



FRIENDS CLUB



Celebrating 25 Years of Service to the Alzheimer's Community!
MARCH 1990 to MARCH 2015

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Brooke Kenny, Director
Leah Covert, Program Director
Debbie Dyer, Office Manager

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Dear Friends Club Family,

After much thought and prayer, I am retiring as Executive Director of Friends Club. It has been an honor to serve the members of Friends Club and their families for these past thirteen years. I feel it is time for new blood, energy and ideas, and time for me to focus on the next chapter of my life. I feel privileged to to have led Friends Club for 13 of its 25 years!

I feel confident that the Club will be in very capable hands with Brooke Kenny at the helm. She has served and overseen every aspect of Friends Club during the past three years. Her intelligence, compassion and dedication to Friends Club assure me that the Club will continue to flourish into the future.

I admire the courage shown each and every day by those living with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. I hope that during my time at Friends Club I have provided a safe and stimulating environment for the members and much needed respite for the caregivers. I also hope I have provided a place for the spouses and caregivers to share their journey, prepare for the future and adjust to their new normal.

Every man who has become a member of our Club has brought amazing gifts to our group. Their careers, travels, family life and depth of knowledge on so many subjects have contributed to making Friends Club a most unique and wonderful place. I have treasured every moment with those who have passed through our doors. Thank you for allowing me to be part of your lives. My life is forever enriched by each and every one of you.

I wish to thank all the dedicated volunteers who have given their time to make Friends Club a warm and welcoming place. Thank you to all of the past and present Friends Club board members who have offered their steadfast support over the years. Thank you to everyone at Bradley Hills for your unwavering support of me and the Friends Club's mission. Friends Club is a very important mission and serves a forgotten segment of our community. Thank you to Brooke Kenny and Leah Covert for your passionate dedication to this wonderful organization and for your kind support of me during this past year. Thank you to Bif Williamson, who volunteers her time to facilitate Friends Club's support group and has been a rock for this organization.

I wish to extend a very special thank you to the founders of Friends Club, Molly Tully and Joan Turner. I greatly admire their determination to improve and enrich the lives of their spouses who suffered from dementia. They nurtured an idea and created a treasured and much-needed service to the Alzheimer's community. They are my heros and inspiration.

I will miss each and every one of you and will always hold you close in my heart.

With gratitude and love,
GayLynn



MEDICAL NEWS

Alzheimer's disease researchers from all over the world gathered at the National Institutes of Health on February 9 and 10 to share with one another how they are approaching their research and what they are uncovering. GayLynn, Brooke and Leah all attended so they could bring back the latest news to the Friends Club community. There was an overarching theme throughout the conference about the importance of working together to tackle this incredibly difficult disease. This can be a challenge when there are academic researchers who are competing for funds and drug company researchers who are vying for knowledge so that they can financially benefit from finding a treatment or cure. There hasn't been a new FDA-approved drug to treat the symptoms of dementia in 12 years, so the importance of working together to find a cure has never been clearer. Researchers discussed how they could share information so that they are not perpetually "reinventing the wheel." They are working on developing a computerized information bank where researchers would submit findings after their studies are completed.

In terms of finding a new drug for treatment of Alzheimer's and related dementias, researchers are in a rebuilding phase. Previous studies that focused on reducing the build-up of toxic beta-amyloid and tau proteins did not lead to a lessening of symptoms. In other words, the protein build-up is very clearly associated with Alzheimer's disease, but is not likely to be the underlying cause of the disease. Instead, it is a byproduct of some other disease process. Scientists are trying to understand exactly what that other disease process is. One theory is that there are several different kinds of Alzheimer's, just like there are several different kinds of cancer. One type is related to Parkinson's disease, another is related to diabetes, a third is related to vascular disease, etc. Each type may require unique treatment. One thing appears to be clear: Alzheimer's and related disorders begin in the brain many years before symptoms develop. Hence, the challenge is identifying people who have "preclinical" Alzheimer's and then researching interventions with them. Of course, researchers would have to be able to tell potential study subjects with relative certainty that they will develop dementia and then convince them to enter into a study with uncertain outcomes. That is a tough sell.

