



FRIENDS CLUB NEWSLETTER

December 2015



Celebrating 25 years of serving the Alzheimer's community!

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

Happy Holidays!

Dear Friends,

The holidays can present a significant challenge to families dealing with dementia. It may be bittersweet to think back on celebrations from years past when you had less to worry about and much more optimism for the future. The years you have traveled the dementia journey surely have not been easy, but the new normal can offer some unexpected gifts.

Holidays often mean family and friends have time to visit and spend time with you and your loved one with dementia. This offers a great opportunity for you to accept help into your life. Be open to having friends and family spend time with your loved one so that you can slow down, rest, and enjoy some solitude. If you can manage a few naps, even better. Did I just suggest rest and solitude at the holidays? I sure did! It may not be what you're used to in December, but you have to take breaks when you can get them. A big part of this means not taking on much at all in the way of hostess duties. Try not to cook, unless doing so relaxes you. Organize events at the homes of others or at restaurants instead of at your home. This is not the time to put more on your plate. Family and friends want to see you, not your house. Letting yourself off the hook can mean that you get to actually enjoy the holiday season, instead of exhausting yourself making sure everyone else is having a good time.

To ease some of the holiday pressures, Friends Club will be open on Monday, December 21 and Wednesday December 23. I urge you to take advantage of those days so that you can do things that are important and fulfilling to you. If those are not your regular days of the week, please call me. In most cases I should be able to accommodate requests to attend.

Remember that this is YOUR holiday season too. You deserve a little fun and relaxation. Practice your ability to ask for help. The most valuable tool we have in caregiving is rotating care partners. People want to help. Simply tell them how to safely spend time with your loved one. Even an hour of respite helps.

Lastly, keep in mind that sadness comes and goes. If it is weighing heavy on you now, do not assume that this is how you will always feel. Keep looking for the things that light up your life. You are doing a great job in the midst of an unthinkable situation.

*May Peace Be with You and Yours This Season,
Brooke Kenny, Executive Director*

Research Updates

Researchers from the University of Virginia School of Medicine recently determined that the brain is directly connected to the immune system by lymphatic vessels previously thought not to exist. The findings change the way scientists perceive the neuro-immune reaction. This discovery could have major implications for diseases from autism to Alzheimer's to multiple sclerosis.

(Featured in Science Daily, June 1, 2015)

A new study suggests that sleeping on one's side, as opposed to on his back or stomach, may help stave off Alzheimer's disease. This is due to the fact that the side-sleeping position may be more conducive to efficient removal of waste from the brain.

(Featured in Journal of Neuroscience, August 5, 2015)

Recent research out of Rush University in Illinois suggests that African Americans are less likely to have Alzheimer's disease alone. Instead, 71 percent of study participants had Alzheimer's disease mixed with another type of brain change that can cause dementia, such as infarcts resulting from stroke, dementia with Lewy bodies or Parkinson's and blood vessel disease. Only 51 percent of European Americans, on the other hand, exhibited Alzheimer's disease with one of these other conditions. These findings could signal the need for different treatment and prevention protocols for African Americans.

(Featured in Neurology, July 8, 2015)

Source for preceding three briefs: AFA Care Quarterly, Summer & Fall 2015 editions

A new study shows that Aricept (Donepezil) may relieve Alzheimer's symptoms enough to keep people out of residential care communities for longer. The drug, which is available in an affordable generic form, has traditionally been used to treat people in the early to middle stages of

the disease. It does not alter the disease process, but instead helps dying neurons to function more effectively for a period of time. Since its effect on producing clearer thinking ends, many people stop taking the drug. Research published in the journal Lancet Neurology in October shows that withdrawing Aricept in people with moderate to severe Alzheimer's doubled the risk of them moving into a care community within the year. With residential care costing upwards of \$100,000 a year, delaying a move could make a tremendous financial difference to families.

Source: www.reuters.com

Researchers have developed an implant, comprised of an array of small electrodes that may someday help people with disabled brains remember better. In what sounds like the plot of a science fiction movie, a ten-year collaboration of researchers at the University of Southern California and Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center has led to the development of a prosthetic that has the ability to bypass certain damaged parts of the brain to convey information. The implant can't yet help someone remember better, but it can transfer information from one part of the brain to another. But once the information arrives at its destination, the brain still can't read it. Researchers liken the current ability of the implant to being able to translate words from Spanish to French without being able to speak either language. The prosthetic has tested well on rats and monkeys and is now being evaluated in human brains.

