

World Alzheimer's Month September 2021



#GoBLUEforAlz



STORIES INSIDE!

Families join together
for the successful
**WALK YOUR WAY
IN MAY**
IG Wealth Management
Walk for Alzheimer's!



New Community Program Lets Participants Hit the Trail

Get your walking shoes on – we're heading outside! "Tales Along the Trail" is the Society's newest dementia friendly community program, debuting this September at FortWhyte Alive. Participants living with early to moderate signs of dementia and their care partners will be able to explore everything a Manitoba autumn has to offer, with an experienced naturalist guiding them along their route.

"We believe that nature should be accessible to everyone – so when we talked with the Alzheimer Society about this new collaboration, we were excited

to provide an opportunity for those living with dementia and their care partners to experience the calming effects of being outside," says Barret Miller, Tales Along the Trail naturalist and Tourism



Barret Miller

and Custom Programs Coordinator at FortWhyte Alive.

Miller is looking forward to seeing people connecting and learning together in the Tales Along the Trail program and hopes it can provide a reprieve for the care partners.

"While my team and I engage with the participants, I'm excited for the care partners to be able to relax and enjoy these simple moments alongside their family member."

Participants will enjoy a slower paced one-kilometre walk learning about different plants and animals that reside in the Manitoba prairie lands, as well as watch the geese take flight as they start their fall migration. At the end of the walk, everyone will be able to enjoy a coffee or tea with the group and have an opportunity to bake bannock or s'mores by a campfire.

"We saw a major need for more outdoor programming after launching our Assiniboine Park Zoo community program last fall, so we were very excited to expand the dementia friendly programs by partnering with FortWhyte Alive," says Kathy Diehl-Cyr, Community Programs Manager at the Alzheimer Society.



"Being able to have participants safely back together outside after a year of virtual programming will be a celebration in itself," she adds.

Tales Along the Trail will take place every Wednesday from September 15 to October 20 from 2 to 3:30 pm. Registration is \$18/pair, which includes programming, a campfire snack and tea/coffee. To register, please visit alzheimer.mb.ca.

See page 3 for more information about Dementia Friendly Community Programs.

Deciphering Headlines in Dementia Research

Some eye-catching headlines related to dementia research have attracted attention recently. That's because significant new findings in research often get picked up by the mainstream media.

Of course, lots of high-quality journalism on research exists. However, sometimes when journalists are asked to interpret complex studies, or are rewarded for how much attention a story gets, we see headlines that exaggerate or sensationalize results to drive more clicks to their articles.

Come across an exciting headline? Here are some steps a savvy reader can take:

Do an initial gut check. Does it feel like the headline is informative, or is it seeking to cause an emotional reaction in the reader? Does it sound too good to be true?

Look beyond the headline. Headlines can be oversimplified or exaggerated to grab attention. Read through the full text of the news story to get a more complete understanding.

Consider the source. Does the source appear reputable? Is the author or associated organization listed? Does the website have any academic affiliations? Is it subject to peer review (for example, in an academic journal)? Does the website identify the original sources of the information?

Check out the author. Do a quick Google search. What are their credentials? Do they have qualifications to speak on this subject? For example,

it's great if the source is a doctor or a university professor, but it's still good to check on their area of expertise. Another consideration: do they stand to gain financially by sharing this information?

Cross reference with other sources.

Do a search of the topic and see if other sources support the findings.

When possible, read the original, full-text research article. Many online news stories will link to the source. While many journals require payment to access, the abstract (summary) may still be accessible.

Consult the experts. Connect with your family doctor, researchers or other health care professionals you trust.

Remember: research findings are often nuanced, with different factors to consider. For example, if a study was done on mice, it doesn't necessarily mean we'd find the same result in humans.

To shed more light on research headlines, the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba is hosting a forum called, "Digging Deeper: What's Behind the Headlines in Dementia Research?" See below for more information.

The content for this article was created by the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and has been adapted with permission.

Courage to Face Grief: Is what I'm feeling normal?



