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Hope for Tomorrow...®

Alzheimer Society  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

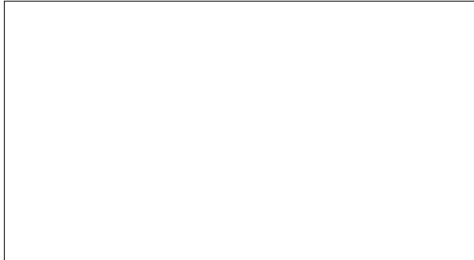
# CONTACT

Winter 2010

## CARING FOR THE CAREGIVERS

With more than 2 million informal caregivers in Canada, how can we help their growing need for a support system?

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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: Alzheimer Society of B.C.  
300-828 West 8th Ave, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1E2

Over 15,000 British Columbians will develop dementia this year. The need to support family caregivers is increasing as well. Two recently released studies show that caregivers are in dire need of support across Canada and the United States.

According to *Supporting Informal Caregivers—The Heart of Home Care* released in the fall by the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), a number of Canada's caregivers, both men and women, are beginning to feel distressed and, as a result, may be unable to continue in their current roles.

"The strongest associations with caregiver distress, while controlling for other factors, were found where the home care client suffered from significant problems with

cognition and daily functioning, where the number of informal care hours was high and where the client exhibited depressive symptoms or difficult-to-manage behaviours. Among caregivers, it was the spouses, rather than children or friends of the senior, who appeared to be more at risk for distress and potential burnout," states the CIHI report.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. is helping to ease that distress, through recent funding received from the provincial government to expand First Link®, Minds in Motion™, and Shaping the Journey: living with dementia™.

"By connecting with people earlier in their dementia journey and providing programs and support, we are able to better assist caregivers throughout the province," said Jean Blake, CEO, Alzheimer Society of B.C.

## RESEARCH: DR. JACK DIAMOND ON MUSIC THERAPY AND DEMENTIA

Elements of music almost certainly activate specific brain systems that are differentially susceptible to injury or disease. Since music and memory are so well defined and readily able to be incorporated into experimental studies, they offer a practical means of investigating the nature of dementia-related long-term memory loss. Music research is also revealing possible therapeutic approaches to recovering memories through studies that explore whether memories have been erased from the brain or still exist but cannot be accessed, which clearly has a significance for understanding dementia. According to the Canadian Association for Music Therapy, musical interventions in dementia have revealed that:

- **Singing** was found to encourage socialization, including reminiscence and thereby to improve memory. When speaking is impaired as seen in fairly advanced Alzheimer's disease, music can stimulate the language centres in the brain and thereby promote the ability to sing.
- **Music** with rhythm and beat can help promote coordination and balance because one part of the brain that this kind of music acts on is the part involved with movement.
- **Listening to music** in general helps to improve cognitive skills, and provides a sense of the familiar, thereby helping one to become aware of their surroundings and people.

Here in B.C., the Society is sponsoring a study at the University of British Columbia (UBC) to assess the benefits of music therapy in Alzheimer's disease; the study, which is being conducted by Dr. Kevin Kirkland, music therapist at UBC Hospital and Dr. Robin Hsiung, neurologist at UBC, is open to participants who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. For more information, contact research coordinators Jesse Ory or Penny Slack at 604.822.7239 or via email at [ory.jesse@gmail.com](mailto:ory.jesse@gmail.com) or [pslack@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:pslack@interchange.ubc.ca).





## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As we approach the end of the year, it is time to reflect on the past year and to consider plans for the year to come. What a year it's been! In 2010, the Alzheimer Society of B.C. has made great strides to advance the cause.

We have:

- expanded the First Link®, Minds in Motion™, and Shaping the Journey: living with dementia™ programs to another five communities across the province. The funding to do this was enabled by the Ministry of Health Services and is an acknowledgment of the value of these programs, first piloted in Victoria.
- continued to reach out to communities across B.C. through special events and education in communities where we do not have staff, and initiatives to strengthen our core services and support our volunteers throughout the province.
- upgraded our technology to enhance operational efficiencies.
- increased our public profile by proactively working with media to share the stories of people living with dementia made a call to action to government and to the general public to turn the rising tide of dementia.

In the coming year, we anticipate further advancements. Indeed, we must continue to advance the cause because families on the dementia journey need all of our support.

Your donations have helped to enable the Society to expand our programs and grow in our ability to provide support to families on the dementia journey, and to prepare to face the increasing prevalence of dementia in our province. We value your continued support and on behalf of the Alzheimer Society of B.C., wish you all a safe holiday season.

Happy Holidays!