In the face of serious challenges to drug treatment research, some professionals have turned their research focus to non-pharmacological interventions. Dr. Laura Gitlin, the director of the Center for Innovative Care in Aging at Johns Hopkins University, spoke of her research on non-pharmacological interventions and their effect on quality of life. These interventions, which include lifelong learning, exercise, nutrition and other meaningful activities, are quite successful in easing psychological and psychosocial symptoms. Gitlin also spoke about the importance of easing these symptoms for the sake of the caregivers. Studies show most caregivers of people with dementia experience anxiety and depression at some point. They are also at greater risk of developing diseases, including dementia, themselves. Although in the relatively early stages, this kind of research can be used in the future to secure funding for programs that offer non-drug interventions and that offer support for caregivers.

Although this may sound as though we are back at "square one" for finding a drug to treat Alzheimer's and related dementias, we believe this is just part of laying the groundwork for future innovations in care. We hope that the next Alzheimer's Summit reveals breakthroughs in drug treatment options.



 IN MEMORIAM 



Nat H. Bellocchi
1926-2014



Natale Hans Bellocchi, known to us as Nat, passed away at his home in Bethesda on November 17, 2014. Nat was a member of Friends Club for nearly four years. After graduating from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in 1954, Nat began his career in service to our country. He began as a Diplomatic Courier in 1955, traveling all over the world. He then became an Administrative Assistant in Hong Kong; Commercial Attache in Vientiane, Hong Kong, Saigon and Tokyo. After serving as Deputy Consul General in Hong Kong, he became the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State under George Schultz during the Reagan administration. After leaving that position, he became the U.S. Ambassador to Botswana from 1985 to 1988. In 1990 he became the Chairman of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT). AIT is the instrument through which programs, transactions, and other relations are conducted by the President or any U.S. government agency with respect to Taiwan. During Mr. Bellocchi's tenure at AIT, Taiwan transformed itself into a full democracy. He was the most senior channel of communications between leaders of the U.S. and Taiwan at that time. After leaving Taiwan and returning the U.S., Nat became chairman of Bellocchi & Co., LLC. He also wrote a bi-weekly column that appeared in the Chinese language newspaper, The Liberty Times and the English language Taipei Times.

We so enjoyed our time with Nat at Friends Club. He had a rich and rewarding life in the Foreign Service and brought those experiences to our group discussions. He was a quiet and unassuming man with a great grasp of foreign relations and the human side of global relations.

Our deepest sympathy goes out to Nat's wife, Lilan, and his children Luke and Jacqueline.



Kevin Delaney
1927 - 2015



Former Friends Club member, Kevin Francis Xavier Delaney, died January 15, 2015. He was born and raised in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn, New York. After serving in the Navy during WWII, Kevin received his B.A. from Williams College and went on to receive his master's degree from the Columbia University School of Journalism. After graduation from Columbia, he returned to the Navy during the Korean War.

Kevin began his career in print journalism and eventually moved to television. His first television job was with CBS. In 1961, Kevin obtained a master's degree in Asian Politics from Columbia University and entered the Peace Corps. He served as acting director of its programs in East Asia and the Pacific region, as well as country director for Thailand. In 1971, Kevin returned to television working for ABC in Saigon. At the end of the Vietnam War he was instrumental in getting the ABC employees and their families out safely before the country fell to Communism.

In addition to journalism, Kevin loved sports, especially baseball and running. He was an accomplished runner, having completed the Marine Corps marathon twice; once at age 65 and again at age 70. He also enjoyed skiing and playing tennis.

Every time Kevin came to Friends Club, he brought newspaper and magazine articles for discussion. The journalist in him came to the forefront in our current events discussions.

Kevin is survived by his wife, Joan Kennan. Please join us in extending our deep sympathies to Joan.