Source: "Computer algorithm created to encode human memories," by Clive Cookson of Financial Times



Mental Storm

*A Poem by Georgetown Memory Disorders
Program Patient Margaret Carter*

**Fear rumbles over the horizon
With lightning bolts of hot destruction
Burning away mental highways.
Cold hail crushes tender thoughts.**

**But, sweet winds still push storms away
And warm sun encourages
Tender shoots to sprout.
Light bathes gently across my mind
Coaxing good memories and
Keeping Connections.**

**With knowledge that the day is quickly
passing
And the night will be long and dark,
I cherish the remaining light.**

*Source: GUMC Memory Disorders Program Newsletter,
Volume XVIII, Fall 2015*

World Alzheimer Report 2015 The Global Impact of Dementia

9.9 Million – The number of new cases of dementia this year alone. That is 1 case every 3 seconds.

46.8 Million – Current number of people with dementia

131.5 Million – Estimated number of people with dementia by the year 2050

\$818 Billion – Global costs to treat dementia currently. To put that in perspective, the market value of Apple is \$742 billion.

\$1 Trillion – The cost to treat dementia by 2018.

\$17,483 – Average worldwide cost per person per year.

*To read the full report, visit:
<http://www.alz.co.uk/research/WorldAlzheimerReport2015.pdf>*

Types of Memory

Episodic Memory. The temporal lobe, which contains the hippocampus, and the prefrontal cortex are important to episodic memory, which enables us to learn new information and remember recent events. The hippocampus is one of the first brain structures damaged in Alzheimer's disease and accounts for one hallmark of early Alzheimer's: **difficulty remembering recent events, without any trouble remembering events from long ago.**

Semantic Memory. Semantic memory governs general knowledge and facts, including the ability to recognize, name, and categorize objects. This system also involves the temporal lobes and, researchers suspect, multiple areas within the cortex. People with Alzheimer's disease may be unable to name a common object or to list objects in a category, such as farm animals or types of birds.

Procedural Memory. The cerebellum is one of the structures involved in procedural memory. Procedural memory is what enables people to learn skills that will then become automatic (unconscious), such as typing or skiing. This memory system typically is not damaged in Alzheimer's disease or is one of the last cognitive domains to deteriorate.

Working Memory. Working memory involves primarily the prefrontal cortex. This memory system governs attention, concentration, and the short-term retention of needed information, such as a street address or phone number. Problems with working memory can impair a person's ability to pay attention or to accomplish multi-step tasks. Numerous cognitive disorders, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Huntington's disease as well as dementia with Lewy bodies, can affect working memory.

Source: John Hopkins via The Alzheimer's Reading Room

*To read more, visit
<http://www.alzheimersreadingroom.com/2008/12/how-memory-is-affected-in-alzheimers.html#more>*

IN MEMORIAM



HERSHEL KATZ

Former Friends Club member Hershel Katz passed away on November 3, 2015 after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. In his final hours, Hersh was surrounded by family, friends, and jazz music.

Hersh loved playing the saxophone. He collected coins and paper money, and he loved sports cars – especially his Lexus convertible. He was a dedicated member of the ROMEOS (Retired Old Men Eating Out).

He enjoyed playing black jack in Atlantic City and eating good food, including chopped herring from Parkway Deli. He and his wife, Linda, traveled widely, visiting, among other places, Italy, France, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Along with business partner Sam Statland, Hersh founded and ran a successful insurance agency, which is still in business. He was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Brentwood Village in Northeast Washington, D.C, and then College Park, Md.

Hersh met his wife of 45 years on a blind date, during which he told her he planned to never marry. He and Linda tied the knot about nine months later. Hersh is survived by son Steven Andrew Katz, daughter Simone Elizabeth Katz and grandchildren Sabrina and Derick. He was a fun-loving man who always brought laughter and a smile to Friends Club. We will miss you, Hersh.



GEORGE SIRILLA

George Sirilla, Friends Club member, passed away on October 28, 2015. George had only been in the club for a brief time, but he was treasured by everyone for his insightful comments and seemingly endless curiosity regarding world news.

George was a devout Catholic and skipped a day at Friends Club to stay home and watch news coverage of Pope Francis' visit to Washington in September.

