

Messenger

Fall 2011: Issue 39

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"Art program engages Alzheimer patients and caregivers...."

Tom Fitzgerald never thought of himself as artistic.

Then the Waterloo senior got a chance to try creating with a variety of art mediums in a new program for people in the early stages of dementia.

Soon the hesitation dropped and his artistic side emerged.

"I didn't know what was going to happen, but I got right into it," Tom said.

Gather at the Gallery is a new initiative of the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener-Waterloo. During the 10-week session, participants visit nearby museums, galleries and art studios to discuss artwork and make art themselves. Art is really just the starting point.

"The whole project is really about relationships," said Cara Dowhaniuk, program coordinator.

Alzheimer patients and their caregivers meet other people who understand. But it's also a chance to simply socialize and enjoy an activity without worry about encountering negative attitudes to the progressive brain disease.

Often after a dementia diagnosis, Dowhaniuk said, people retreat into their homes and avoid activities.

"We're trying to break that isolation,".

Tom and his wife Maureen Fitzgerald didn't know anyone with Alzheimer's until he was diagnosed. Educational sessions hosted by the society helped them better understand the disease, but the gallery program brought new opportunities.

Tom gets to create, but also a comfortable place to talk. His difficulty talking makes him nervous around people without the disease.

"I'm afraid I'm going to make a mistake," said Tom, 72.

The couple also connected with others in the group and is going golfing with another pair — a common occurrence as the participants get to know each other and meet outside the program.

"He's getting to meet people who are in a similar circumstance to him," Maureen said during a recent session at the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery. "It's so good for him."

And they're both enjoying the art, both talking about it and making things now displayed in their home.

"We've learned an awful lot through this group," Tom said.

Excerpts from an article in The Record, July 18, 2011 by J. Weidner

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF KITCHENER-WATERLOO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & AWARDS CEREMONY

Monday, September 19th, 2011
6:30 - 8:30 pm

AT

Bingemans Conference Center
Berkley Room
425 Bingemans Centre Drive
Kitchener, Ontario

WITH

Guest Speaker: Dr. Linda Lee
Topic... Primary Care Memory Clinics:
Improving care for Seniors with
Cognitive Impairment and Dementia

Reception: 6:30pm

Guest Speaker: 7:00pm

Awards Ceremony: 7:45pm

Annual General Meeting: 8:00pm

Families and Friends are Welcome.

Kindly RSVP by September 7th
to Alyson at 519-742-1422 Extension 10
or Email askw@alzheimerkw.com



ALLIES IN AGING CONFERENCE

Thursday,
October 20, 2011
in Kitchener

See enclosed brochure or register on line
at www.alzheimerkw.com

UPDATES ON ALZHEIMER RESEARCH

Tues. September 27,
7 – 8:30 pm

A PUBLIC FORUM FEATURING

Dr. Jack Diamond,
Scientific Director,
Alzheimer Society of Canada

TO BE HELD AT

Sunnyside Home (Heritage Hall)
247 Franklin St. N. Kitchener

Learn about the most recent research on
Alzheimer's disease and what scientists are
looking towards in the search for a cure.

Preregister for this free event by Sept. 23rd.
Phone 519-742-1422

MORE THAN 180,000 ONTARIANS HAVE DEMENTIA.

**That number is expected to
increase by 40% in ten years.**

JOIN US ON

World Alzheimer Day
September 21, 7:00 pm

to learn about warning signs, risk factors,
treatment and community resources.

Alzheimer's Disease: The 5 W's
with Charlotte Sider, Alzheimer Society of
Kitchener-Waterloo

at

Forest Heights Library Auditorium
251 Fischer Hallman Rd. Kitchener On
Please contact the host library to register.

The Power of Meaningful Activity

The Alzheimer Society has been fortunate to have an occupational therapy student for the summer. Below, Tara Embrey shares ideas about activity in the life of the person with dementia.

As occupational therapists, we believe that participating in meaningful activities is a basic human need. We call these activities, occupations. Occupations range from taking care of yourself and your family, to participating in paid or volunteer work, to enjoying leisure activities. Our goal is to help you stay involved in activities that are meaningful to you. Whether you enjoy playing golf, or reading a good book, there are many benefits to staying involved:

- **Builds confidence**

By challenging our bodies and minds and trying new things, we are building confidence in ourselves. Just ask the budding new artists from Gather at the Gallery!

- **Improves mood**

Meaningful activities bring joy and satisfaction to our lives. Research has shown that volunteering plays a role in decreasing depression in older adults (Doraiswamy, Gwyther & Adler, 2008).

