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Miss Manitoba Helps Promote Memory Walk

Jade Vandebosch is a champion for people with dementia. “Nothing can compare to the feeling I get when I know I’m doing everything I can to help other people,” says Jade Vandebosch, a 19 year old philanthropist.

A welder at Manitoba Hydro, Jade was crowned the winner of Miss Manitoba 2009, an annual competition that focuses on the inner beauty of young women in Manitoba. “As a woman, you shouldn’t be judged on your physical appearance, there is so much more to us than that. This competition looks at how we face challenges, our confidence and our passion on reaching out to help others.”



Young philanthropist, Jade Vandebosch

Jade chose the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba as her platform and will be the spokesperson at this year’s annual Memory Walk in Winnipeg on June 11, 2009. She has a close personal connection with Alzheimer’s disease as her uncle, Gerald Bonin, was diagnosed in 2005 at the age of 52.

“The first time my uncle went missing, my mom and I went out looking for him. When we found him he was shaking and very unsettled. By the time we brought him home, he had no recollection of even leaving. It was a scary experience.”

It is common for a person with dementia to lose the ability to recognize familiar places, to communicate or to remember their own names or addresses. Jade’s uncle hasn’t been able to recognize her for a while now.

“It has been pretty difficult. I want people to understand that it affects everyone around, not just the person who has the disease.”

Jade is actively involved with the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba. In less than six months she has held a Coffee Break™ fundraiser at Manitoba Hydro, a midnight madness event at the local IGA in Ste. Rose, Manitoba, a skidoo poker derby event in Ste. Rose and was involved in the Alzheimer’s Gala in Brandon.

“Most young people don’t think about volunteering because they have so much going on in their life. They go to school, work and socialize,” says Jade. “I get so excited to do an event, and it’s so rewarding after the event is done.”

Jade challenges everyone, young and old, to participate in a Memory Walk this June. Walks will be held around the province throughout the month of June.

Visit www.alzheimer.mb.ca to join today. ❁❁❁

Investors Group
MEMORY Walk
Take Steps Now!

For more information or to register for a walk near you, visit www.alzheimer.mb.ca

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Family Fights for Seniors' Rights

Mattie Bars is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. She lives in a personal care home where she is happy and content. She receives frequent visits from her two sons, Barney and Curtis Bars, along with their families.

"Mattie is a very happy and positive person. She loves to arrange and care for the fresh flowers that always fill her room. The caregivers in the home say that Mattie never gives them any trouble," says Anne Bars, Mattie's daughter-in-law who visits often.

Prior to taking a cognitive enhancing drug prescribed by her doctor, Mattie suffered from paranoia and was not taking proper care of her personal hygiene. When off the medication, Mattie, a normally cheerful and welcoming person, becomes aggressive, withdrawn and irritated.

After moving to the personal care home, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) ordered her off the drug, overriding the recommendations of her doctor. If the WRHA orders someone off a drug, they can purchase it independently and the personal care home will administer it. The Bars family has been paying for their mother to remain on the drug out-of-pocket since November 2007.

"What if you don't have the money to pay for the drug on your own or you don't have a family member to explain your choices?" asks Barney. The Bars family has filed a complaint against the WRHA to fight for the rights of Mattie and other Winnipeg seniors to remain on drugs that help maintain their quality of life.

The current policy by the WRHA has seniors taken off cognitive enhancing drugs within 90 days of being admitted into personal care homes to evaluate the drug's effectiveness.



Mattie Bars

"If someone worsens after they are removed from a drug to prove its effectiveness, it is not certain that the deterioration will be reversed when they are put back on it. This has not been established, but there are indications that it would be a serious concern," says Dr. Jack Diamond, Scientific Director, Alzheimer Society of Canada.

The WRHA policy says that residents who are steadily deteriorating are unlikely to receive benefit from this classification of drug.

"If treatments have shown to be successful and effective in clinical trials, then the Alzheimer Society supports their use.

Clearly the drug that Mattie Bars takes has been adequately proven to be effective. Not that it works for everybody, each case is different," explains Dr. Diamond.

Dr. Diamond says that there is no question that you have to evaluate each person on an individual basis. Each situation has a unique set of circumstances and needs to be established in its own right.