A dementia diagnosis brings with it many emotions, and one of them is quite likely to be grief... something felt not only by the person affected but by their caregivers.

Dr. Genevieve Thompson, a registered nurse and associate professor in the College of Nursing at the University of Manitoba, will be speaking on the topic of grief at the Alzheimer Society's Care4u Family Conference to be held virtually on October 16.

As a professional, her focus is on research and on teaching ways to support older adults living with dementia and their caregivers.

As a daughter, she is someone who helped her father care for her mother, who had dementia and passed away six years ago.

Genevieve stresses that a diagnosis of dementia can mean the loss of an imagined future together with your spouse, or as an adult child, an imagined future with your aging parent. If you are the one with the diagnosis, then you may grieve for your future self.

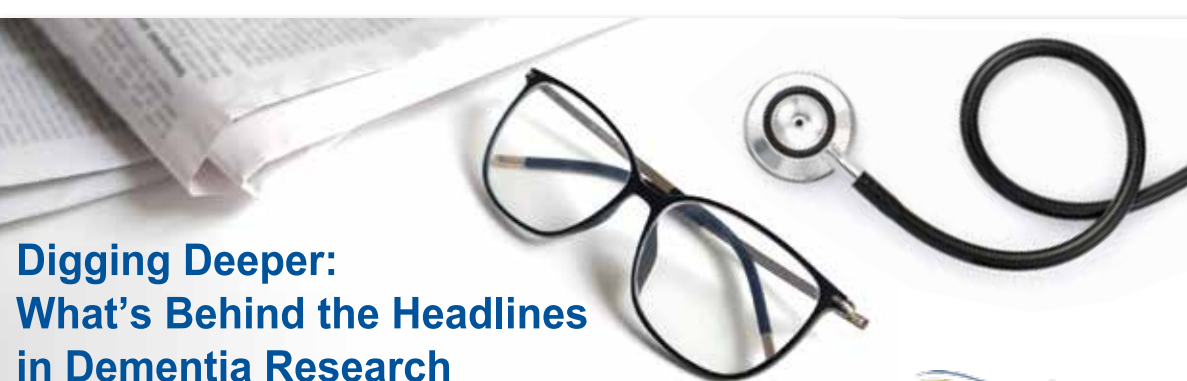
"We all have certain roles and expectations," says Genevieve. "We need to recognize that we may experience feelings, thoughts or even physical reactions to the loss of those roles after a diagnosis of dementia and during the trajectory of the illness."

The grief felt by caregivers or a person with dementia can manifest itself as aches and pains, insomnia, loss of appetite, anxiety, and even chest pains or shortness of breath. Most of all, explains Genevieve, it could simply be a sensation of "feeling off" – and it's normal to feel that way.

At the Care4u conference, Genevieve will also explore ways to cope with the grief. "There are going to be good days and bad days, and there will be days when you feel more grief and more anger," she says. "You need to be gentle with yourself and with the person with dementia regarding the emotions you're feeling."

Genevieve will talk about reframing what hope looks like, which may be as simple as deciding upon what constitutes a "good day." But it's also about "acknowledging when we're sad – because this is not how we wanted it to be – and looking at how we can find meaning, purpose and goodness in what we have."

To register for the Care4u 2021 Conference or for more info, go to alzheimer.mb.ca/care4u or call 204-943-6622 in Winnipeg or 1-800-378-6699.



Digging Deeper: What's Behind the Headlines in Dementia Research

Tuesday, September 21
6:30 – 8 pm
Free Online Session via Zoom

Register today at alzheimer.mb.ca

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SENIOR LIVING
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MEDIA SPONSORS

Winnipeg Free Press



MATCHING GIFT



\$319,654 RAISED!

Alzheimer Societies across Canada connected with their communities in new and creative ways for the 2021 IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's. And they did it with a flourish!

During May, walkers were challenged to form teams, raise money and walk their own way throughout the month of May.