George left his law practice at age 31 and spent the next 7 ½

years in the Jesuits, training to become a priest. After he was approved to be ordained as a priest, however, George had a change of heart and went back to work at his old law firm at age 39. He worked there as a patent attorney for the next 46 years.

George's interests included church activities, dancing, baseball, basketball, handball, tennis and writing legal articles. He was named to multiple Engineering Honor Societies and was a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers. He had a very special bond with his dog, Sammy. Originally from Yonkers, N.Y., George served in the U.S. Army from 1946 to 1947. He traveled to Europe, Japan and Korea.

He is survived by Floranne, his wife of 47 years, who he described as "the best thing that happened to me at that time and for the rest of my life." George is also survived by sons Michael (Laura) Sirilla and Joseph (Celeste) Sirilla, and nine grandchildren. We will miss you, George.

2015 ENTERTAINERS!

Thank
You



Exercise and Strengthening:

Gail Biedscheid- Exercise and Strengthening
Taj Johnson- Tai Ji
Sandra Roachford- Creative Movement
Elisabeth Larson- Tai Chi
Annetta Dexter Sawyer- Healing Movement

Music:

Mark Hanak- Piano, Song and Dance
Jerry Roman- Piano and Trivia
Steve Gellman- Guitar and Song
Linda Levasseur- Keyboard and Song
Bill Lynch- Guitar and Song
Boys Night Out- Bluegrass
Anthony Hyatt- Violin
Peter Burroughs- Opera, Education and Theatre
Ellen Tenenbaum - Piano
Charles Mokotoff- Classical Guitar
Kevin James' Songs for Seniors- Guitar and Song
Steve Friedman- Theatre, Education and Song
Frank and Trish Curerri- Song and Dance
Jesse Palidofsky- Guitar and Song
April Wanzer- Singer
Tara Parks- Young at Heart Music Therapy
The Friday Morning Music Clue- Piano Ensemble

Art/History/Education/Other:

Joan Hart, Museum One- Art/Photography Appreciation
Candace Wolfe- AFTA
Moirra Dougherty- Storytelling
Pat Furgurson- Historian
Miles Roberts- Nature Lecture
Bill Offutt- Historian (MCHS)
Corky Hickey- Historian (MCHS)
Marian- Mario and Bella Dog Show
Mimi Zannino- Emily Dickinson Live
Nancy Havlik- Poetry and Movement
Donna McKee- Art Lecturer
Emily Correll- Historian (MCHS)
Dwane Starlin- Historian/Impersonator
Annie Holscher- Art Therapist
Quicksilver- Moving Art
Karen w. Gilat- Folk in the Home

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We would also like to recognize and thank our volunteers, without whom Friends Club would not be possible. Their dedication to Friends Club is invaluable.

Bernie Auchter

Art Levine

Peter Sherman

David Belkin

Andy Lyman

Robert Schulmann

Harry Benner

David Lyman

Trish Sutherland

Marty Ganzglass

Jenks Middleton

Kanesa Thasan

Lance Graef

Nathan Reynolds

Mark Waksberg

Corky Hickey

Debbie Roe

Bif Williamson

SPECIAL NOTICES

Upcoming Club Closures

Friends Club will be closed Thursday, Dec. 24 through Sunday, Jan. 3 for the holiday. We will reopen Monday, Jan. 4

We will also be closed Monday, Jan. 18 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

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.

Friends Club Caregivers Support Group

Meets 9:30-11:00 a.m.

The 1st Monday and 3rd Wednesday of each month

Meets in the church library

DECEMBER

Monday, Dec. 7

Note: No Meeting Wed., Dec. 16

JANUARY

Monday, Jan. 4

Wednesday, Jan. 20

FRIENDS CLUB WISHES TO GIVE THANKS TO THE BRADLEY HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH KITCHEN MINISTRY



The Kitchen Ministry donates two homemade meals to our club each month. These meals are not only delicious, but they save us a great deal on our grocery bill.

Kitchen Ministry Members

John Gaffney*, Ed Hummers*, Corky Hickey, Lisa Hicks, Marcia Kingman, Joan Jameson, Carol McLeod and Jeanne Eagleton

**Pictured above*

Thank you for your continued service to Friends Club!

BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER

Nathan R. 1
Bill C. 17
Bob P. 27

JANUARY

Leah C. 30

FEBRUARY

Emmett B. 5
David B. 15
Howard B. 18
Al S. 20
Kenneth R. 28

