, and collect information that will allow the experimental drug or treatment to be used safely. Phase IV includes post-marketing studies to sort additional information including the drug's risks, benefits and optimal use. For more on clinical trials, visit www.clinicaltrials.gov.

Study Finds Simvastatin May Reduce Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Risk

Statins are a widely prescribed class of medications that reduce cholesterol. Researchers from Boston University School of Medicine have found more evidence to support the fact that one of the statins, simvastatin, may reduce the incidence of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases by almost 50 percent. It is the first study to suggest that statins might reduce the incidence of Parkinson's disease.

The researchers examined data from the Decision Support System database of the Veterans Affairs Medical System, a federal database of medical centers throughout the U.S. which contains diagnostic, pharmaceutical and demo-

graphic information on some 4.5 million people.

Multiple studies have investigated whether statin treatment might be of benefit to people with dementia or at risk for it, but with conflicting results. In this study, said lead author Dr. Benjamin Wolozin, professor of pharmacology at the medical school and a recipient of one of this year's Memory Ride Grants from the Alzheimer's Association for an unrelated study, "The strength of reduction of incidence of dementia with simvastatin is striking." Findings will appear in an upcoming issue of *Biomedcentral Medicine*.

Political Purses for a Purpose—Benefit Alzheimer's Awareness

Langdon Place of Keene hosted its annual premier, pre-event Wine and Cheese Gala to raise awareness and funds for the Alzheimer's Association Monadnock Region Memory Walk. Special guests included Robert Santulli, MD, Honorary Memory Walk Medical Chair and Interim commissioner of NH Health and Human Services, Nick Toumpas.

A special new addition to this year's gala was a "Political Purses for a Purpose" silent auction. All of the 2008 Presidential candidates from both parties were contacted and many generously donated "gently used purses" signed by the candidates themselves or their wives, accompanied by a short note.

The 2008 presidential candidates donating to this worthy cause included Sen. and Mrs. Barack (Michelle) Obama, Gov. and Mrs. Bill (Barbara) Richardson, Gov. and Mrs. Mike (Janet) Huckabee, Sen. and Mrs. Joe (Jill) Biden, Congressman and Mrs. Tom (Jackie) Tancredo, Mr. and Mrs. John (Sarah) Cox and Sen. and Mrs. John (Cindy) McCain. The event raised more than \$3,000.00.



PHOTO BY ROGER APPEL

Monadnock Region Memory Walk chair, Bonnie Moore (l.) presented the purse donated by Cindy McCain, wife of presidential hopeful Senator John McCain at the Langdon Place of Keene premier pre-event Wine and Cheese Gala. The jeweled purse by designer Katherine Baumann had an approximate \$4,000 value and the proud new owner is Lisa Baker (r.)

patient care

Worrying... *continued from page 1*

sites and times across the state. The program is free and is especially for family members. Each program is taught by an expert who explains the disease and diagnostic process as well as what to expect and steps to take. In the past 10 years much has been learned about how to take control of what need not be considered a hopeless situation. Getting Started program, and all other programs can be found at www.alz.org/NH.

Care Consultation service provides the opportunity for people to work through more complex decisions, situations and issues with a trained care consultant. These meetings provide, without charge, in-depth, person-to-person assessment, education and support. Care Consultation is available in our Bedford office, by phone or e-mail.

Support groups for family members and for people with memory loss provide a safe and comfortable forum in which people meet regularly with a group leader for mutual support and education. (See page 7 for more about Support Groups.)

People all too often wonder, "Why did I wait so long?" It is so sad to hear and must be heartbreaking to experience. It does take courage to face these situations directly. The Alzheimer's Association offers support groups and books, many different educational programs, and a 24/7 Helpline and web site. Whatever stage you or your family member is in, whatever problem, question or concern you are facing, there is help.

Uncertainty is the most chilling thing of all.

Vernon Walters

Is It Alzheimer's?

10 Warning Signs You Should Know:

Memory loss that disrupts everyday life is not part of the normal aging process. It is a symptom of dementia, a gradual and progressive decline in memory, thinking, and reasoning skills. The most common cause of dementia is Alzheimer's disease, a disorder that results in the loss of brain cells.

Memory Loss. One of the most common signs of dementia is forgetting recently learned information. While it's normal to forget appointments, names, or telephone numbers, those with dementia will forget such things more often and not remember them later.

Difficulty performing familiar tasks. People with dementia often find it hard to complete everyday tasks that are so familiar we do not usually stop to think about how to do them. A person with Alzheimer's may not know the steps for preparing a meal, using a household appliance, or participating in a lifelong hobby.