Participants shared their videos of walking, running, biking, gardening, dancing, baking cookies – and much more! On May 30, the Society featured the innovative ways people participated in a national livestream broadcast.

The results were nothing less than astounding! Families connected with each other online, sharing their activities and their reasons for being involved.

HERE ARE SOME OF THEIR STORIES!

Joanne's Team Found Ice Cream on the Trail

Larry O'Dell knows how challenging Alzheimer's disease can be, and he wants to do everything he can to help find a treatment that will slow it down or stop it.

He cares for his wife Joanne, who was diagnosed in 2016 and now lives in a personal care home. It is because of his personal experiences that he decided to gather a group of friends to participate in this year's IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's.

A retired farmer who lives near Stonewall, Larry chose an existing walking trail in his community as the route he and his friends would complete. It didn't hurt, he admitted, that an ice cream shop marked the halfway point on the trail.

"We could stop for ice cream and it would give us the energy to finish," he joked.

The 13 participants called themselves "Joanne's Team." Some walked in a socially-distanced group and some walked as couples. It was Larry's first time taking part in the Walk, and he was pleased with the results.

He knows fundraising is crucial to keep the Alzheimer Society's programs and services going. For the past three years he's been a regular participant in a caregiver support group in the Stonewall and Selkirk area. Not only is the group helping him, but it's another way of giving back to the Society by helping his fellow participants. "I've been through stuff and now I can give some pointers to others," he says.



Participant Stepped out of her Comfort Zone to Support the Society

Courtney Addison's goal in life is to challenge herself and not be afraid to try new things. That was the inspiration for the novel approach she took to this year's IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's.

As someone who loves music and motion, and with her mom Loreen behind the camera, she stepped out of her comfort zone and recorded seven dance and four workout videos to post on her Instagram page. Her imitation of Tom Cruise's dancing scene in the movie *Risky Business* got lots of extra attention and became part of her contribution to the Alzheimer Society's "Walk Your Way in May" social media posts. Her efforts helped to bring in lots of donations.

Courtney, who is involved in the Society's Minds in Motion® program, is also a spin enthusiast. She organized a fundraising spin class at Ignite Cycle and Strength, where she is a member. She was grateful to the Kenaston Boulevard studio for donating the space, her friend Sam Lane for donating her time to lead the class, and her fellow cyclists for supporting her efforts and the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

Courtney's grandfather John, who had Alzheimer's disease, had always drilled into her that she could do anything she set her mind to. "I hope I did him proud," she says.



Nothing Stopped this Family from Walking Their Way in May

He's allergic to grass, but he kept walking. His body ached from his COVID shot, but he kept walking. There were bears on the path, but he kept walking... five kilometres every day in May!

Nothing could stop Tim Rowan and his wife Nancy from meeting their goal of walking in and around the Brandon area during May to raise money for the Alzheimer Society.

Tim, IG Wealth Management's regional director for Western Manitoba, and Nancy, an executive administrative assistant with the company, chronicled their daily walks with videos on Facebook. As a result, they became a bit of a phenom, which encouraged them to increase their fundraising goal from \$1,500 to \$5,000. In the end, they raised almost \$8,000!

Friends and IG Wealth Management employees across Western Manitoba also participated on and off in the "Walk Your Way in May" challenge. Because it was a virtual walk, Tim's 12 brothers and sisters across Canada could follow his efforts on Facebook. Tim and Nancy also posted information about Alzheimer's disease; they are familiar with the challenges of living with this disease because Tim's father, Stuart, was affected by it. Stuart passed away in 2009.

Even the couple's grandkids, Logan, Harlen and Bowe, got in on the act, posting a funny video about how to pronounce "Alzheimer's."

All in all, for Tim, Nancy and their friends and family, it was a great way to get out in nature, show leadership and help the Society.

COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER: THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!





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

Saturday, October 16
9 am to 12:30 noon

Virtual Conference via Zoom

Cost: \$15

Register online today!
alzheimer.mb.ca/care4u

**Courage
& Care**

Join us for a morning of learning strategies and resources to help you find and strengthen your courage as a care partner amidst times of constant change.

