

Alzheimer Society of KFL&A Forget-Me-Not Newsletter

Alzheimer Society of KFL&A * 400 Elliott Ave, Unit #4 * K7K 6M9 * 613-544-3078 *



ALZHEIMER SOCIETY OF KFL&A STAFF DIRECTORY

Vicki Poffley,
Executive Director, x 207
vpoffley@alzking.com

Kim Parkinson
Administrative Assistant, x 201
reception@alzking.com

Danielle Weir,
First Link Care Navigator, x 206
dweir@alzking.com

Lisa Prest,
First Link Care Coordinator, x 210
lprest@alzking.com

Pam Lemke,
Education, Client Care and Programs,
Sharbot Lake and Northbrook, x 701
plemke@alzking.com

Lesley Deshane,
First Link Care Coordinator, x 208
ldeshane@alzking.com

Wendy Harris,
Education Coordinator, x 203
education@alzking.com

Mari Vepsalainen,
Program Coordinator, Kingston x 209
programs@alzking.com

Lesley Kimble,
Fundraising Coordinator, x 204
fundraising@alzking.com

Hello Readers!

With spring around the corner days are getting longer and we can finally enjoy some time outside, lets just hope this past week has not been a tease.

With the KFLA region being in the Green Zone we will resume some in office services. As of March 29, 2021, 1:1 caregiver support will be available by appointment only please reach out to your care coordinator or call Kim at reception 613-544-3058 to set up an appointment. Please be advised that Public Health Guidelines are in place and masking and social distancing are required. At this time, all programs will continue to be offered online and you can still access 1:1 support virtually or by phone should you wish.

We are excited to announce that Lesley Deshane is our newest team member. She will be working in both the Napanee and Kingston office as part of our client service team. Lesley is an energetic health care professional and brings with her 15 years of experience in long term care where she cared for people living with dementia and supported their care partners. We welcome Lesley to our team and look forward to introducing her to you.



Just a reminder that our next "Make and Take" project features Michaela from *Into the Woods Signs Kingston*, who will be running a sign making workshop. We are offering this as a complimentary activity thanks to a grant from the United Way. The kits will be available for pick up and we will then join on Zoom to do the project virtually on Friday March 26th at 5:00 pm. Please register at this link https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGOlh5IQM7T4NH0KTwxHuyWuIADpMqxBnO9jFC6ROkSVPGNNA/viewform?usp=sf_link as soon as possible, as time is running out to register. This is a great independent or two-person project. More information in the poster attached. Or contact Mari Vepsalainen, Program Coordinator at x209, programs@alzking.com.

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CAREGIVERS CORNER

“Care facility dilemma” by Denis

There is so much I have not thought through let alone tried to write about, all of which may affect today yet, I feel compelled to write about the day I am both dreading and looking forward to, the day I decide to move Catherine to a care facility. I could have said “the day I have to move Catherine to a care facility” but I am convinced I will never “have to”. I could have said “the day we decide to move Catherine to a care facility” but as sole caregiver I know I will have to bear the brunt of the decision.

Applications have been made to several facilities, but these applications are mere precautionary measures for I do not know what the decision will be the day I receive the call. This indecision possibly explains why I partake in the futile practice of delving into what remains a hypothetical issue. I cannot predict how Catherine’s condition will have evolved by the time I get the call. I do not know what the context will be but fear of the day the call will come invades me. As I try to understand what exactly invades me, my three G’s come to mind, the grief, the guilt, and the gap.

Four years ago, at the time of the first diagnosis, Catherine and I were happy, we were enjoying life. Early stage dementia (Alzheimer’s was not discussed at the time) made enjoyment of life more difficult! We did not care because the glass was always more than half full, the key was that enjoyment of life was possible and we did enjoy life. Also, in these early days, we had a strong ally which assisted us, facilitated our happiness.....denial! Denial helping, it took a while for grief to invade our life. Grief did not overwhelm us with its power, it surreptitiously snuck into the remote corners of our hearts and, at first, our thrust to enjoy life confined grief to small spaces.

I have this vague memory of the first encounter with grief. Catherine had forgotten something she knew, and I replied my usual “don’t worry, we all forget things” and just moved on. However, she replied “I am worried, it does not feel right, am I losing my mind?” We had both experienced frustration from forgetfulness but this time we saw sadness in each other’s eyes. Denial had started retreating and grief had penetrated our first lines of defense. To this day, grief has not fully captured my heart but as Catherine’s condition deteriorates it is steadfastly making headway. With certain diseases grief, at times, gains ground but at other times, it is also forced to retreat. There are battles won and lost and often there is hope the enemy will be vanquished. The grief of Alzheimer’s never retreats, its progress can be stopped temporarily but it never backs down.