Jean Blake  
CEO  
Alzheimer Society of B.C.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS AND BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR BETTER DEMENTIA CARE

The announcement on World Alzheimer's Day that the Ministry of Health Services is providing \$1 million to expand the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s (ASBC) programs, was the culmination of a longstanding commitment by health leaders to transform dementia care in British Columbia. As a result, the Society is able to extend First Link®, a first response strategy into Victoria, Nanaimo, Richmond, Burnaby, Kelowna, and Prince George and neighbouring communities.

The ASBC first partnered with the Vancouver Interior Health Authority (VIHA) to implement First Link®, supported by the VIHA Seniors Integrated Health Network. In July 2010, the Primary Care division of the Ministry of Health Services entered into a contract with ASBC to expand First Link® into each health authority to ensure that families affected by dementia are connected to a broad range of programs and services to serve them throughout their journey with the disease.

First Link® has five key components:

- **Partnering** with physicians and community organizations
- **Formal Referral** soon after a diagnosis is made

- **Proactive outreach** to individuals and families, giving them the opportunity to ask questions, receive information about the disease and learn about community support services and resources
- **Information and connections** to Alzheimer Society programs and other community and health care services
- **Planned follow up** keeping families informed about ongoing education and support programs.

There are more than 70,000 people living with dementia in B.C. and each year 15,000 more people develop the disease. The expansion of First Link® means the Society connects sooner to support families on the dementia journey.

## SPOTLIGHT: VOLUNTEER AWARDS

The Society recognizes the unique contributions of our dedicated volunteers through the presentation of several annual volunteer awards. This year, three outstanding volunteers have been acknowledged for their tireless commitment and work on behalf of the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

The Twigg White Award was presented to **Jean Cornish**, who has volunteered with the Society for 11 years, as Support Group Facilitator and Office Assistant. Jean's knowledge, generosity and eagerness to support other caregivers make her a fitting recipient of this award of merit.

The Lola Turik Community Service Award was presented to **Lorena Sware**, for the 14 years of volunteer service as co-facilitator for Early Stage Support Groups and as a *Walk* volunteer. Lorena's empathy for persons diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease is unfailing and her many years of service have truly strengthened her community.

The Clyde and Lanny Slade Leadership Award was presented to **Nicole Bertrand** at the Society's AGM in September. Through her dedicated leadership on and with the Board of Directors, the National Board, Ascent for Alzheimer's, the 25th Anniversary Gala, the Scotiabank Half Marathon and much more, Nicole embodies the spirit of this award for "outstanding contribution to the Society's mission".

# ALL ALONE – WITH US!

Yesterday I met a very brave British Columbian! He has Alzheimer's. He is aware it is fatal with no known cure. He is living alone.

Mario came from the Philippines to Vancouver in the early 70s with all the hope that a university educated businessman brings to a new country.

By the early 80s, he was established at one of our best known Canadian corporations with a future that was endless in its possibilities.

Around mid 2005, doubt started to creep in. This capable man would be giving a presentation to his colleagues and forget what the next sentence should be. He would be walking home from visiting his sister and completely lose his way.

The doctors chalked it up to 21st century stress. So Mario decided that he would solve this problem by taking an early retirement, decreasing his stress levels, and devote his life to travelling.

Yet, increasing frequency of forgetfulness pushed Mario to get better answers. After numerous tests, including an MRI at the UBC Alzheimer's Clinic, a neurologist confirmed that Mario was in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

The very same day Mario received his diagnosis, he marched into an Alzheimer

Society of B.C. Resource Centre at 8th and Willow in Vancouver and was immediately supplied with literature and information. Months later, he completed an eight-week course called *Shaping the Journey: living with dementia™* that informed Mario how to plan for the disease's progression. Now, Mario attends two afternoons a month at one of the South Fraser Support Groups, where he is surrounded by others who share his journey, abundant resources, and trained facilitators.

As I sat across the table from this kind, soft spoken and dignified man my heart went out to him. This strong, previously independent man lives alone and faces a diminishing future by himself. He has surrendered his driver's license and transferred power of attorney to another. He must increasingly rely on others for support; someone comes in for routine house maintenance, including cleaning out the fridge of mouldy food he has forgotten to throw away.

There are some facts you should know. The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides support services to British Columbians, like Mario, on the dementia journey, at no cost. But every five minutes a Canadian is being told that they have Alzheimer's disease and this

figure is set to double within one generation if we don't act now.

You also need to know that we have some significant financial needs to meet for the remainder of the year and Mario has personally asked if you could help us financially.

- **\$50** would go towards helping provide information packages for fifty caregivers attending a Dementia Education workshop.
- **\$100** would enable the Dementia Helpline to provide information about dementia and care to two people.
- **\$200** would go towards helping the Alzheimer Society of B.C. give information tool kits to 200 volunteers, training them to facilitate Support Groups for those where dementia affects all aspects of life.
- **\$2,500** would give up to 100 caregivers living in rural communities across BC access to dementia education through a tele-conference workshop.
- A larger gift would help us provide education and support in one of our Resource Centres across B.C.