This Fall at the Alzheimer Society...

Fall In-person Dementia Friendly Community Programs

Minds in Motion

In-person and virtual sessions start after Thanksgiving. Volunteer Recruitment Meeting: Sept. 9, 10 to 11 am on Zoom.



Winnipeg Art Gallery: Art to Inspire

Five Fridays starting Oct. 22 (no session on Nov. 5)



Assiniboine Park Zoo: Journeys Through the Zoo

Four Tuesdays starting Sept. 14



Manitoba Museum: Now and Then – A Journey in Time

Four Fridays starting Sept. 17



FortWhyte Alive: Tales Along the Trail

Six Wednesdays starting Sept. 15



For more information about these programs go to alzheimer.mb.ca/discover-explore-get-involved/

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: ONLINE FALL EDUCATION VIA ZOOM

Virtual Support Groups

We offer support groups for people with dementia, as well as for care partners, including an ambiguous loss support group for care partners. *(The ambiguous loss group is full, but please contact us for information on a wait list.)* These groups connect people with others living in a similar situation during these uncertain times and ensure that families continue to have access to support and information.

Pre-registration is required as there are limited spaces available.

For more information, go to our website at alzheimer.mb.ca and search under the "We Can Help" tab.

Living with Dementia: First Steps Sponsored by Edison Properties

PART ONE
Saturday, September 18, 10 to 11:45 am

PART TWO
Saturday, November 13, 10 to 11:45 am

PART THREE
Saturday, December 11, 10 to 11:45 am

Family Education: Next Steps Sponsored by Edison Properties

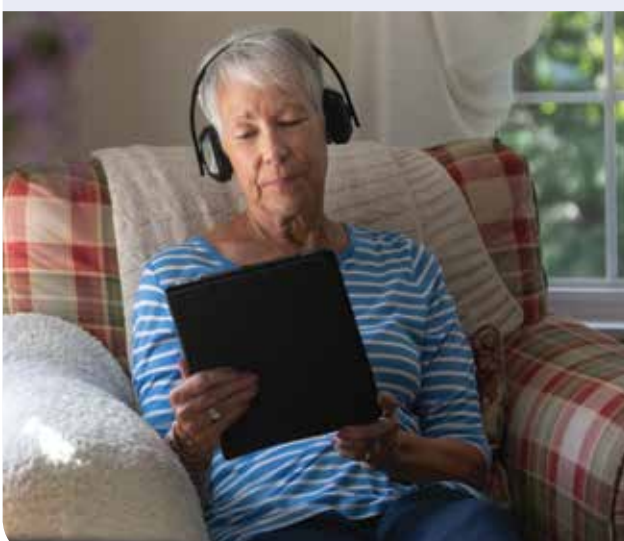
Understanding Responsive Behaviour in Dementia
Wednesday, September 29, 2 to 3 pm

Communication and Dementia: Detective Work and Improv Skills
Wednesday, December 15, 2 to 3 pm

Sponsored by:



To register or for more information, visit alzheimer.mb.ca or call 204-943-6622 in Winnipeg or call a Regional Office near you. Toll free: 1-800-378-6699.



CARING DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND

Sponsored by:



The Dementia Care Professional Development Series offers new and thought-provoking monthly sessions this fall through to March 2022.

Register at:

alzheimer.mb.ca/dc



Save the Date! Trivia Challenge 2021!

Exercise your brain and join the Alzheimer Society for the 13th annual Trivia Challenge!

The virtual event will take place on Tuesday, October 19 at 7 pm

Gather your friends, family and co-workers for a fun night of trivia!

Visit alzheimer.mb.ca to find out more.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

Our offices are open for one-on-one appointments. You can also reach a comforting ear by phone or get a quick response by email.