Denial was an ally and it recently dawned on me that as denial faded away, it was replaced by guilt. I often wondered about guilt and for the most part I have found its major component to be fear of losing. For me, guilt has always been the fear that my actions would lead me to lose something precious. Through the good years, I enjoyed Catherine’s presence and more specifically, I enjoyed her happiness, her well-being.

This may sound magnanimous, but it is neither selfless nor selfish, I simply enjoyed sharing my life with Catherine because we were happy together. I can still bring Catherine some form of happiness, still make her laugh with my corny jokes, reassure her with my words. I can still drag her away from restlessness but my degree of success on all counts is diminishing while the efforts to arrive at these declining returns is increasing, almost exponentially. Every time I fail, I feel the last droplets of Catherine’s happiness evaporate and I feel guilty. The guilt is accentuated when my failures are the result of lack of patience, which invariably leads to lack of effort yet, the guilt I fear most lives and even strives in the gap.

I spend 158 of the 168 hours of every week caring for Catherine. It is not constant effort filled caregiving at all times, but the structure of my life revolves around her needs at all times. The everyday gap is the gap between the effort I put in and the effort I could put in. Should I have talked with her more even though keeping irrational conversations positive is a challenge? Should I have gone for another drive instead of watching the ball game? It is not perfect, but I manage that guilt well enough. The guilt, the gap, I fear most is that which will be instantaneously created the day I get the call from the care facility

When the call comes in, there will be a gap between what I want to do for myself and what I feel compelled to do for Catherine in order to savor these last droplets of our happiness. A little more can always be done so how do I know if the day of the call is the right day? Those around me who love me insist I am already past that day, that I have done more than enough, more than ever before, yet the finality of the situation is such that the stakes have never been higher. The day Catherine moves to the care facility is the day I relinquish my role as the custodian of her last gasps at happiness. How can I prefer my comfortable moments of fun, of joy, to these last gasps? Despite the full-time caregiving, I have always chosen Catherine and myself. I fear the day is approaching when I will have to choose Catherine or myself, the day there is a gap between the two. It is that fear which nourishes the guilt.

It has been three weeks since I wrote the above. I could neither add to it nor leave it as is. Writing about the guilt has served to alleviate it, writing about the grief has served to entrench it, writing about the gap has brought me back to the sadness of today. I am uncertain but I believe grief is making me better, stronger while guilt weakens me. I realize this is not coherent, but I feel the strength is fragile. I can handle Catherine’s memory loss and the repetitious nature of her interventions much better than I can adjust to her incapacity to perform simple task and her inability to grasp the events unfolding in her simplified environment but that is a topic on its own.

As of March 12, over 325 pharmacy sites, including Shoppers Drug Mart, Rexall and independent pharmacies, will offer the AstraZeneca vaccine to eligible Ontarians 60-64 in Toronto, Windsor-Essex, and Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington. To book an appointment, eligible Ontarians can visit ontario.ca/pharmacycovidvaccine to find a participating pharmacy and can contact the pharmacy to book an appointment. News release link (English): <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/60628/ontario->

ACTIVITY CORNER

This Month's Movie Feature:



**FRIDAY ZOOM
MATINEE MOVIE**

Please register for our fun ONLINE event!

Register with Reception at 613-544-3078

<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/87833874941?pwd=a2dt0khhJ0hJOGZnTmlyMkpnNDIKUT09>

Friday
March
19th at
1:30pm via
ZOOM

Société Alzheimer Society



Complimentary Sign Making Workshop

All items for sign will be provided but please wear old clothing or apron the night of the project. Cover your table with newspaper as there will be paint involved. You may also need an old credit card and tweezers to move your stencil around.

with Michaela from Into the Woods

Friday March 26th 5pm via ZOOM (link on calendar)



Société Alzheimer Society
KINGSTON, FRONTENAC, LEARDE & ASSOCIATION

Sign Up Required! Contact Office at 613-544-3078 to RSVP by March 10th
Kits to be picked up at Office!

Thank you to Arnie Shaw and Lisa Prest for a lovely musical afternoon this past Thursday!



Look for a tribute in the next issue to all of our Musicians who have been dedicated to bring smiles and toe taps during this Pandemic!