Problems with language. Everyone has trouble finding the right word sometimes, but a person with Alzheimer's disease often forgets simple words or substitutes unusual words, making his or her speech or writing hard to understand. If a person with Alzheimer's is unable to find his or her toothbrush, for example, the individual may ask for "that thing for my mouth."

Disorientation to time and place. It's normal to forget the day of the week or where you're going. But people with Alzheimer's disease can become lost on their own street, forget where they are and how they got there, and not know how to get back home.

Poor or decreased judgment. No one has perfect judgment all of the time. Those with Alzheimer's may dress without regard to the weather, wearing several shirts, or blouses on a warm day, or very little clothing in cold weather. Individuals with dementia often show poor judgment about money, giving away large amounts to telemarketers or paying for home repairs or products they don't need.

Problems with abstract thinking. Balancing a checkbook may be hard when the task is more complicated than usual. Someone with Alzheimer's disease could forget completely what the numbers are and what needs to be done with them.

Misplacing things. Anyone can temporarily misplace a wallet or key. A person with Alzheimer's disease may put things in unusual places: an iron in the freezer or a wristwatch in the sugar bowl.

Changes in mood or behavior. Everyone can become sad or moody from time to time. Someone with Alzheimer's disease can show rapid mood swings—from calm to tears to anger—for no apparent reason.

Changes in personality. People's personalities ordinarily change somewhat with age. But a person with Alzheimer's disease can change a lot, becoming extremely confused, suspicious, fearful, or dependent on a family member.

Loss of initiative. It's normal to tire of housework, business activities, or social obligations at times. The person with Alzheimer's disease may become very passive, sitting in front of the television for hours, sleeping more than usual, or not wanting to do usual activities.

Choosing an Alzheimer Caregiver Support Group

All support groups are different. To find one that's right for you, do a little investigating first.

First, think about what you want to gain from a group. The primary purpose of a support group should be to provide you with knowledge about the disease and caregiving skills while allowing you to receive support and encouragement from others in the same situation.

Because they take on the characteristics of the people participating in them, all support groups are 'one of kind', but some groups also have a distinct focus as well. A group may concentrate on a particular type of caregiver such as adult children while another may focus on a type of diagnosis such as early onset Alzheimer's disease. This is where a little detective work before joining a group is very valuable. Call the leader before the group meeting. Have a list of prepared questions such as:

- How often are meetings held? What time of day? How long are they?
- Ask who is in the group – spouses, adult children, men?
- What stage of Alzheimers' are the members loved ones in? End stage? Recently diagnosed?

Tips for Late Stage Care

Each stage of Alzheimer's disease has its unique challenges for patients and for caregivers. Effective care giving techniques in the later stages can prevent or ease many related problems, and give comfort.

- If possible, learn how to give good physical care before the skills are actually needed. There is probably more to it than you think!
- Learn to recognize your patient's signals for pain and illness.
- As in all stages, ask why something is happening.
- Remember to talk, to touch, make eye contact, smile and even to laugh
- Find support.

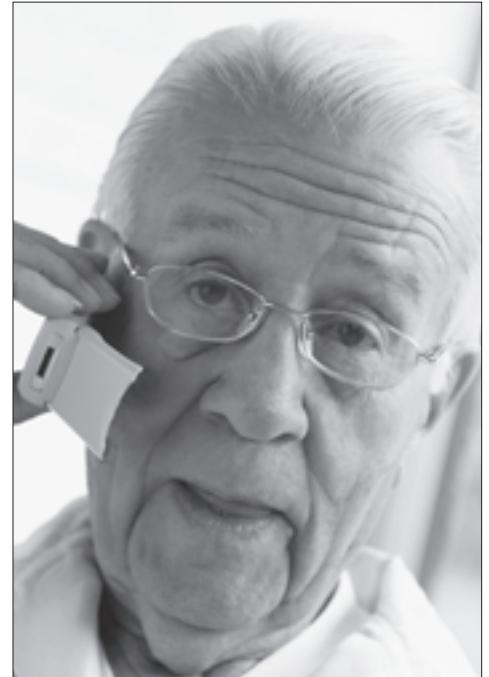
- Are the group members long distance caregivers or do their loved ones live in their own home, with them, or in a facility?
- Where is the group located? Nursing homes tend to have more caregivers of their residents, community groups tend to have more patients still living at home.
- How often are there speakers or films? Groups that concentrate more on educational meetings are different than those who don't.

