

ASN NEWSLETTER

**Alzheimer's Support Network
of South Central Massachusetts Inc.**

Vol. 21 No. 1 ISSUE : WINTER 2009

Editor: Roger Lamontagne

President's Message "Dementia Caregivers' Health "

Roger Lamontagne, LICSW, BCD
President
ASN Board of Directors

Alzheimer's Support Network Membership Is Important to Caregivers in Need

Please renew your 2009 Membership,
If you have renewed, Thank you!

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Respite Grant Awarded

The Journal of General Internal Medicine published a research article on the impact of dementia caregiving has on the health of caregivers as it relates to the use of emergency and acute care health services. The research found that about one in four caregivers received acute health services in the six-months prior to the study. The interpretation from this finding affirms the importance that caregivers, both new and established, need to maintain their own health during their active role of caregiving. In addition, health care providers need to be more sensitive to the stresses that caregivers are experiencing. Providers need to assess the symptoms that their patients present that are related to the stresses of caregiving for the loved one with dementia. There are cognitive, behavioral, psychological, and functional changes that may occur to the dementia caregiver. Getting early assessment and timely intervention will produce positive effects for the caregiver. If you are a caregiver, get an appointment for your annual physical to make sure your baseline wellness is in place, and attend a caregiver support group to receive help from your fellow caregivers. Thanks for giving and for caring!—Roger

The Alzheimer's Support Network has been awarded a \$5000 Grant for its Community Respite Services Program. The George W. Wells Foundation, Bank of America, Trustee, has granted the Alzheimer's Support Network of South Central Massachusetts Inc. financial support to sustain the caregiver respite program.

The respite program provides financial assistance for respite care to family caregivers of individuals with dementia. Eligible individuals must have a medical diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or another related dementia and be appropriate for adult day health. In addition, family caregivers are expected to be active members of the Alzheimer's Support Network (ASN).

ASN contracts with Accord Adult Day Center in Dudley to provide its respite service to member families. Client satisfaction surveys have consistently resulted in family members reporting excellent ratings for the adult day health care services received at Accord Adult Day Center.

Anyone interested in the Community Respite Services Program or in joining the Alzheimer's Support Network can contact ASN InfoLine at 508-764-2423. ASN InfoLine is provided in collaboration with Harrington Hospital's Social Services Department.

*Thanks for Supporting
Alzheimer's Support Network*

To

*KOINONIA Women Fellowship at
Sturbridge Federated Church*

Christopher Heights of Webster

Lion's Club of Sturbridge and Fiskdale

Sitkowski & Malboeuf Funeral Home

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*Appreciation goes to our ASN
General Members for their
continued support through their
Membership Dues.*

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In Addition,

*Memorial gifts have been a
major source of support for
ASN to maintain its services
to our caregiver families and
local community. We are
deeply appreciative of the
kindness of our benefactors!*

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www.AlzSupportNet.org

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MEMORIALS

*The following ASN Memorials
were recognized by family of
loved ones who died:*

In 2008

+

Martial R. Chasse

Of Southbridge

Theresa M. Noga

Of Southbridge

Viola Olmstead

Of Webster

Nina Perrin-Tucker

Of Southbridge

Elizabeth Ruda

Of Dudley

*Memorial donations
received this past year
in Remembrance of:*

Mary Burbank

Elizabeth Clemence

Anna Dido

Victoria Eczakosky

Joseph Fitzgibbons

Peter Geary

Shirley R. Hyland

Katherine Kujawski

Raymond A. Martel

Harold Piehl

Joyce P. Richardson

Celia Rivers

Phyllis Thompson

ATTENDING RELIGIOUS SERVICES MAY PROLONG LIFE

Another study has been published that shows a benefit to regular attendance at religious services. According to a study published in the journal, Psychology and Health, women who attend religious services on a regular basis are 20% less likely to die when compared with people who do not attend.

This finding was part of a larger study funded by National Institute of Health called, Women's Health Initiative Observational Study. The study followed the women for 7.7 years on average to be able to get data. This recent finding dovetails with past research that suggests people who are part of strong social networks tend to be healthier.

Women (and men) who are caregiver of persons with Alzheimer's disease would be well served to develop social supports to help them cope and maintain their personal help. Attending religious services and participating in an ASN caregiver support group program are examples of ways to improve social network.

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CAREGIVER FINANCES

Very few of us have the ability to have advance planning for unexpected caregiving needs. Financial tools such as long term care insurance that can help with home based servicing are often financially prohibitive. So what can a family do to deal with the added costs associated with caregiving?

One area to explore is whether there may be IRS tax credits for the dependent status, and tax deductions for related expenses that can be verified. Another possible avenue is to have a caregiver evaluation to determine eligibility for a caregiver stipend through one of the adult family care programs. One such program is located at Tri-Valley Inc. Their staff can advise the caregiver of financial eligibility rules. Tri-Valley's number is 800-286-6640.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

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Caregiver Training in April

- Are you a caregiver of a person with a memory loss?
- Do you have questions about how to handle problem behaviors during dementia caregiving?
- Would you like to learn about being more effective in your interactions with your loved one?

Then you should attend the upcoming ASN Alzheimer's Caregiver Training for family and friends who are caregivers.

Contact ASN at 508-764-2423 for dates and times, and to register for the program.

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ASN Caregiver Resource Help

Family caregivers in need of respite help can apply for the **Community Respite Services stipend**. ASN Member families who are eligible for adult day health can **receive financial assistance for respite**. Call ASN's Helpline at 508-764-2423 for further information.

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**ASN Website Address
Is
www.AlzSupportNet.org**

Alzheimer's Support Network of
South Central Massachusetts Inc.
P. O. BOX 839
Southbridge MA 01550

UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

Caregiver Support Groups

Southbridge: 1st Tuesday of each Month
at 7:00pm, CR1, Mezzanine Level,
Harrington Memorial Hospital

Webster: 2nd Monday of each Month
at 6:15pm Meeting Room Floor G,
Webster Public Library

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### **ASN BOARD MEETINGS**

ASN Members are Welcome.

Call 508-764-2423

for the next meeting date/time/location.

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VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

***Are you interested in being involved with
Serving others, Writing articles, co-
leading a support group or educational
program?***

Call Us at 508-764-2423

to volunteer your talent.