"This has been a very slow process. We're trying to persevere but it is frustrating at times. A new policy will benefit us all in the future," explains Barney. ☆☆☆

What if you don't have the money to pay for the drug on your own or you don't have a family member to explain your choice?

Are You Eligible?

☆ Learn about the Disability Tax Credit, the Manitoba Primary Caregiver Tax Credit and the Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit.

Wednesday, May 13, 2009 at 7:00-9:00 PM
Deer Lodge Life and Learning Centre
2109 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg

To register call Janice Hebb at 943-6622 or email jhebb@alzheimer.mb.ca by May 12th.

☆☆☆ With less than 2% of our 1.6 million dollar annual budget from Government, we rely on donations and fundraising every

Donations 42%

Bequests 16%

General 18%

Tribute/Memorial 8%

Handi-Transit Update

The Human Rights Commission has ruled that the City of Winnipeg Handi-Transit is acting in a discriminatory manner toward people with dementia and recommends that the matter proceed to mediation.

Individuals with dementia have a need for Handi-Transit when they can no longer drive or use the regular transit system safely, yet they are refused access to this vital service. A complaint was filed by the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba against the City of Winnipeg in October 2005.

“This decision has been a considerable time in coming,” states Norma Kirkby, Program Director at the Alzheimer Society. “We are pleased that the case is finally moving forward.”

The Human Rights Commission will be appointing a mediator to undertake the resolution of the complaint. It is expected that progress will be made within the next four to six months. The Alzheimer Society is working with the Public Interest Law Centre preparing submissions required.

“We are hopeful that the end results will bring about changes in Handi-Transit policies and procedures that will benefit people who live with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias,” states Kirkby.

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Mark Your Calendar!

For more information on any of these events, call the Alzheimer Society in your area or visit our website at www.alzheimer.mb.ca

June

Memory Walk Month

Take Steps Now!

Check the website for a complete listing of local walks!



August

Motorcycle Poker Derby

Motorcycle Poker Derby is taking place on Saturday, August 15th in Brandon.

September

Coffee Break Month

Host a Coffee Break and invite your customers, co-workers, family/friends to make a donation for a cup of coffee.

nts to support our programs, services and commitment to research. Donate securely online at www.alzheimer.mb.ca. ***

Fundraising Events/Campaigns 32%

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Program 4%

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Focus and Determination Generates Award



Research Student, Solmaz Nafez

Solmaz Nafez's focus and determination have gained her many awards including the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba's 2009 graduate student fellowship.

She is currently working on a project at the St. Boniface Hospital Research Centre Lab that could ultimately lead to the development of drugs to treat neurodegenerative conditions such as Alzheimer's disease. The lab has discovered one specific protein, NF-kappa B, which plays an important role in our understanding of neuronal activity during new memory formation.

"This protein and the genes it regulates will help in understanding the memory encoding changes that happen in neurodegenerative diseases. I'm doing experiments to make sure our findings are valid," explains Solmaz.

Dr. Ben Albeni, Associate Professor of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the University of Manitoba, is the Principal

Investigator in the lab and Solmaz's mentor. He is proud of the work that she performs and is excited to have her as part of his team.

"Solmaz is a critical and precise thinker who shows great enthusiasm and interest. I am very pleased to have her involved in this exciting research project, which has the potential for very high impact," says Dr. Albeni.

Originally from Iran, Solmaz is finishing her Master of Science degree at the University of Manitoba while working on her research. She received her Bachelor of Engineering degree at the University of Esfahan before moving to Canada in 2001.

"After our move I wanted to explore a field in health sciences where I could use my engineering background. That's when I decided to go into medical genetics. Memory encoding and the organization of memory in humans is very similar to computer hardware systems."

Solmaz says she is grateful for the support that the Alzheimer Society provides for the students. "As a graduate student, we don't have too many resources, so I was thrilled and delighted to learn that I was receiving this award." ***

The Alzheimer Society of Manitoba's **Annual General Meeting** is being held on the evening of Tuesday, June 23, 2009 at the Provincial Office.

All are welcome to attend.

Please call 943-6622 (in Winnipeg) or 1-800-378-6699 (in Manitoba) for more information.