SOLOMON (SOL) GNATT
1922-2014



Sol Gnatt passed away at the age of 92 on December 7, 2014. He was a treasured member of Friends Club for 3 ½ years. Sol lit up the room when he walked in with his big smile and warm nature. The men in the group were drawn to him, as he always had a welcoming handshake and stories to share. His sunny nature belied the fact that he overcame many things as a young boy and went on to achieve greatness in his life.

Sol lost both of his parents before the age of 5. He was raised in a Jewish foster home in Georgetown. Sol went on to receive his B.S. from Wilson Teachers College, his M.S. from George Washington University, and his doctorate from the University of Maryland. Sol also served proudly in the U.S. Merchant Marines during WWII. Sol believed every person is entitled to a great education. He loved teaching and dedicated his life to education. During his career he was a teacher, a trainer of new teachers, a principal, Assistant Superintendent of D.C. Schools, and he came out of retirement to serve as an assistant to the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools.

Sol was married to the love of his life, Lenore (Lennie), for 66 years. He told us the story of how he liked to take his whole family on special trips to celebrate his and Lennie's wedding anniversaries. On their 50th, they took the family on an Alaskan cruise and for their 60th, they all took a cruise to the Caribbean!

Sol is survived by his wife, Lennie, and their three children, Elaine, Roberta and Michael and their families.
Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family.



Samuel W. Keller
1930-2014



Samuel (Sam) Keller passed away on December 14, 2014. Sam was a longtime member of Friends Club. Sam was a towering presence -- gentle man with a quick wit and warm sense of humor. He is remembered fondly by our staff and volunteers. He loved telling stories of growing up in West Virginia, his scientific partnership (and adventures) while working on the cooperative space programs with the Soviet Union, his flying days and stopovers on Wake Island and of his days working at NASA.

After his father died, Sam, his mother and sister, moved to Washington, DC. After graduating from high school and the Bliss Electrical School, Sam worked at the Naval Research Lab (NRL) where he was convinced by his supervisors to go on to college. He enrolled at the University of Maryland as an electrical engineering student. While there he worked part time at the Applied Physics Lab of John Hopkins University. Upon graduation from college he went into the Air Force and attended pilot training school. After receiving a rating as a multi-engine pilot, he was based in California flying C-97 Strata cruisers across the Pacific. After 3 years in the Air Force, he returned to Washington, DC and the Naval Research Lab and enrolled at George Washington University studying law at night. When NASA was formed in 1958, Sam moved to the Goddard Space Flight Center as a Patent Advisor, rising to the position of Director of Administration and Management. He continued his law studies and graduated from GW in 1961. He passed the bar in 1962. It was also in 1962 that he met and married his beloved wife, Sally.

In 1982 Sam transferred to NASA Headquarters and became the Associate Deputy Administrator of the Agency. He was involved in the development of the Hubble Telescope and many other projects. While at NASA, he also spent a couple of years detailed to the East West Space Science Center at Maryland University working on cooperative programs with the Soviet Union – sharing scientific information for the good of both programs.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife, Sally, his children David and Tracy and their families.

A special THANK YOU to the Keller family for directing memorials in Sam's name to the Friends Club.



Richard P. Kleeman
1923-2014



Former Friends Club member Richard (Dick) Kleeman passed away on December 5, 2014. He was born in New York, New York on June 24, 1923. His father was a banker and his mother was a television producer. He had a twin, Frances, and a sister, Elizabeth. Dick attended school in Switzerland from the age of 7 to 12, then went to Choate Prep School and graduated from Harvard University. After serving in World War II as a Lieutenant specializing in Japanese intelligence, he became a newspaper reporter for the Minneapolis Tribune in Minneapolis from 1948-1966, then the Tribune's Washington Bureau from 1966-1972. Dick loved journalism and possessed great curiosity for nearly every subject. He was a 1st amendment specialist and spoke fluent French, Japanese and some Spanish.