204-942-6622 (Winnipeg) • 1-800-378-6699 • alzheimer.mb.ca



Mother of the Bride Bouquet

By Gary Elbers

Dementia challenges families to adapt and change. Over 17 years ago, our daughter Michelle presented her mom with a “mother of the bride” bouquet of fresh flowers caressed by a ribbon of the bridal colours. I sensed my wife Brenda’s delight in receiving it because she placed it in an earthen flowerpot and set it near our most used entrance.

Eventually the flowers became dry, lost all their colours and turn into an unrecognizable brown clump. I was about to discard them when Brenda asked, “What are you doing with those?” I replied, “Composting.”

With a resounding “No!” the flowers were instantly snatched and restored to prominence on the windowsill. I have not attempted to touch them again. Over the years I tolerated their presence – they were the last appalling



Gary and Brenda Elbers

thing and the first dreadful sight when using that door. As the petals and leaves fell off, I quickly cleaned them up, all the while wearing a smirk and thinking that eventually the bouquet would be compost.

Brenda, my soulmate whom I have known for over 55 years, has

dementia and has no control over how it influences her brain nor the changes that are occurring. I, on the other hand, am affected by her dementia, but for the most part can control my reaction and how I am adapting to the changes in her. I am becoming more aware of the effect of her dementia on my role, responsibilities and our future. I accept that we will eventually have to downsize, so I continually and analytically discard memorabilia that reflects our life together.

Recently I uncovered a cache of letters and cards for every occasion addressed to “my wife, mom, grandmother, aunt, daughter, niece, sister and friend.” There are kids’ drawings from our children and grandchildren, hand-drawn coupons redeemable for hugs and kisses, and many handmade gifts.

I now realize that Brenda is a greater creature of sentiment than I ever imagined, and what I see as useless objects, she sees as expressions of love from those whom she cherishes.

It is heart-rending to discard her keepsakes. However, that shrivelled, crumbling remnant of a bouquet is gone. Instead, now seen through eyes of affection, it is a stunning



Gary Elbers’ wife Brenda and daughter Michelle with the mother of the bride bouquet.

manifestation of adoration of what was, what is and what will always be the mother-daughter bond. Now as I enter and leave our home, I smile with commitment to preserving every petal, every leaf, of this vibrant and most gorgeous mother of the bride bouquet that beautifies and enhances our window.

Yes, dementia made a change indeed, but (for me) an unexpectedly favorable one.

Thank you to Gary Elbers for submitting this moving story which, in his words, “reflects the impact of dementia on us and how we are evolving.”

CEO’s Message How Are We Doing?



Wendy Schettler, CEO

It’s important that we continue to make sure our priorities reflect your priorities, so every few years we formally ask you to tell us what you think.

Here are some of the highlights from our recent survey of Manitobans:

- More than six in ten adults have or have had a close friend or family member with dementia.
- A further one in ten report that they know someone who likely has dementia, but has not been diagnosed.
- Alzheimer’s disease and other forms of dementia were identified as one of your top four health-related priority areas, following closely behind cancer, mental health and heart disease.

A quarter of Manitoba adults surveyed report that they’ve had some form of contact with us – a 7% increase since 2018. We will continue working to improve awareness of the Society so that people know where to turn when help is needed.

People who have used our services speak to their value. Of this group, 91% agree that we provide a safe place to talk about issues, while 87% say the information they received was practical and relevant. As well, 86% of respondents agree that we do a good job of connecting families with help and support.

Our mission is to help people living with dementia. These survey results suggest that we are, although we know there are still too many families facing this on their own. We ask that you help us to help them by keeping the Alzheimer Society high on your radar as the go-to place for people with dementia and their families.

If you know someone who is worrying – if you are worrying – call us. We can talk you through the next steps.

If you work in health care, you can refer clients to us.

And if you can support our work by making a donation, please give now. People with dementia and their families need our support – more than ever before.

We’re here to help.

Ask An Expert

QUESTION: *I am considering saving money by writing my own will without help from a lawyer. Is that advisable?*

I’d like to relay a cautionary tale on this topic.