- **Maintains Self-Identity**

After receiving a diagnosis, many people with dementia express concerns related to a loss of self identity. Maintaining interests and trying new activities supports personhood and sense of self.

- **Creates Belonging and Community**

Getting involved in social activities can help people to feel part of a community. Gather at the Gallery is an example of an occupation that brings couples together to share experiences and socialize in a supportive setting. Strong social networks have shown promise in decreasing the impacts of dementia-related cognitive challenges. (Doraiswamy, Gwyther & Adler, 2008).

Role of Occupational Therapy

With a diagnosis of dementia, it can be more challenging to do the things that you have long enjoyed. An occupational therapist will adapt the environment and the activity so that you can stay engaged. We help with self-care tasks such as dressing and cooking, paid employment, volunteer work, and leisure activities.

To learn more about occupational therapy, visit the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists at www.caot.ca. Also why not visit the 'activities' section of the resource library at the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener-Waterloo for some new ideas.

Engaging in meaningful occupations is good for your brain, your body and your soul. In the words of John F. Kennedy, **"It is not enough to add years to one's life: One must add life to those years."**

Reference

Doraiswamy, P. M., Gwyther, L. P., & Adler, T. (2008). *The Alzheimer's action plan: The experts' guide to the best diagnosis and treatment for memory problems*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR

Learning AND Fun

FIRST STEPS LEARNING SERIES

This 4 week series helps individuals newly diagnosed with a dementia and their care partners to understand their diagnosis and the changes they experience. Topics include understanding dementia, coping strategies, and future planning.

Future Dates:

- Tuesdays, September 6, 13, 20, 27
from 3:30 to 5:00 pm
- Thursdays, September 8, 15, 22, 29
from 1:30 to 3:00 pm
- Thursdays, November 3, 10, 17, 24
from 10:00 to 11:30 pm

BEGINNINGS SUPPORT GROUP

Beginnings is a monthly discussion group for people in the early stages of dementia. Individuals can join the group at any time and long-term participants move on when the group no longer meets their needs. An atmosphere of warmth and understanding where friendships can be developed will be cultivated.

Assessment & Registration Required

MEMORY PLUS!

Memory Plus is a dynamic group of people who live life to the fullest! Members enjoy spending time with friends, doing recreational activities, learning more about healthy living and supporting each other after a diagnosis of dementia. The group consists of those who have been diagnosed and their friends and family.

To learn more about these opportunities contact us at **519-742-1422**.

Raise Your Cup!

Coffee Break® is the annual national fundraising event for the Alzheimer Society.



Join us at one of our Coffee Break® Signature Events!

- Coffee Break Open House at the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener Waterloo, hosted by Memory Plus, September 1st, 1.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.
- Golliger's Travel Open House on Saturday, September 24th. Support ASKW on site and enjoy great travel savings!

You are invited to host a Coffee Break Event! All funds raised directly support the many free services we offer to those living in our area with Alzheimer's and related dementias.

There are many fun and creative options for this event. It is not limited to Coffee! There are team building exercises, themed days at offices, educational sessions, bake sales and BBQs. Just contact us and we can help you craft an event that will fit you!

Your team could win prizes in the following categories:

- Top Coffee Break Fundraiser – Helicopter Flight for One – Courtesy of Great Lakes Helicopter and \$50 Pizza Party Gift Certificate
- Long Term Care or Retirement Home - \$50 Worth of Dining Gift Certificates
- Church/School - \$50 Worth of Dining Gift Certificates
- Most Fun and Unique Fundraiser – Two Day Passes for Paintball at the Flag Raiders Indoor Arena and Four Day Passes to Max's Golf centre, Waterloo



The Alzheimer Society of Kitchener Waterloo acknowledges and thanks Premier Homecare Services for their sponsorship of our 2011 Coffee Break program.

To be a host, or make a donation to support the campaign, please email us at specialevents@alzheimerkw.com or phone 519-742-1422.



REMEMBERING BARRY: 1ST ANNUAL CLASSIC ROCK NIGHT FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH Saturday, November 26, 2011

Please join the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener-Waterloo at a celebration for Barry!

Barry Benness is the inspiration for "Barry's Party". Barry died of Alzheimer-related disease at the age of 58 after being diagnosed with early-onset dementia three years earlier. He was the adoring father of Brianne and loving husband of Joy. Joy and Barry received the Beacon of Hope Award from the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener Waterloo because of their

fundraising and advocacy efforts.