Ask about confidentiality. All information shared at a support group should be kept strictly confidential unless it poses a risk to caregiver or patient.

Ask about the group leaders' experience – knowledge of Alzheimer's disease, length of time doing the group.

Don't be discouraged if the first group you attend isn't what you want. Talk with the group leader about your feelings. Every meeting is different and it may be that particular meeting wasn't typical of what usually happens. We all spend time finding the right physician or auto mechanic. It may take more than one try to locate the support group that best meets your needs and style. For a busy caregiver, this may seem like another unwelcome task but a good

support groups



match between a caregiver and a support group can improve caregiving skills, decrease stress, and improve quality of life for both the caregiver and the person with Alzheimer's. Thousands of support group members will tell you it's time well spent.

Support Groups

Support groups provide a forum for family members and caregivers of people with Alzheimer's disease to share feelings, concerns and information, and to support each other in coping with the effects of the disease or a related disorder. Groups vary in size, frequency of meeting and in the time of day they meet. Some support groups are specialized for certain types of caregivers or patients.

Call the 24/7 Helpline for information and referrals at 800.272.3900 or visit our website for a complete listing at www.alz.org/NH.

support groups

Get the emotional support you need

We have many support groups, at various times and locations. Check to see if there is a group close to you that fits your needs. If you prefer, call our 24-hour Helpline — 1.800.272.3900.

Support groups are independently run and this listing should not be construed as a recommendation.

New Hampshire Alzheimer Caregiver Support Groups

Berlin: Tiffany Kenison	603.752.3336
Concord: Trudy Bantle	603.228.1108
Jaffrey: Lori Lohrmann	603.532.2428
Keene: Bev Parkard	603.355.8281
Lebanon: Robert Santulli	603.650.5804
Manchester: Pam Potter	603.621.3548
Manchester: Nancy Zidle	603.621.3548
Meredith: Frank Vignand	603.279.8111 x123
Nashua: Beverly Remillard	603.888.1573
Colleen Wentworth	603.595.3722
Newport: Lorraine Strobble	603.543.6800
Plymouth: Kathy Wieliczko	603.238.2216
Portsmouth: Nancy Lamoureux	603.430.8615
Rochester: Hanna Jacoby	603.335.1770
Wolfeboro: Linda Johnson	603.323.9394 x24

New Hampshire Alzheimer Support Groups

Boscawen: Faith Flint	603.796.2165 x202
Laconia: Pat Marceau	603.524.8444
Lebanon: Jane Conklin	603.448.1558
Londonderry: Stacy Thrall	603.425.1770
Manchester: Sheryl Brooks	603.624.4717 x12
N. Haverhill: Tony Gahn	603.787.6971 x183

Massachusetts Alzheimer Caregiver Groups Near the New Hampshire Border

Amesbury: Patricia Lavoie	978.290.1797
Andover: Kristine Arakelian	978.623.8321
Athol: Wanda Landry	978.249.3717
Chelmsford: Patty Keane	978.251.8491
Fitchburg: Harriet Klayman	978.343.5216
Fitchburg: Judy Wilson	978.342.9428
Lowell: Maria Maskaluk	978.458.4844
Shelburne Falls: Jackie Stanford	413.625.2502
Turners Falls: Molly Chambers	413.773.5555 x262

**Volunteer Corner:
Genie Dean, Bedford, NH**

Genie Dean carried the Alzheimer's message to presidential hopeful John Edwards.

How did you come to be involved with the Alzheimer's Association?

I became interested in spreading the word about Alzheimer's disease when my mom was diagnosed with Lewy Body. She passed away in 2005, and since that time, I have been interested in the work of the Alzheimer's Association.

Why did you become a volunteer?

I want to get the word out to people that Alzheimer's is a disease that's on the rise—and working through the Association helps people to understand that there needs to be a push to increase funding for research to cure

the disease, and make more medications available for treatment.

Tell us something you are proud of as a volunteer.

I am proud to have joined the advocacy program. I have gotten in touch with people such as the Presidential Campaign Advocates who are energized and dedicated to make positive changes for people and families affected by Alzheimer's disease. I am also encouraged to be working at the Adult Day Program at the Elliot. The staff and families show great enthusiasm, caring and the proper amount of humor in doing their work.

24 - HOUR HELPLINE : 1 . 8 0 0 . 2 7 2 . 3 9 0 0

Please don't toss this Newsletter!

We encourage you to "recycle" Newsletters to a friend, doctor's office, house of worship, or club—and let us know if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.

alzheimer's  association®

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