Recently, Sam came to me for help with the probate of his friend Bill’s estate. Sam had found a handwritten will (a holograph will) prepared by Bill a few years earlier.

Bill had worked in good jobs with decent pensions. He was financially stable, owned his own home and had savings through an investment company. Lucky Bill.

Bill had started to prepare for his later years. He had a Power of Attorney properly set up by a lawyer. He even had a Health Care Directive. But Bill didn’t want to spend money on a will, so he handwrote his holograph will.

This presented problems for Sam, who consulted two lawyers before coming to see me. Each consultation cost Bill’s estate more money than if Bill had consulted a lawyer in the first place!

We helped Sam solve a couple of problems. First, we figured out which of Bill’s holograph wills was the copy and which was the original. Second, we tracked down an old acquaintance of Bill’s who could identify his handwriting and vouch that Bill was competent when he wrote the will.

But the final, and biggest, problem had to do with the gifts in the will. Bill left several valuable items to friends, but many of those friends had moved or died years earlier. Bill did not identify where the assets should go if a beneficiary died or could not be found. Those gifts failed.

All his life, Bill had been determined to make a difference in the world by donating to various charitable organizations. In his will, he left a substantial amount to “charity” – but he didn’t name the charity! That gift failed, too.

Bill never married and never had children. His only relatives were two cousins with whom he had no contact. Those two lucky people got all of Bill’s estate. And they didn’t even care much about Bill! How sad.

I wonder if Bill would really think it was worth saving his money on a will?

Heather Dixon, Lawyer & Notary Public, Counsel, The People’s Corner Law Office



Heather Dixon

Heather will be part of a panel session about planning for the future at the virtual Care4u 2021 Family Conference on Sat., Oct. 16 from 9 am to 12:30 pm. Register: alzheimer.mb.ca/care4u or call 204-943-6622 (Winnipeg) or 1-800-378-6699

Your Will Can Make a Difference

willpower.ca



Cambrian Credit Union Gives Back to its Communities

Every year, employees of Cambrian Credit Union look forward to a special day in mid-October – a day when they go all out during their coffee break, enjoying scrumptious goodies while raising money for the Alzheimer Society.

Both employees – a total of 300 at 11 branches and three corporate locations in Winnipeg and Selkirk – and Cambrian’s 66,000 members are invited to support the annual Alzheimer Society Coffee Break fundraiser.

Employees donate baked goods, and those with real baking ability get to show off their talent. The co-workers and Credit Union members who drop by give generously, knowing they’ll be enjoying home-baked treats while supporting the Society.

“It’s a nice opportunity to chat with fellow employees and connect with our members,” says Jennifer MacKenzie, Senior Associate, Communications

& Community Engagement.

It’s also a chance to raise awareness about the Society and to learn more about its programs and services.

“We provide financial support to a variety of organizations whose focus aligns with our core giving areas,” Jennifer explains. One of those areas is health and wellness, which focuses on improving the lives of community members. The Society fits that bill.

What started out as an initiative at one branch 15 years ago has spread to all Cambrian branches and corporate locations. In the past four years alone,



Employees at Cambrian Credit Union’s Corporate Office participate in a Coffee Break event to raise money for the Alzheimer Society.

the annual Coffee Break event has raised \$10,000 for the Society.

Anyone can host their own unique event to raise funds for the Alzheimer Society. Visit **Anything for Alzheimer’s®** at alzheimer.mb.ca for ideas and to register.



The Standards Program Trustmark is a mark of Imagine Canada used under licence by the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba.

The Winnipeg 10 & 10 Run is Going Virtual!

Run or Walk 5 km, 10 km, 10 miles or 30 km between Sept. 10 and Oct. 4, 2021. Anytime, anywhere!

Registration now open at events.runningroom.com

Virtual Entry – \$40 includes a finisher’s medal and a long sleeve t-shirt.

\$5 of each registration fee goes to the Alzheimer Society.

For more information please contact Chris Walton at cwalton@runningroom.com or go to events.runningroom.com