

FRIENDS CLUB NEWSLETTER

September 2015

Celebrating 25 years of serving the Alzheimer's community!

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Not-So-New Drug Still Showing Promise in Ability to Slow Alzheimer's

Solanezumab, a drug that has been on the research scene for some time, is still thought to have potential for slowing the progression of Alzheimer's disease.

Solanezumab was a hot topic at July's Alzheimer's Association International Conference, which was held in Washington, D.C. Researchers from drug manufacturer Eli Lilly said they believe the drug can cut the rate of disease progression by about a third. Solanezumab attacks the sticky amyloid proteins whose buildup between nerve cells is a hallmark of the Alzheimer's disease.

An 18-month trial of Solanezumab seemingly ended in failure in 2012, but upon reexamination of trial data, researchers saw signs that the drug did work on patients in the earliest stages of the disease. Hence, the company asked 1,000 of the original study participants to continue taking the drug. This led to positive results, with those taking the drug the longest benefitting the most with slowing disease progression.

The company is still working on a completely separate trial on people in the earliest stages, which began in 2013 but is not yet complete. The results of that study could be the defining assessment of the drug. Results are due in October of 2016.



This article is a summary a story by the BBC. Visit www.bbc.com/news/health-33617141 to read the full article.

Physical Exercise Helps People with Dementia Live Better

Exercise can help reduce the risk of neuropsychiatric symptoms and can help maintain higher levels of cognitive function in people with dementia, according to three new studies. The results of these three studies were released at July's Alzheimer's Association International Conference.

A Danish study found that participants of the exercise program had fewer symptoms of anxiety, depression and irritability as compared with members of the control group, which did not participate in any extra exercise.

A study out of Wake Forest School of Medicine found that participants who got regular aerobic exercise had a statistically significant decline of tau proteins present in their cerebrospinal fluid. Higher levels of tau in the brain are associated with faster mental decline in people with Alzheimer's. An improvement in attention, planning and organizing abilities was also found in the exercising group.

Aerobic exercise not only benefits those with Alzheimer's, but also those with vascular dementia, according to a study from the University of British Columbia. We will certainly keep up our dedicated exercise regime at Friends Club!

To read more about these studies, visit www.alz.org/aaic/releases_2015/Thurs1130amET.asp



In July, club members enjoyed an outdoor game of golf toss and a barbecue catered by Word of Mouth.

Research Briefs

Getting Closer to a Blood Test for Alzheimer's

New research suggests that certain brain proteins, known as lysosomal proteins, can be detected in the blood long before symptoms of Alzheimer's are present. These proteins are thought to aid in the removal of damaged nerve cell material. Blood levels of these proteins were higher in people with normal memory and thinking skills as early as 10 years before they developed Alzheimer's disease.

Developing an affordable, non-invasive test for Alzheimer's disease is critical because it will help researchers to identify study subjects on whom they can test drug interventions earlier in the disease process. Since researchers have thus far been unsuccessful in altering the course of Alzheimer's once symptoms have begun, they have turned their efforts to earlier interventions, in the hopes that these are more successful.

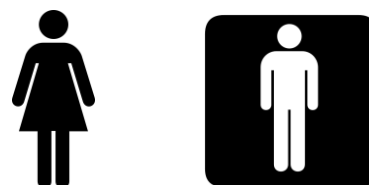
This includes a summary of a "Neurology" article from June 10, 2015, as summarized by AFA Care Quarterly

Study Finds that Alzheimer's Worsens Twice as Fast in Women

A new study has found that women with mild cognitive impairment descend into dementia at twice the rate of men. Researchers don't know exactly why this is, but they suspect it is a complicated combination of genetics, hormones and differences in the way the brain develops. The study was discussed at the annual Alzheimer's Association International Conference, which was held in Washington, D.C. this year.

Kristine Yaffe of the University of California San Francisco explains that women are more likely to have depression, which is a risk factor for Alzheimer's. Women are also more vulnerable to stress, which is another risk factor.

Two-thirds of Americans suffering from Alzheimer's are women, and the only previous explanation for this is that women tend to live longer and age is the top risk factor for developing the disease.



To read the full article, go to www.nbcnews.com.

15-Year-Old British Boy Invents Potential Test for Alzheimer's

Krtin Nithiyandam, a 15-year-old from Epsom, England, has developed a potential test that could lead to diagnosis of the condition up to 10 years before the first symptoms appear.

