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Caring Communities Keep Watchful Eye on People with Dementia



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Colleen Leslie and her mother, Hazel Lowe

The residents of Austin, Manitoba, and a young woman in Winnipeg have something in common: they are turning their neighbourhoods into caring communities through their compassionate action towards people with dementia.

Small Town Safety Net

When Colleen Leslie's mother, Hazel Lowe, began showing signs of dementia, Colleen worried about how she would care for her. Colleen helps run the family farm near Austin and also has a part-time job. She has five children and nine grandchildren to think about, too.

Hazel, a former school bus driver, now lives in a care home in McGregor. However, when she first retired from the farm, she moved into a seniors' lodge in Austin. There, Colleen took comfort knowing that her mother was around people who knew her. What Colleen

didn't know was just how much the community of 400 would care about – and care for – Hazel when Colleen couldn't be there.

Hazel's neighbours in her building were one piece of the support system that developed. Hazel loved to go for walks, but a nearby railway mainline and highway posed a risk to her. It wasn't long before the whole town would be on alert if they saw Hazel out walking. Someone would always be there to guide her home if necessary.

"Everyone always watched and made sure she was safe," says Colleen.

[See "Caring Community" next page...](#)

Investors Group MEMORY Walk

See inside for more information about the June 2015 Memory Walk!

Meet Josephine Brazeau: Winnipeg Memory Walk Marshall

During the month of June, thousands of walkers throughout Manitoba will raise funds for the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba. This support helps provide valuable programs and services for people with dementia, like this year's walk marshall, Josephine Brazeau.

Josephine is 73 years old and has Alzheimer's disease. She has an exuberance for life that is easy to admire. "This disease is not going to stop me from continuing to live life to its fullest

each and every day," she says.

Josephine will be speaking and cutting the ribbon to start the Winnipeg Walk on **Tuesday, June 9** at the Forks (Festival Stage – formerly Scotiabank Stage). [See inside for more information! →](#)



Bockstael Helps Build the Walk

When it comes to community building, Bockstael Construction walks the talk. For 103 years, the multi-generational family-owned company has "built the places Manitobans live, play, work, retire and receive health care," according to President John Bockstael.

However, the Bockstaels know that a community is built with more than bricks and mortar. The company also believes in walking the talk and taking meaningful action for the greater good of the community. On June 9th, they are doing this – quite literally! – through their participation in the 2015 Investors Group Memory Walk.

Meaningful Participation

This will be the third year that Bockstael Construction has entered a team in the

Walk, and this year will have greater meaning to the Bockstael family: the team is walking in honour of the family matriarch, Marietta, whose journey with dementia ended this past January.

When Marietta was first diagnosed, she and husband Robert approached the Alzheimer Society to take advantage of the support and educational services offered. The Society helped the Bockstael family to better understand the disease, plan for the future and navigate the challenges they faced. Becoming involved in the Walk was, as John recalls, "the obvious next step."

Stepping It Up!

It is thanks to teams like Bockstael Construction that both the revenue and the participation rate in the Memory Walk have steadily increased over the last five years. In only two years of participation, the Bockstael Construction team raised over \$11,000, helping the Society to deliver its vital programs and services for people with dementia and their caregivers.

"We wanted to bring attention to this cause because when we started talking about it, we realized that everyone is affected: staff, friends and family – all the stories came out," says John.

In fact, over 20,000 Manitobans are affected, and 43 per cent of Manitobans have a personal connection to someone



Bockstael Construction Team

with the disease. Statistics like these are what make community involvement in events such as the Investors Group Memory Walk so crucial. So far this year, there are almost 60 Walks taking place in communities across the province in which individuals, teams and companies can participate.

What can people expect when they participate? Allison Woodward, Events Coordinator at the Alzheimer Society, explains: "The Walk is a fantastic event for all generations to be united and to show their support, raising awareness for the cause. There will be exercise, great musical entertainment, food and prizes." Allison says that by joining in, walkers help support the ever-growing need for services, programming and research.

Bockstael Construction is looking forward to this year's event. "After 103 years, we are very entrenched in the community and try to be involved in as many ways as we can. It's giving back." ★

Investors Group
MEMORY Walk
TITLE SPONSOR

STEP IT UP!
Register online today!
alzheimer.mb.ca

WINNIPEG WALK:
Tuesday, June 9, 2015
5 pm at The Forks
Visit our website to find a Walk in your community.