[Continued on page 5](#)



# INSIGHT FROM THE JOURNEY: TIPS FOR MANAGING THE HOLIDAYS

By Jim Mann (Originally published in Insight)

With the holidays coming up, there are crowds, parties, and general sensory overload. The holidays can be an overwhelming time for everyone. This is particularly true for someone with dementia. Having a diagnosis of dementia means that things are not always going to work the way that you want.

There may be times when you feel uncomfortable in a social situation. Realize that it's ok and a part of the disease. If you are feeling overwhelmed, don't be afraid to admit this to yourself and to take a time-out. For example, if you are at a party and feel uncomfortable, take a step back

If you need to go to a quiet room for a few minutes, or perhaps lie down, go ahead and do that. Here are some other strategies that you can use during the holidays or anytime when you feel stressed:

- Ask the person you are talking with to move with you to a less distracting space to continue the conversation.
- Feel free to leave a conversation if you feel uncomfortable.
- Go to a quiet place and close your eyes.
- Practise breathing.
- Share your feelings with others (communicating with family and close friends)

*Jim Mann was diagnosed with dementia in 2007 and is the editor for Insight, a bulletin for and by people with dementia.*



## PRACTICAL TIPS: SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS

(Originally published in In Touch)

For most families, regardless of faith or culture, holidays are a time of joy, celebration and enjoying one another's company. However, when you're caring for someone with dementia, the holiday season can be difficult. Typical stressors at this time of year include:

- Dealing with the memories of past holidays, and the unexpected feelings and emotions these memories cause.
- Feeling overwhelmed with maintaining traditions while keeping up with caregiving responsibilities.
- Visitors who don't feel comfortable relating to a person with dementia.
- Trying to live up to others' expectations.

The person you're caring for may also have difficulty coping with the holidays. Perhaps he or she feels a particular sense of loss at this time of year or finds the disruption in routine caused by holiday activities distressing.

*In Touch is an Alzheimer Society of B.C. bulletin for Caregivers*

### What can you do to survive the holidays?

**Adjust expectations.** Talk to family members and friends to ensure they understand your situation and that their expectations are realistic. Perhaps you can work together to adapt your traditional activities to suit the needs of the person with dementia.

**Minimize holiday stress.** Pick and choose the holiday activities and traditions that mean the most to you and to your family member – don't try to do it all.

### Involve the person with dementia

- Wrap presents
- Hang decorations
- Pack cookies in tins for gifts
- Listen to music, sing holiday songs
- Drive around in the evening to look at the holiday lights.

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# ALL ALONE – WITH US!

Continued from page 3

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. exists to help Mario and thousands like him. You can help your fellow British Columbians who are facing a difficult journey and are living with a disease that has no cure.

We need you to give today. Mario and thousands of others will be touched by your gift today. Yesterday is fading with the memories of the past. Tomorrow is diminishing as the disease destroys their vital brain cells. When you give today, you make a difference right now.

This December, we urgently need you to give to these three specific programs that are touching Mario and many like him!

Warmly with much thanks for your response,

David Walker  
Director of Fund Development  
Alzheimer Society of B.C.

P.S. Please clip out and send in the response card below in the enclosed envelope today. Yesterday is fading. Tomorrow may be too late. It is today that you can help! Another way to give is to go to [www.alzheimerbc.org](http://www.alzheimerbc.org)

"I had an idea that it was Alzheimer's. I had done the research. It can happen to people my age. Now I had to get prepared for both a shorter life in retirement and one with many challenges."

– Mario



**YES! I WANT TO HELP MARIO AND THE ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF B.C. PROVIDE HELP FOR TODAY AND HOPE FOR TOMORROW.**

**Alzheimer Society**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

Name

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Please send me more information about:

Leaving a gift in my will  How to become a monthly donor

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Phone: 604.681.6530 Toll-free: 1.800.667.3742 Fax: 604.669.6907  
[info@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:info@alzheimerbc.org)

I would like to donate  \$50  \$100  \$200  Other

Enclosed please find my:  Cheque  Credit Card

Please charge my:  VISA  MasterCard  AMEX

Card #

Expiry


Signature

**THANK YOU.** A tax receipt will be sent to you for any donation over \$15. Donations made by December 31, 2010 can be used for your 2010 Income Tax Return.