Nithiyandam developed a "trojan horse" antibody that can penetrate the brain and attach to neurotoxic proteins that are present at the very beginning of the disease. These antibodies are attached to fluorescent particles and are injected into the bloodstream so they can then be picked up on a brain scan.

Nithiyandam developed his test as an entry to the Google Science Fair and he has been named a finalist in the contest. If he wins, he will win a scholarship and get mentoring to take his idea further.

Nithiyandam says he hopes his invention will lead to early diagnosis so families can prepare for the future and so existing drug treatments can be used to better effect. He also hopes it will help researchers to map Alzheimer's in the brain in a non-invasive way.

The antibodies developed by Nithiyandam can pass through the blood-brain barrier, which is a membrane designed to keep infections in the bloodstream separate from brain tissue. Getting treatments to penetrate this barrier has long been a road block for researchers. Lab tests even indicated that these antibodies may be able to stop the development of toxic proteins in the brain.

This is a summary of an article in The Telegraph. Visit www.telegraph.co.uk for the full article.

Local Drug Trials Currently Recruiting

Cancer Drug with Promise in AD Treatment

The CONNECT study at Georgetown University will test whether an oral, experimental drug, known as AZD0530, will slow progression in mild-stage Alzheimer's disease. The drug was previously developed as a cancer therapy, but may hold greater hope as a treatment for AD.

PET imaging will be used to evaluate whether the drug is effective in slowing decline in brain metabolism and will also determine whether it is safe and well tolerated in people with AD. Researchers are seeking people who have a diagnosis of mild Alzheimer's disease, are between the ages of 55 and 85. Participants must also have a study partner with whom they have at least 10 hours of contact per week and who is willing to attend clinic visits with the participant.

Contact Kelly Behan at 202-687-0413 for more information.

Phase II Study for drug to treat Mild to Moderate Alzheimer's

The Georgetown University Memory Disorders Program is currently recruiting men and women who have mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease for a study on the experimental drug T-817MA. The impact of this drug on cognition and daily functioning will be measured by standard tests. Requirements for participation are as follows:

- Women and men aged 55-85 years old with mild to moderate Alzheimer's
- Currently taking Namenda, Exelon patch or Aricept
- Living in the community (not in a facility)
- Has a study partner that has regular contact with you about 10 hours a week and who will come to study visits with you.
- Weight of no more than 220 lbs

Please call Wesley Horton at 202-687-9078 or email him at wesley.horton@georgetown.edu.

Study Seeking Older Adults without Memory Impairment A4

The A4 Study, also known as the Anti-Amyloid Treatment in Asymptomatic Alzheimer's Study, is a landmark clinical trial to prevent the memory loss associated with Alzheimer's disease (AD). The A4 Study is for individuals ages 65 to 85 who may be at risk for AD-related memory loss, but who have no outward signs of the disease.

The A4 Study is investigating a new treatment that may reduce the impact of a protein known as "amyloid" or "beta-amyloid," which forms plaques in the brain. Scientists believe that the accumulation of amyloid in the brain may play a key role in the development of AD-related memory loss.

The investigational treatment used in A4 targets the excess amyloid in the brain with the aim of slowing possible AD-related damage in the brain and delaying symptoms of memory loss.

The study lasts approximately three years and participants will be required to visit the clinical research site once a month. Participants will have their health monitored using assessments such as memory and thinking tests, ECGs, PET scan, MRI scans and blood and urine tests. You may be eligible if you meet the following requirements:

- Are 65 to 85 years old
- Have normal thinking and memory abilities
- Have a study partner who has at least weekly contact with you and can answer questions once a year
- Are willing and able to receive monthly IV infusions of the investigational treatment or the placebo

Please contact Erica Christian at 202-687-8800 (Georgetown University) or Sarah Woody 410-550-9054 (Johns Hopkins University).



IN MEMORIAM



Jean Weir

1935 - 2015

We are sad to report the passing of longtime Friends Club supporter Jean Weir. Jean passed away peacefully while surrounded by family at her home on May 31, 2015.