Investors Group
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SAVE THE DATE!

2015
care4u

A conference for family and friends caring for a person with dementia

Saturday, October 31
Canadian Mennonite University,
500 Shaftesbury Blvd.
Winnipeg, MB

2015 Chili Cook Off Great Success!



The 20th annual Chili Cook Off was held on Friday, April 10th at Houstons in Brandon. Nineteen teams participated for a chance to win an award in four categories.

Over \$5,000 was raised to support programs and services in the Westman Region.

Thanks to our sponsors ... Houstons and Kuipers Family Bakery, our prize donors, the judges and everyone who made this event so successful!

GET YOUR MOTORS RUNNING!

20th Annual Motorcycle Poker Derby
Brandon, MB
Saturday, August 15, 2015
9 am to 7 pm

To register or for more information, contact Jodee Webster at alzwm@alzheimer.mb.ca or go online at alzheimer.mb.ca



"Caring Community" continued from page 1...

When it was discovered that her mom was making daily withdrawals from the local credit union and giving the cash away, staff promised Colleen that they wouldn't give Hazel more than a few dollars each time she came in. "They told her they didn't want to give her too much money or she wouldn't come back to visit them as often," Colleen chuckles.

The grocer and hairdresser also agreed to run up a tab that Colleen would pay, rather than expecting Hazel to remember to pay them.

In December 2014, Hazel moved to the care home, where staff look after her needs. Colleen appreciates that, but is also very grateful to the caring people of Austin. "I know she wouldn't have managed as long as she did if everyone hadn't been watching out for her."

Big City Safeguards

Stéphanie Demers is a lot like the people of Austin. The 18-year-old Winnipeg nursing student was in the right place at the right time and didn't hesitate to help a person with dementia.

It was about 0°C on a December night last year. Stéphanie was driving to a friend's house when she saw an elderly man walking on the busy road. She pulled over, put on her flashers, and rolled down her window to speak to him. "He wasn't wearing a coat and was clearly confused," she says. Still, she was cautious. Was he only pretending and did he mean her harm?

She decided that he was not a risk and urged him into the car, where it was warm. She called police and while they waited, she chatted with the man, who said he was born in 1923 but also said he lived with his mother. When the police arrived, they were compassionate and seemed to know the man. They told Stéphanie they would take him home. Stéphanie is left wondering about his story. "I worry about him. Who's caring for him now?"

She's glad she stopped to help the elderly gentleman and says that, although a person should always assess their own safety first, she hopes anyone would have done what she did.



Stéphanie Demers

Wendy Schettler, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba, praises Stéphanie and the people of Austin. "In order for people with dementia to better live in the community, we all need to get involved...it takes a thoughtful, compassionate community to care for our most vulnerable," she says. ★

Mother's Day Gift Ideas

Visit alzheimer.mb.ca to view and order these special gifts:

- A Forget Me Not silver pendant necklace or bracelet by Hillary Druxman (part of the proceeds go to the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba)
- A Touch Quilt
- Or make a donation in honour or in memory of your mother



THANK YOU!



COMING UP!

Touch Quilt Presentations

We will be presenting Touch Quilts to each resident of Misericordia Place, Concordia Place and Beacon Hill in May. Check alzheimer.mb.ca for more details.

Personal Care Homes: What is my Role and What Remains my Responsibility?

Wednesday, May 13, 7 to 8:30 pm
Meadowood Manor, 577 St. Anne's Rd., Winnipeg, MB

Surviving Ambiguous Loss and Grief: Tips for Caregivers and Those that They Care For

Wednesday, June 17, 7 to 8:30 pm
River Ridge Retirement Residence, 50 Ridgcrest Ave., Winnipeg, MB

BBO
Jeans Day
Birthday

Rodeo
Office Luncheon

Support the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba's programs and services and the continuous search for a cure for dementia by hosting a fundraising event of your choice in support of the Society.

For event ideas, fundraising tips and the tools you'll need to plan, promote and host your event, check our website at alzheimer.mb.ca and click on the "Anything for Alzheimer's" link.

CAMPFIRE
POETRY

Anniversary
Golf Tourney
Bake Sale
Wedding

Upcoming Event: *Canada 5000 Rally Against Alzheimer's*
5,000 Miles Across Canada in a 1967 Volvo 122S
Passing through MB June 15-16 • [Donate online: alzheimer.mb.ca](http://alzheimer.mb.ca)

QUESTION: Lately I've seen a lot of requests for research study participants. Why are there so many requests right now and how do I decide which ones to participate in?

