

ASN NEWSLETTER

Alzheimer's Support Network
of South Central Massachusetts Inc.

Vol. 19 No. 1 ISSUE : FALL 2007

Editor: Roger Lamontagne

President's Message "Caring With Baskets"

President Nancy J. Coderre
Attorney At Law
Southbridge MA

November is National Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia, affects over 5 million Americans. Our Alzheimer's Support Network continues to see new caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease. Caregivers, whether just starting or coping with it for years, are always in need of encouragement and support.

As part of ASN's Awareness Month, our dedicated volunteers will be distributing **ASN Care Baskets** to our family caregivers who are caring for a person with Alzheimers at home. Our **ASN Care Baskets** provide a friendly reminder to family caregivers in our community that they are not alone.

With the personal one on one contact, ASN volunteers connect with caregivers to provide reassurance and refreshment. Each **ASN Care Basket** includes homemade treats, caregiver supplies, and a special ASN gift. If you are a current family caregiver at home or know someone who is one, please read details inside this newsletter.

Thank you.

Alzheimer's Awareness Month Events

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November is National Alzheimer's Awareness Month. ASN will be offering educational information on caregiving and Alzheimer's services in a number of ways during Awareness month.

ASN plans to have a community display in the main lobby at Harrington Memorial Hospital. The educational display will have free materials from November 5th thru the 19th.

ASN will be providing caregivers attending any of our Caregiver Support Groups during November with a magnetic memo board for use at home or office. ASN sponsors three caregiver groups. They are located in Southbridge, Webster and Charlton.

Educational presentations are being planned in the community and at our support group meetings. On November 10th, ASN volunteers will be creating our **ASN Care Baskets** for distribution to current family caregivers locally. **ASN Care Baskets** act as an outreach service tool. On November 15th, Roger Lamontagne, one of ASN's Speakers Bureau, will be conducting a workshop for the care staff at Christopher Heights Assisted Living Center in Webster. Additional programming is being planned.

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Many Thanks
for Supporting ASN

Our thanks go out to:

Sturbridge Lions Club Inc.

&

Sitkowski & Malboeuf Funeral Home

for their supportive donations
this year.

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In Addition,

*Memorial donations
were received this year
in remembrance of:*

Mary Burbank
Dora Casavant
Elizabeth Clemence
Georgette Coderre
Anna Dido
William Geary
Joseph Janket
Katherine Kujawski
Raymond A. Martel
Ruth Meyer
Filomena J. Moretti
Harold Piehl
Elizabeth Pavolis
Joyce P. Richardson
Cecelia Rivers

Since our last Newsletter Issue,

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MEMORIALS

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

In 2006

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*Joyce P. Richardson
Of Charlton*

*Elizabeth J. Pavolis
Of Webster/Worcester*

In 2007

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*Edward D. Cole
Of Barre*

*Richard C. Dudley
Of East Brookfield*

*Elmer B. Gardner
Of Sturbridge*

*Quinto J. Trifone
Of Southbridge*

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*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!*

2007-2008 **ASN Board of Directors**

President-Nancy J. Coderre of Southbridge
V.Pres.-Marilyn Travinski of Southbridge
Treas.-Jean Lefebvre of Woodstock Valley
Sec.-Wanda O'Connor of Dudley
Committee Chairs:
Service-Debra Boucher of Webster
Membership-Marlene Mach of Southbridge
P. Relations-Meegan Bullock of Fiskdale
Finance-Patricia Maly of Southbridge
Nominating- Roger Lamontagne of Southbridge

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Client Satisfaction Survey **Attention Respite Users**

Family users of ASN 's Community Respite Services at Elder Day Services of Dudley are being surveyed for their feedback on the program. Families were mailed a survey form this past month and asked to return their forms to help us evaluate the program. If you are a respite user and have not replied, please complete your survey and return it to us. Thank you.