Jean was a talented and creative woman, as shown through her award-winning watercolors, her magnificent floral designs, her home decorations and her kitchen remodels. We at Friends Club are very appreciative for her beautiful floral gifts, which graced the tables at our Annual Holiday Party and Caregivers Luncheon. She also gifted our Club members with beautiful roses to take home to their spouses on Valentine's Day.

Jean, along with her husband Charles (Chuck) Weir, generously supported Friends Club over the past decade.

Growing up in Michigan, Jean and her twin sister, Judi, had many adventures. These adventures produced a treasure trove of stories that Jean loved to tell. Jean adored her sister and in later years they were partners in a farming enterprise.

Jean volunteered for Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, the Landon Woods Garden Club and the Walt Whitman High School Booster Club. She also volunteered for the Bethesda Boys Club, where she was their first female president.

Even before her passing, Jean was truly an angel. Jean lit up a room with her charm and smile. She gave so much to so many. Jean will be truly missed by all of us at Friends Club.

Our thoughts are with Chuck, her husband of 58 years, their daughter, Wendy, sons Greg and Christopher and the rest of the Weir family.

A memorial service and a private inurnment will be held on Sunday, Nov. 1 after the regular 10:30 a.m. service. We would like to extend a very special thanks to the Weir family for naming Friends Club as a beneficiary for donations made in Jean's honor.



Thomas Lohm

1922 - 2015



The Honorable Thomas Alexander Lohm, former Friends Club member, passed away from complications of Alzheimer's disease on June 24. Judge Lohm served as Chief Administrative Judge of Montgomery County from 1983 to 1992.

Tom was a graduate of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and served in the Navy during World War II. Tom graduated from both George Washington University and George Washington University Law School. Throughout his career as a prosecutor, criminal defense attorney and judge, he advocated on behalf of victims, taking an even harder line if those victims were women or animals.

Tom's family reports that Alzheimer's disease took his memory, but not his sense of humor.

Tom is survived by his beloved wife, Helen Gidden Lohm, his only remaining living daughter, Sande Riesett, his son-in-law Don Riesett and his two grandchildren, whom he lovingly called LittleMan and Buggy.



Alfred "Al" Jaffe

1929 - 2015



Former Friends Club member Al Jaffe passed away May 2, 2015. Al was a retired dentist who loved opera, sports and current events. He was born in Washington, D.C. and attended Northwestern Dental School. He served in the Army as a dentist before opening a dental practice in Takoma Park, Md. He later moved his dental practice to Silver Spring, Md. before retiring in 2002.

Al leaves behind Ferne, his beloved wife of 54 years, daughters Sharon Jaffe Dan, Maureen Jaffe and Jennifer Jaffe, sister Janet Kaufman and grandchildren Alisa, Michelle, Marc and Emma. Funeral services were held May 5 at Washington Hebrew Congregation.

Friends Club would like to wish the Jaffe family healing and peace during this time. We will miss Al!



SPECIAL NOTICES

Upcoming Club Closures

The Club will be closed Monday, Sept. 7 for Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 14 for Rosh Hashanah and Wednesday, Sept. 23 for Yom Kippur. We will also be closed on Thursday, Nov. 26 for Thanksgiving.

NEW EARLY STAGE DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

- Every Thursday 6:30 - 8pm
- August 20 -- October 15 (no group Oct. 8)
- Ingleside at King Farm
701 King Farm Blvd
Rockville, MD 20850
- Free

Call Elinor Ginzler for more information:
301-255-4222

BIRTHDAYS

SEPTEMBER

Jenks M.	6
Bill C.	19
Richard L.	19
Bruce M.	23

OCTOBER

Stan M.	3
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NOVEMBER

Bill H.	6
Lance G.	9



REGISTRATION REMINDER

Please remember that all registrations must be completed prior to the month of attendance. Friends Club is no longer able to offer credits for missed days, even if advanced notice is provided. We require each member to register for at least one day each week.

SAVE THE DATE!

Friends Club Presents: What If It's Dementia?
An Educational Series for Families

What Is Dementia?

Monday Nov. 2

Lindsey Vajpeyi, Alzheimer's Association

Caregiving Strategies

Monday, Nov. 9

Terry Ullman, LCSW, Eldercare Consultant

Community Resources

Monday, Nov. 16

Mary Ann Buckley, Care Management Associates

**All talks are from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at
Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church**

**All are invited. Free to attend. Registration
required. Please call
301-469-0070**

Spread the word!