Ask an Expert

YOU HAVE ASKED GOOD QUESTIONS.

First we will take a look at why you are seeing so many requests for study participants. It is a fact that new funding from a variety of sources has become available for dementia clinical trials and studies in Canada. Alzheimer Societies across Canada are helping to connect researchers with potential study volunteers. Also, health and social service care providers are speaking with patients and families about the benefits of being a study participant. Some benefits are:

- You can help others, including future family generations, who may be at risk for Alzheimer's disease.
- You can play a more active role in your health care.

- As a study participant you will receive a high standard of care. You would receive care related to the study and opportunities to speak with study staff.
- You can gain access to potential treatments before they are widely available.

Before making your decision to participate in any study, you should be well informed and feel confident and secure. Talk to your own doctors, health care staff and family members. You should know answers to the following questions before you make your decision:

- What is the purpose of the study?
- What is required of me?
- What is my role?
- Will the study directly benefit me and/or others?
- Are there risks? What are they and the chances they will occur?

- What discomforts are involved?
- What is the total time involved?
- Are there other inconveniences?
- Has the study received ethical approval, ensuring that I will be treated with respect and dignity and that good care protocols will be followed?

For further information you may want to visit the following sites:

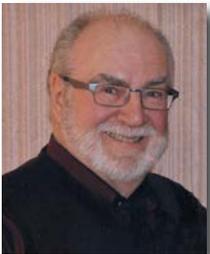
<http://www.alzheimer.mb.ca/research/participate/>

<http://clinicalcenter.nih.gov/participate/studies.shtml>

Whatever your decision about participating in research, you can know that the outcomes of clinical trials and studies aim to increase the well-being of people with dementia and those who care for them. ★

Norma Kirkby, PHEc, Program Director, Alzheimer Society of Manitoba and Michelle Lobchuk, RN, PhD, Associate Professor, Manitoba Research Chair in Caregiver Communication, College of Nursing, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba

Alex Boyes Chooses Planned Giving in Memory of Family Friend



Alex Boyes

When Alex Boyes gives his monthly donation to the Alzheimer Society, he remembers a man named Murray McPherson, whose influence helped to guide his career as a teacher.

"As a child, I would spend my summers on the McPherson farm near Brandon," explains Alex. "Murray was one of three McPherson boys. I learned to drive a car sitting on his knee. Eventually, he became a professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. He was a role model and a mentor to me."

Murray's mentorship also reached across the generations; three of Alex's children followed in their father's footsteps to become teachers themselves, while the fourth was an instructor in the military before rising to the position of Commander.

Later in life Murray was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and he passed away in 2001. Alex felt it fitting to honour this admired family friend by donating to the Alzheimer Society through a monthly contribution – something he has been doing for over 10 years. "I hope my contributions will help to find a cause and a cure for this disease," he says.

Alex is also concerned about helping caregivers, who spend so much of their

lives providing care for a person with dementia. Murray's wife was one of those dedicated people. Through his ongoing donations, Alex knows the needs of these caregivers are being met through the Society's programs and services.

Leave a Legacy Today

May is Leave a Legacy Month. You can leave a legacy for someone in your life by donating to the Alzheimer Society through a variety of planned giving options, including monthly giving, a bequest in your will and naming the Society as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. For more information, call 204-943-6622 or 1-800-378-6699 or go to alzheimer.mb.ca ★

Celebrate our accomplishments, recognize our dedicated volunteers and honour those who have lost their lives to dementia at the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba's

Annual General Meeting, Volunteer Recognition & Tree of Memories Ceremony

Wednesday, June 24, 5:15 pm, 10-120 Donald Street, Mezzanine, Winnipeg, MB

Tree of Memories Ceremony

For a gift of \$250 to the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba, you can honour your loved one by placing an engraved brass leaf on the Tree of Memories. For information, please email tmattey@alzheimer.mb.ca or [check our website](http://alzheimer.mb.ca).

CEO Message

Taking Action Towards a Dementia-Friendly Community



Wendy Schettler, CEO

Inspiration comes in many forms. For me, it comes through the encounters I have with those in our community who show they care about people with dementia.

