

# ASN NEWSLETTER

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

**Vol. 20 No. 1 ISSUE : SPRING 2008**

Editor: Roger Lamontagne

## **President's Message "Caregiver Support Groups"**

**President Nancy J. Coderre  
Attorney at Law  
Southbridge MA**

***Alzheimer's Support Network***

***Has a Homepage***

**[Www.AlzSupportNet.org](http://www.alzsupportnet.org)**

Family members and friends who are caregivers of someone with Alzheimer's disease are in need of encouragement and support. Caregiver Support Groups are an excellent way for caregivers to receive that supportive help in dealing with the ongoing needs of someone with memory loss.

ASN provides Caregiver Support Groups at different times and locations throughout each month. The support groups are open to family and friends, whether they are direct caregivers, long distance caregivers, or respite caregivers. Family members seeking understanding of Alzheimer's dementia and about available community resources are encouraged to attend as well.

ASN's sponsored Caregiver Support Groups are held in Southbridge, Webster, and Charlton each month. Please note the locations and times listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

If you wish more information about these groups, you may contact ASN's InfoHelp at 508-764-2423 (Social Services) or by email at [info@alzsupportnet.org](mailto:info@alzsupportnet.org).

Thanks for giving and for caring!

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ASN has developed its own website on the internet. The new resource is located at [www.alzsupportnet.org](http://www.alzsupportnet.org).

With technical assistance of Bob Datz, the creative website design consultant for *DatzMedia*, ASN has successfully launched itself into the worldwide web. The ASN website has many wonderful features to assist people with information about ASN services, understanding Alzheimer's disease, caregiver tips, and opportunities to participate in the volunteer efforts of our locally based programs. In addition, the website's Memorial Honor Roll provides recognition of recent ASN memorial obituaries. The Honor Roll provides an acknowledgment of families who designate ASN to receive memorial donations in memory of their Loved Ones.

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## Many Thanks for Supporting ASN

Our special thanks go out to:  
Ryan Chase and Kori Gale of

Southbridge who made a creative  
generous donation to ASN in lieu of  
providing favors at their Wedding  
Reception this past year.

Best Wishes to the Newlyweds!

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### Web Resources To Consider

National Family Caregivers Assoc.

[www.thefamilycaregiver.org](http://www.thefamilycaregiver.org)

National Alliance for Caregiving

[www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org)

AARP

[www.aarp.org/families/caregiving/](http://www.aarp.org/families/caregiving/)

### Smile For No Reason Exercise

Get out your calendar and pick one day that  
will be your SMILE DAY. You have to pre-  
pick the day. On your smile day you have to  
smile at everyone you make eye contact  
with. Really. Try It. You 'll realize how little  
you actually smile and how much one smile  
can affect a whole bunch of people!

—from *Sometimes Ya Gotta Laugh* by  
Karen Stobbe.

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## MEMORIALS

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

*In 2008*

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*Viola Olmstead  
Of Webster*

*Nina Perrin-Tucker  
Of Southbridge*

*Elizabeth Ruda  
Of Dudley*

*In 2007*

*+*

*Edward D. Cole  
Of Barre*

*Richard C. Dudley  
Of East Brookfield*

*Elmer B. Gardner  
Of Sturbridge*

*Quinto J. Trifone  
Of Southbridge*

*Phyllis Thompson  
Of Southbridge*

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*We are deeply appreciative  
of the kindness  
of our benefactors!*

## FREE RESOURCE FOR YOU

### Are You A Long Distance Caregiver?

If you are, there is an excellent guide-booklet available free to you from the Central Mass. Family Caregiver Support Program. The guide booklet is called, LONG DISTANCE CAREGIVING, and it can be requested from our local elder services agency, Tri-Valley Inc. Their number is 800-286-6640.

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### Understanding Alzheimer's Disease

Alzheimer's disease is a neurological disease of the brain. It is a type of irreversible progressive dementia. Presently, there is no known definitive cause of Alzheimer's.

There is no cure for the disease at this time, though medical research is making progress in finding ways to minimize the disease's effects. As with other types of progressive dementia, Alzheimer's affects a person's ability to think, reason, remember, and function physically over time.

To read more about Alzheimer's, sign on to [www.alzsupportnet.org](http://www.alzsupportnet.org) and click on the link, 'Articles'.

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### Caregiver Resource Help

Family caregivers in need of respite help can apply for the Community Respite Services stipend. Member families of ASN eligible for adult day health can receive financial assistance for respite. Call 508-764-2423 for further info.

## What can a person do to maintain brain wellness? Do's & Don'ts

The state of our brain function is due to genetic causes and environmental influences. While our individual genetic makeup is not under our influence to change, we do have the potential to make an impact in the area of environmental effects on the brain. Growing neuroscience research is revealing that everyone, including individuals with Alzheimer's disease, can have some influence on their functioning and future capacity to maintain functioning for a longer period of time. The following Do's and Don'ts are recommendations from research to maintain optimal brain functioning at whatever level it is currently.

#### DO'S:

- Maintain a consistent 7-plus hours of sleep each night.
- Maintain a nutritious diet that is heart healthy, such as the Mediterranean diet.
- Maintain a regular daily interest in physical activity and/or exercise.
- Maintain/expand your social contacts and experiences.
- Actively pursue new learning experiences that stimulate interest.
- Practice doing daily routines in slightly different ways.
- Develop skills to cope optimistically with life's difficulties, such as, laughter.

#### DON'TS:

- Do not smoke tobacco.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages to excess.
- Avoid eating foods that have saturated fat or are highly processed.
- Do not withdraw mentally and socially because of convenience or anxiety.
- Do not become a "couch potato", sitting and watching television does not help your brain neurons stay healthy and working.

The human brain was made for a physically mobile body. Moving the body helps the brain.

Alzheimer's Support Network of  
South Central Massachusetts Inc.  
P. O. BOX 839  
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## **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

**Charlton:** 4th Thursday of each Month  
At 10:30am, Training Room, 3rd Floor,

Overlook Masonic Center

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### **ASN BOARD MEETING DATE**

**WEDNESDAY, April 30, 2008**

**5:30 PM**

Law Office of Nancy J. Coderre

39 Elm Street, Southbridge

ASN Members are Welcome.

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### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY**

***Are you interested in being involved with  
the creation of our ASN Newsletter?***

***Become a Co-Editor by calling***

***508-764-2423***

***to volunteer your talent.***