“CIRCLE OF FRIENDS” GROUP



Join us on Wednesdays at 1:30, for a fun time of socializing, travel, trivia and more

[Click here to join](#)

March 17th – St. Patrick's Day
March 24th – Spring Has Sprung
March 31st – Springtime in Paris

LADIES PEER GROUP

2nd, 3rd, 4th Wed. Mornings at 9:00 am
(for ladies with early onset)

[Click here to join](#)

MEN'S PEER GROUP

Tuesday Mornings at 8:30 am

[Click here to join](#)

MINDS IN MOTION

Mon, Tue, Thur at 10 am

Tues and Wed pm at 3pm

[Click here to join](#)

If you have any questions about the Groups, please feel free to contact Mari Vepsalainen, program coordinator, programs@alzking.com or 613-544-3078 x209

Province Wide, Live “Musical Memories” Singalong Thursdays at 2:00 pm



Thursday March 18th Featuring:
Michael K Meyers

Thursday March 25th Featuring:
Glenn Reid

Link to Join Us on Zoom:

[Click here to join](#)

Forget Me Not Fundraisers

IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimers



Get ready to 'Walk Your Way' in May this year, on May 29 & 30, (or anytime during the month of May if you that weekend isn't convenient for you), with the virtual IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimers! The walk sites are all ready to go so you can register anytime.

Again this year, we are hosting two walks online, one for Kingston and Frontenac regions, and one for the Lennox and Addington regions. You may register for whichever one you wish. Then send a request out to your friends and family to join your team, or donate to your walk.

This year you can walk, run, dance, bike, canoe or do whatever you want, with whomever you want, and whenever you want in the month of May, all in support of people in your community living with dementia!

Can you Walk 12,900 Steps?

If you are walking, here is a goal for you – walk 12,900 steps - one step for every person in KFLA who is impacted by dementia. We know that there are 4300 people diagnosed in KFLA, but for every person diagnosed, there are at least 2 more impacted – that's 12,900 people impacted by a dementia diagnosis. So, you can choose to walk that many steps in the month of May, or all in one day, or split them up and do a few each week (that's 3225 per week) or even walk that many steps every day in May if you are a true walking enthusiast! However you do it, 12,900 is the number of people who will also be impacted by your support in our communities.

You can find the Walk sites here: www.alzgiving.ca/kingstonwalk or www.alzgiving.ca/napaneewalk and all the instructions to register and how to form and communicate with your team are there for you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Lesley Kimble at 613-544-3078 ext 204, or email me: fundraising@alzking.com

Who will you be walking for this May?





We want to ensure you remain connected to us and as this pandemic continues into another wave, we cannot safely offer in person group sessions yet therefore we will continue to use phone calls and Zoom for our support and client groups.

Have you tried zooming? If not, are you someone who is unsure of new technology? Reach out to

us and we are happy to chat over the phone to work on getting you connected.

To participate fully in the Zoom groups, you will need a computer, tablet or smart phone that has a camera and an internet connection, **however if you only have a phone, you can still call into the groups.** Just contact us to get the phone number for the group you would like to join. Please note that you will often be in the virtual “waiting room”; you just sit back and relax, and we’ll do the rest.

Want to book an appointment to talk to an Alzheimer Society staff member? We are available for you outside of group times to help you through these difficult times by lending an ear and offering suggestions where needed. Just contact us via email or at the office and we will be happy to schedule a time to chat either on Zoom, FaceTime, Skype or over the phone. Phone numbers and staff emails are listed on the front page of the newsletter.

Zoom Privacy Waiver Thank you for joining us via ZOOM. We are excited to be able to connect with our clients during these times of self-isolation and physical distancing. We know that staying connected is important. Please note that we are using ZOOM, an online technology that helps us connect with you securely. We believe that the privacy measures put in place by Zoom and precautions that we take will protect your privacy, but we urge you to also take steps to protect your privacy such as a secure WIFI, and being aware of your surroundings. Also, since we are working from home, please be assured we have taken every measure to ensure your privacy is respected from others who are social distancing with us.

From the Education Desk!

Join us on Thursday, March 25 at 12:30pm for a discussion with the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN). Join Joanne Browne, Manager of Home & Community Care with the South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), to learn more about the services they offer and how to access them.

This will be an informal discussion with plenty of time to ask questions, but we will touch on:

- What services are available
- How to access services in the community
- LTC application process

There is no cost for this session, but please register in advance:

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

STAY TUNED FOR APRIL WHEN WE HOPE TO OFFER A CONSENT AND CAPACITY INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR!

Care Partners for someone living with dementia (Unpaid care givers)

We are excited to be able to offer another U-First! For Care Partners workshop. Please note that in order to successfully complete the course, you must attend all sessions in that Workshop (6 hours total).

Feedback from the first session has been positive!

DAYTIME: Friday, April 9, 16 & 23: 10:00am-12:00pm
[REGISTER HERE FOR DAYTIME WORKSHOP \(3 sessions\)](#)

I want to hear from YOU!

My goal is to provide the education that YOU need. Please take a moment to either email me with any suggestions or complete this survey:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/KFLAED

Please contact Wendy at education@alzking.com or call 613-544-3078, ext.: 203 if you have a suggestion for a speaker or topic you would like to know more about.