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Many Thanks to Carolyn & Ken Racicot for their many years of service to ASN as owners of Elder Day Services.

Happy Retirement, Ken & Carolyn!

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RESPITE PROGRAM CHANGES

ASN Welcomes Joe & Lisa Rizzo as the new owner/operators of Elder Day Services of Southern Worcester County Inc. With a change of ownership, a new contract will be necessary and is expected. Current respite users were notified by letter in September of the change in ownership. ASN 's Board of Directors voted to continue to pay 100% of the respite days through the balance of 2007. In 2008, ASN will be paying a flat rate of \$50 per authorized ASN respite day. Family respite users will be responsible for a co-pay to EDS of \$5 per ASN respite day.

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ASN WEBSITE IN DEVELOPMENT

The Alzheimer 's Support Network is planning on having a website in the very near future. ASN 's web address will be: www.alzsupportnet.org .

Community Respite

Family caregivers in need of respite help can apply for Community Respite Services. Members of ASN receive 2 adult day health respite days per month. Call our Helpline-508-764-2423.

“CAREGIVER’S CORNER”

How Do You Know Love Exists?—When Caregiving Meets Compassion.

By Roger Lamontagne, LICSW, BCD

When a family member becomes aware that there is need for giving of care to a fellow member of the family, there are many concerns, doubts, and anxieties that arise. Initially, it is common for many family members to hope that the care needed is maybe only temporary or the family member thinks that maybe they are overreacting and the care is not really necessary. But, for a person with a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease, the family member soon understands that the person with progressive dementia will need care indefinitely; and that the care to be provided will become more increasingly demanding.

Caregiving for a person with Alzheimer’s dementia is an act of service. The caregiver must have patience, be intuitive, provide guidance, and remain flexible. Anyone who has assisted another with personal hygiene and toileting know the definition of humility. When a caregiver is reluctant or resistive to the reality of the caregiving task, both the caregiver and the person with dementia suffer. But, when the caregiver grows in understanding of the disease process, the caregiver begins to have the capacity to demonstrate the compassionate care that is essential. And, as a result, both the caregiver and person with dementia benefit.

Caregivers benefit from education about the nature and needs of Alzheimer’s disease, and about the principles of effective caregiving in the home. Through support group instruction, educational workshops, and dementia care materials, caregivers become genuine agents of compassion and love.

Ultimately, the purpose of the caregiving experience is to place the relationship between the caregiver and person as the primary focus. The relevance of developing and enhancing the relationship is the key to caregiving success. Within the decreasing ability of the person with dementia to express appreciation of the care given, the caregiver sustains the relationship through unselfish service by the expression of loving kindness. Such compassionate care is Love in action.

***The Board of Directors of
the Alzheimer's Support Network of South Central Massachusetts Inc.***
*wishes to express its appreciation to the Family Caregivers who provide dedicated assistance
and care at home to loved ones who experience memory loss.*

Are You a Family Caregiver of a Person with Alzheimer's Disease?

***Would you be interested in receiving an ASN Care Basket
delivered to your home by one of ASN's Volunteers?***

On Saturday, November 10th, ASN Volunteers plan to make home deliveries to our Family Caregivers. Our ASN Care Baskets are simply intended to provide a friendly expression of support to family caregivers in our local community. Our ASN Care Baskets will include homemade goodies, caregiver materials and a special ASN gift. Our ASN Volunteer will bring a caring greeting with a smile to brighten up your day.

Family caregivers report difficulty getting out of the house at times to tend to their needs. Oftentimes, family caregivers feel isolated in the constant demands of providing for the basic needs of their loved one with Alzheimer's disease.

Let our ASN Volunteer come visit and bring you special treats!

***To Sign Up for an ASN Care Basket,
Contact your ASN Support Group Leader***

Or

***Telephone
ASN's Information and Resource Assistance
508-764-2423
Monday through Friday
9AM to 2PM***

Registration deadline is November 2nd.