Dick's beloved wife, Rosslyn (Roz) Kleeman, also passed away on July 18, 2014. Together they had four children. Before moving to Ingleside, Roz and Dick had a lovely home with a swimming pool. Their home was always the center of social gatherings. They had many fond memories of lively discussions, great dinners and pool parties. The Kleemans traveled frequently, doted on their grandchildren, and remained active in Planned Parenthood and the journalism community.

Please join us in extending our deep sympathy to Dick and Roz's children,
Nancy, Alice, Kathy and David and their families.



Konrad K. Schaefer
1937-2015



Friends Club volunteer and member Konrad Schaefer, known to us as "Konnie", passed away on February 17th, 2015, at his home in McLean, Virginia. Born in Braila, Romania, Konnie had an extraordinary life. At the outset of World War II, he and his family were sent to a labor camp in Ukraine. After the war ended, he and his family emigrated to Israel. Konnie lived in Israel for 10 years, serving as a paratrooper in the Israeli Defense Forces. He moved to the United States in 1956 to attend Howard University. There he earned a B.S. in Econometrics and went on to continue his graduate studies at George Washington University. He worked in the Office of Telecommunications Policy in the White House and served as the Assistant to the Federal Communications Commission for International Policy under Presidents Carter and Reagan. After his years in government service, Konnie founded K. Schaefer & Associates, a private consulting firm. He was a very accomplished, self-made man who was loved by all who knew him.

Konnie was a people person. He loved life and jumped in with both feet. Always ready with a smile, joke or story, he lit up the room! He enjoyed the company of the men in our group and blessed us with his gift of laughter. His loss is deeply felt by the Friends Club family.

Our deepest sympathy goes to his lovely wife, Gloria, and his children Robbie, Lauren, Derek and their families.



SPECIAL NOTICES

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Support Group



Meets in the Library on the
1st Monday and the
3rd Wednesday of each month
9:30-11:00 am

MARCH

Monday, March 2

&

Wednesday, March 18th

APRIL

Wednesday, April 15th

(Please note there is no Monday group due to Easter holiday)

**ALL CAREGIVERS ARE WELCOME,
SO PLEASE JOIN US!**

FRIENDS CLUB WELCOMES DEBBIE DYER AS OUR NEW OFFICE MANAGER!



Debbie Dyer joined the Friends Club team in late February as our new office manager. She is originally from Jamaica, and lived in the greater Westchester area of New York for many years after coming to the US as a child. Debbie's family relocated to Rockville in 2001 because of her husband's job. They now live in Germantown with their daughter, 8 and their son, 7.

She graduated from the Johnson & Wales University in Providence, RI with a degree in travel and tourism. Debbie worked for many years in the hospitality industry before taking time off to be a full time mom. Now that her kids are in school, she is happy to be reentering the workforce.

Debbie enjoys gardening, going to the movies and taking long walks. Please introduce yourself when you see her around!

Additional Support is offered through the Suburban Hospital Group run by Elaine Byergo and Lynn Meltzer in the BHPC Library the 1st & 3rd Friday of each month (11:45a-1p).
Call 301-530-3551.



BIRTHDAYS

MARCH

Robert G.	7 th
Robert S.	8 th
Roger W.	25 th
Mark W.	30 th

APRIL

Marty G.	1
BJ	4
Peter S.	14

MAY

Brooke K.	2
Al K.	12
Debbie R.	12
Bob G.	15



Molly Tully, Founder of Friends Club, celebrates her birthday on May 19th!

Attention All Drivers! When bringing Friends Club members in the morning and when picking them up in the afternoon, *PLEASE*:

***DO NOT** drop members off and have them walk in on their own!!! Please accompany them into the building and be sure they are in the care of Friends Club staff or volunteers.

***DO** come inside to pick them up. We will not allow members to leave the building unless accompanied by their caregiver or driver.

*Please use the middle door on the south side of the church and follow the posted traffic signs (it is one-way) when driving up to our entrance.