PROGRAMS & GROUPS FOR CAREGIVERS



WEEKLY CAREGIVER CAFÉ

Tues afternoons 1:30

[Click here to join](#)

FRIENDLY FRIDAYS AT THE CHIT CHAT

Live, email Noreen if you would like to join
noreenpeters@cogeco.ca

CAREGIVERS EVENING CHAT with Patti and Jan

Tuesday, April 12th, at 7:00 pm

[Click here to join](#)

SUPPORT GROUP FOR MALE CAREGIVERS

Pre-COVID the Men's Group met in person on the third Thursday of each month, but presently the meetings are virtual on Zoom.

The purpose of the Group has not changed.

Men who are primary caregivers of a much-loved partner or parent with dementia get together to learn how their new experiences are not frighteningly unique, and to apply the experiences of others to individual personal situations.

So, you could say, the Men's Group creates a space where guys can feel comfortable.

Next meeting Thursday, March 18 at 10:00am

[Click here to join](#)



PROGRAMS & GROUPS FOR CAREGIVERS

CARE IN THE FACILITY

Join us monthly on the first Wednesday of every month at 10:00am for a support group for those with loved ones in care homes.

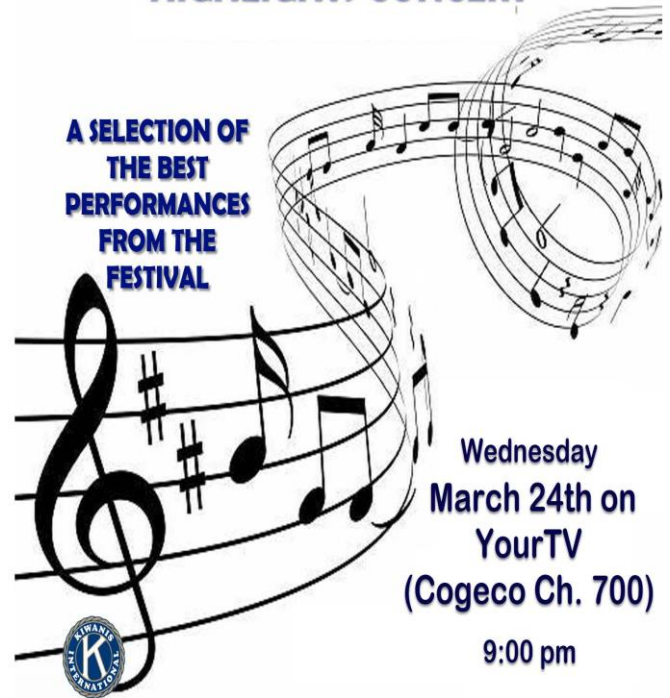
[Click here to join](#)

Don't forget to check out the Education section of the newsletter for upcoming sessions for Care Givers!

KIWANIS MUSIC FESTIVAL

HIGHLIGHTS CONCERT

A SELECTION OF
THE BEST
PERFORMANCES
FROM THE
FESTIVAL



Wednesday
March 24th on
YourTV
(Cogeco Ch. 700)

9:00 pm

Available from March 27th onwards
via the ISABEL DIGITAL CONCERT HALL

www.isabeldigitalconcerthall.queensu.ca/concert-videos

Sponsored by the Ballytobin Foundation



Safety Plan Ideas for

Care Partners of a Person Living with Dementia : By, Lisa Prest

Work with your First Link Coordinator to help prepare the safety plan and then inform trusted others of your safety plan to help you remember and act upon it if needed. Your trusted other could be a friend, neighbour, family member or anyone that you trust.

Your safety plan could include any or all of the following:

- ✚ Hide your car keys in an accessible place or always keep them with you.
- ✚ Keep a charged wireless phone with you or hidden in a place that you can quickly access it
- ✚ Park your car backed in (driving out forward is quicker)
- ✚ Hide or remove any weapons or anything that can be used as a weapon.
- ✚ Do not go into rooms without exit whenever possible.
- ✚ If being hit, protect your face and head by putting your arms around each side of your head and lock your fingers together.
- ✚ Practice your escape route (to see if there are any barriers or problems) i.e., getting to your neighbour's house.
- ✚ Practice calling 911 to ensure you remember what to say to operator (DO NOT actually dial 911)
- ✚ Determine at what point you or your trusted other should call 911?
- ✚ Think of a codeword e.g.: " Music" to use if you need to call for help in the presence of your attacker.
- ✚ Increase in-home supports that can offer buffers/supervision/check ins (i.e., MOW, PSWs, friendly visitors, phone check-ins with code words)

Identify when and in what circumstances your safety plan will be used (i.e., when will you know it is time to call 911? When will you know it is time to leave the house?) and discuss it with your trusted other.