Long before the disease process intruded, whenever he was asked about his wishes, regarding his funeral, Barry would simply say, "have a party". Although a memorial service was held directly following his death, plans were always in place to have that party. And now, it is happening.

The band, "The Lost Faculties" is providing the music, and the event is to be held at Federation Hall, University of Waterloo (free parking at Lot M across from Fed Hall). There will also be a silent auction. **More Information at www.alzheimerkw.com or phone 519 742 1422**



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Friday, November 4th, 2011 7pm to 10pm

Heffner Toyota Showroom, 3131 King Street East, Kitchener

Tickets: \$45

TO PURCHASE TICKETS

email specialevents@alzheimerkw.com, phone or register on line at www.pursesuasionaskw.com

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Many thanks to Shannon Schwartz, Debby Catton, Adrienne Doucette and Jennifer Dunne, organizers of the 2011 women's Sunlife Golf Tournament. They raised \$2,726 for the Society.



“MAN’S MIND,
once stretched by a new idea
NEVER REGAINS
its original dimension.”

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF KITCHENER-WATERLOO PRESENTS...

Circles of Learning represent core education available for five service recipients groups. The five groups accessing core education are:

- The Person diagnosed with dementia, during the early stage of the illness
- Family and Friends of the person with dementia
- Volunteers working with persons who have dementia
- Professional Health Care Providers (ie PSW’s, homemakers, health care attendants)
- Community Intersectors (those whose roles occasionally involve engagement with persons with dementia. For example, transportation providers, police, etc.)

Core Education for these groups is vital to their role as care supporters, and includes some of the following areas of learning:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| -First Link Education Series, | -Person Centered Care |
| -Caring With Confidence Day Long Workshop, | -Gentle Persuasive Approach |
| -Dementia Overview | -U-First |
| -Communication | -Meaningful Activities. |
| -Dementia Behaviors | |

Additional learning opportunities are available in 2011 for the general public, care providers and families. The following represent the major themes for these education events.

- | | |
|---|---|
| - Foundations For Care (4.5 hrs, covering overview, communication and responsive behaviors) | - Stress management for Care Providers |
| - Virtual Dementia (A learning experience that has participants completing tasks while being physically and sensory impaired) | - The Cost of Dementia Care |
| - Search is an Emergency and Safely Home | - Living with Grief and Guilt |
| - Linking Memory and Lifestyle | - Care Providers...Supporting Dignity and Respect |
| - Understanding the Alzheimer Experience | - Palliative Care for Persons with Dementia |
| - Supporting Families of Persons with Dementia | - Advanced Care Planning |
| | - Downs Syndrome and Alzheimer Disease |
| | - Dementia...The Rising Tide Study |

Please Note: Workshops designed for your specific learning needs available upon request.

To book your complimentary education event, phone 519-742-1422, Ext. 11. It is an honor to serve you and your organization.

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Trinity  Village

Trinity Village will celebrate 39 years this Fall of service to seniors in the K-W community. We offer a continuum of care with independent living town homes, assisted living retirement residence and long term care facility. Trinity exists to meet the needs of seniors in our community, not only through our housing options but through community programs such as the Adult Day Program. This program is open to seniors and provides caregivers with a deserved break while offering participants excellent programming. For more information about our Day Program call Laura Becotte at 519-893-6320 ext. 235.

Call for a tour today!

Terrace Town Homes, Susan Box, 519-896-3112 ext. 232

Studios Retirement Residence, Mihaela, 519-896-3112 ext. 300

Care Centre, Reception, 519-893-6320 ext. 223, or "0"



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EDUCATION:

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Resource & Referral Centre
Caregiver & Professional Training

SUPPORT SERVICES:

First Link™
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Connections (Supportive Groups)
Safely Home (Wandering Registry)
Volunteer Companion Respite Program
Community Development Projects



Alzheimer Society of
Kitchener-Waterloo
wishes to acknowledge
the generous support of

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In Memoriam

We would like to express our sincere sympathy to those who have lost loved ones, and we gratefully acknowledge donations made to the Society in their memory. Your generosity helps our Chapter continue to provide education and support in our community to people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, and their partner in care.



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Seniors for Seniors

Messenger

is a quarterly newsletter published by the Alzheimer Society of Kitchener-Waterloo. It provides practical information, tips and news about Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. While the opinions expressed in this newsletter are gathered from reliable sources, we cannot guarantee their accuracy.

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