Winter 2010

Cut along dotted line

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. (ASBC) is committed to protecting the privacy of people whose personal information is collected and held by ASBC, and we adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to protecting privacy. If at any time you wish to have your name removed from this or another mailing, call us by phone at 604.681.6530 or toll-free 1.800.667.3742, or via e-mail at [info@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:info@alzheimerbc.org), and we will gladly accommodate your request.

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# PARTICIPATE: INVESTORS GROUP WALK FOR MEMORIES

On Sunday, January 30, 2011 British Columbians will come together in 20 communities across the province to honour and remember the special people in their lives who are touched by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, while raising vital funds for the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

While this is a province-wide initiative, each *Walk* reflects the local community in which it takes place and brings together people who are connected by a common cause, making the *Walk* a community building event as well. In every participating community, the *Walk* is dedicated to an Honouree – a person who has been impacted by Alzheimer's disease or related dementia, and is held in high regard by their family, friends, and community. Local volunteer committees plan the *Walk* in their community, recruiting sponsors, volunteers, and walkers, and coordinating activities on the day of the event.

"In addition to funding research for a cure, walking makes a difference to families across B.C. who have been impacted by dementia by ensuring they have support and education to build the skills and confidence

to maintain quality of life on the dementia journey," explains Angie Kok, provincial coordinator for the *Investors Group Walk for Memories*. "It is an event where families and friends come out to support each other in the community."

Last year, walkers in 19 local communities helped raise more than \$600,000 to support families facing dementia to build the skills and confidence to maintain quality of life, and bring us a step closer to finding a cure. This year, we hope to get even more people out walking.

It's easy to participate! To learn more about the *walk* go to [www.walkformemories.com](http://www.walkformemories.com). One in three Canadians knows someone with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. **Who are you walking for?**



2010 Vancouver Investors Group Walk for Memories at Stanley Park.

## In 2011, Walks will take place in:

- Barriere,
- Chetwynd,
- Courtenay/Comox
- Cowichan Valley (Duncan)
- Dawson Creek
- Fraser Valley (Chilliwack)
- Kamloops
- Kelowna
- Nanaimo
- Nelson
- Penticton
- Port Alberni
- Powell River
- Prince George
- Salmon Arm
- TriCities (Port Moody)
- Vancouver
- Vernon
- Victoria
- White Rock/Surrey
- \*with possible Walks in Creston and Williams Lake.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For the most up-to-date event details, including educational programs, visit our website at [www.alzheimerbc.org](http://www.alzheimerbc.org) and click on the News and Events button at the top of the page.

### INVESTORS GROUP WALK FOR MEMORIES

Sunday, January 30, 2011

Get *Walking* British Columbia! The 2011 *Investors Group Walk for Memories* will take place in 20 communities across B.C. on the last Sunday in January. To volunteer or register for a *Walk* near you, go to [www.walkformemories.com](http://www.walkformemories.com) or contact Angie Kok at 604.742.4908 (toll free 1.800.667.3742)/email [akok@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:akok@alzheimerbc.org).

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## EVENT CELEBRATIONS

### Coffee Break™

On September 16, 2010 more than 80 *Coffee Break*™ hosts joined us in making a difference. Families, friends and co-workers gathered together in over 30 different communities across B.C. to help raise money and awareness for Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. A big thank you to our volunteers and donors for your time, dedication, and effort for making the 15<sup>th</sup> annual *Coffee Break*™ another successful event! Save the date for next year – September 15, 2011! For more information about hosting your own *Coffee Break*™, contact Jenna White at 604.742.4915 or [jwhite@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:jwhite@alzheimerbc.org).

### Ascent for Alzheimer's

Congratulations to the 2010 *Ascent for Alzheimer's* team for completing their journey 19,340 ft on Mt. Kilimanjaro and raising over \$130,000! A big thank you also to our sponsors: The Highbury Foundation, Rio Tinto Alcan, RBC Global Asset Management and 100.5 The Peak.

To find out how you can join the 2011 *Ascent* team, e-mail Vivianne de Pass at 604.742.4920 or [vdepass@alzheimerbc.org](mailto:vdepass@alzheimerbc.org).

### Flora Aasen

The Aasen Family hosted the 11th annual Flora Aasen Memorial Pro-AM on August 23rd at the Pitt Meadows Golf and Country Club, raising more than \$18,582.85 in honour of the late Flora Aasen. In the last 10 years, thanks to the Aasen family and their supporters, the event has raised over \$356,000 for the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

### Ralph Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament

A big thank you to the event participants, sponsors and staff at Skaha Meadows Golf Course who raised over \$19,000 at the 8th annual Ralph Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament held in Penticton on Sept. 11th.



Top team: Gene Wawryk, Bonnie Gladish, Tim Gladish, Joan Barnes, Don Graham and Ron Gladish - Ralph Robinson Memorial Golf Tournament