As CEO of the Alzheimer Society, I have the privilege of meeting inspiring individuals almost every day. I recently visited with an amazing man; he is a caregiver for his wife, who is in the late stages of dementia. The two have been married for 63 years. As I talked with him, I was inspired by how he kept his wife involved in the conversation, even though she was unable to respond. He'd gently stroke her, letting her know he was there. The way he communicated

with her showed a deep commitment to her well-being. I told him that his wife is lucky to have him, to which he simply replied, "No, I'm lucky I have her."

It isn't always easy to be optimistic in the face of adversity. Being diagnosed with dementia is life-changing. Caregiver stress and ambiguous loss are real challenges faced by many Manitobans each day. Yet it is through hard times that resilience shines through. People face seemingly insurmountable odds daily, but there is a beautiful humanity that permeates through our community as people support and care for those in need.

I see it in our support groups, where people with dementia accept and support each other in living their lives to the fullest. I see it in our office, too. All of our staff members – regardless of their role in our organization – are committed and passionate about improving the lives of the people we serve. I also see it in my neighbourhood, where a local restaurant owner welcomes and watches

out for my dad, who has dementia, when he comes in by himself for a coffee. And I see it in the larger community, where people like Stéphanie Demers (whose story is told inside) don't hesitate to come to the aid of a person with dementia, perhaps even saving a life in the process.

These people inspire me to fight even harder for those impacted by dementia. Here's my challenge to everyone: take a moment to look at your community and try to find ways to help the most vulnerable among us. We want to encourage as many Manitobans as possible to help us create true dementia-friendly communities.

Reach out, talk to people. Volunteer and help in any way you can. Allow yourself to be inspired by the actions of others.

To our community of supporters who already take action – thank you. I am inspired by your dedication. We stand with all Manitobans affected by dementia. Together, we can inspire others to work with us for a better future. ★

Alzheimer Society Programs Perfect Fit for Winnipeg Couple



Henk and Marcia Schippers have found a program that works for them, and they plan to keep coming back for more.

The program, Minds in Motion®, is one of the many opportunities available through the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba. It is specifically designed to provide physical and mental stimulation for people like Henk who have early to mid-stage dementia. As Henk's support, Marcia also attends the program, which runs once a week for eight weeks several times a year.

"We are starting our third session right now," says Marcia. "It's just great – I came as a support for Henk, but I am having as much fun as he is!" The couple finds the physical activity segment of the program to be upbeat, while the choice of

mentally stimulating activities – which can include anything from reading lines in *Romeo and Juliet* to playing "Name that Tune" – provides just the right amount of challenge to stretch their minds.

The social aspect of the Minds in Motion® program is also a draw for Henk and Marcia. They attend with a couple they have known for years, and they are getting to know other members.

Norma Kirkby, Program Director at the Alzheimer Society, says it's important for people with dementia and their caregivers to reach out for help. "No matter what stage people are at in their journey, the Alzheimer Society is available to provide information, support and services," says Norma. "Nobody has to face the challenges alone. We have experienced and caring staff who can help you navigate many details, such as learning about the progression of the disease, finding ways to maintain independence and how to access care when the need arises."

Norma urges people to investigate the support groups offered through the

Society. For those affected by the disease, the weekly gatherings provide a safe venue for sharing feelings and common experiences. There are also support groups for caregivers; people involved in these groups can share information about their day-to-day challenges and practical tips for coping with change.

Both Henk and Marcia have attended the eight-week Experiencing Dementia program at the Society. Marcia says that the information presented is informative and interesting, and she appreciates receiving follow-up material so she can absorb the details more fully later.

Henk admits to feeling a little tired after participation in the Minds in Motion® program and Experiencing Dementia. However, this admission is accompanied by a smile. "I like going to these programs – it's amazing how every week, there are different things to try." ★

For information on Alzheimer Society programs and services, call 204-943-6622 or 1-800-378-6699 (toll free) or check our website at alzheimer.mb.ca.



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INTERLAKE / EASTERN

31 1st St.
Beausejour, MB
R0E 0C0
Phone: 204-268-4752
Fax: 204-268-4799
alzne@alzheimer.mb.ca

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108 B Saskatchewan Ave.
Portage la Prairie, MB
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Phone: 204-239-4898
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Dauphin, MB
R7N 1C4
Phone: 204-638-4483
Fax: 204-638-4493
alzprk@alzheimer.mb.ca

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Steinbach, MB
R5G 0T3
Phone: 204-326-5771
Fax: 204-326-5799
alzse@alzheimer.mb.ca

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