

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

Fall 2012 Volume 31 No. 4

Research Forum

Join us for the latest news in Alzheimer's research going on right here in Alaska. Dr. Brian Edmonds', a Chemistry and Biochemistry professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, will talk about his own research project, as well as the trends in national research. Edmonds' research project involves the study of the neurotransmitter, *acetylcholine*, and its moderators: fast-acting neuronal nicotinic acetylcholine receptors (nAChRs) that essentially act as gatekeepers for synaptic signaling.

A number of disorders and diseases, including Alzheimer's disease, are associated with a reduction of some types of nAChRs. Dr. Edmonds' research is focused on understanding how nAChRs are activated. He is also studying how a new class of drugs boosts the responses of nAChRs upon the binding of acetylcholine. These drugs may offset the decline of nicotinic receptor responses and may be promising candidates for new drug treatments for Alzheimer's disease.

The Research Forum is free and open to the general public.

Schedule

Fairbanks

Westmark Hotel 813 Nobel Street November 5 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Anchorage

Admiralty Place 2nd Floor 9350 Independence Drive November 7 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Juneau

Centennial Hall Hickle Room 101 Egan Drive November 8 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

Guest Speaker, Brian W. Edmonds, Ph.D



Dr. Edmonds graduated with a B.S. in Biological Sciences from Stanford University in 1985, and he received a Ph.D. in Physiology and Cellular Biophysics from Columbia University in 1990. Dr. Edmonds joined the laboratory of David Colquhoun in the Department of Pharmacology at University College London in 1990 as a

postdoctoral fellow, where he carried out a series of studies of CNS receptors to glutamate, the major excitatory neurotransmitter in brain. Dr. Edmonds joined the Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry at the University of Alaska Fairbanks in 2009 as an Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics.

Director's Message	pg.	3
Caregiver Corner	pg.	5
Event Pictures	pg.	7
Support Groups	pg.	13



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565 University Ave. Suite 2 Fairbanks, AK 99709 Phone (907) 452-2277 Fax 457-3376

Juneau

3100 Channel Dr. Suite 19 Juneau, AK, 99801 Phone (907) 586-6044 Fax 586-6084

Mat-Su Valley

Trinity Barn Plaza 10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy. Suite 110 Palmer, AK 99645 Phone (907) 746-3413 Fax 746-3412

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Letter from the Executive Director

It is a tradition here, at the Alzheimer's Resource Agency, to provide the public with an opportunity to hear the latest news in Alzheimer's research. The Research Forum is a simple venue: an evening spent in the company of a scientist or researcher who is working in Alzheimer's research.

Thirty years ago there was very little research being done in the field of Alzheimer's disease. Not much was known about its cause, progression, or treatment. Support for research has grown over time. Funding from agencies such as ours, the government, and by other organizations has increased dramatically. Over time the mysteries of Alzheimer's disease have been revealed, treatments have been found, and ultimately, a cure may be discovered.

Today, much more is known about the genetic, biological, and environmental factors that result in Alzheimer's disease. As our population continues to age, it is important that scientists continue to make advances in age-related declines in brain functioning. It is imperative that we continue to support this important work until a cure is found.

Join us in November as Dr. Edmonds presents his findings in research being done right here in Alaska. Research that we, at the Alzheimer's Resource Agency, are proud to support.

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The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Research Fund

The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Research Fund was set up with University of Alaska Foundation to support the excellent work of our research partners' right here in Alaska. Each year, money will be contributed by the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska to an area of research in Alaska that is dedicated to exploring causes and potential therapies for Alzheimer's disease and related dementia (ADRD). The fund is open to anyone interested in contributing to ADRD research.

Last year the funding was distributed in the form of a grant to provide one graduate student the ability to work full-time in the Marvin Schulte Laboratory. Shane Rideout, a third year graduate student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) was awarded the grant. Rideout received his undergraduate degree in Biochemistry from UAF and went on to pursue a doctorate. He has been working in the lab since 2010 but until recently, has been splitting his time teaching, writing papers, giving presentations and mentoring.

Shane has been characterizing the interactions of a promising compound, dFBr, as well as developing a platform for testing the drug. This compound has the potential to improve cognitive abilities responsible for recalling, retaining and forming memories. Continuing research may lead to the development of new therapies for Alzheimer's disease.



Page 3

Research

Cancer drugs may help treat Alzheimer's

A U.S. and Chinese team of neuroscientists and chemists say they used two cancer drugs to "cure" fruit flies and rats with Alzheimer's disease.

Professor Yi Zhong of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York and colleagues found two kinds of drugs -- erlotinib, or Tarceva, and gefitinib, or Iressa -- suppressed epidermal growth factor receptor production which helps tumors to grow. Over-expression of the epidermal growth factor receptor is a characteristic feature of certain cancers, particularly lung cancers.

Zhong's team said signaling within cells that is induced by epidermal growth factor receptor activation also plays a role in the pathology -- still poorly understood -- involved in the amyloid-beta plaques-associated memory loss in Alzheimer's patients.

The team demonstrated that enhanced activation of epidermal growth factor receptors in brain cells exacerbated memory loss in the amyloid-beta-42 fruit fly model of Alzheimer's disease. This led them to dose 3-day-old flies of this type



with the two anti-cancer drugs over a week's time. By day 11, the memory loss reversed, the study said.

The team tested the drug combo on middle-age mice, with advanced memory loss during an 18-day period.

"Eighteen days was sufficient to reverse loss in these mice, although we should note that these animals had few morphological changes in the brain despite their severe memory loss when treatment began," Zhong said in a statement.

The findings were published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

- from UPI.com

Eliminating Visual Clutter Helps with Mild Cognitive Impairment

A new study suggests that memory impairments for people diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer's disease may be due, in part, to problems in determining the differences between similar objects. The findings also support growing research indicating that a part of the brain once believed to support memory exclusively also plays a role in object perception.

"Minimizing the degree of perceptual interference improved patients' object perception by reducing the number of visually similar features," said Rachel Newsome. The findings suggest that, under certain circumstances, reducing "visual clutter" could help Mild Cognitive Impairment patients with everyday tasks.

- from *agelessdesign.com*





Question: I am having trouble getting my father to eat. What can I do? ~Concerned Son

Concerned Son,

Good nutrition is important for individuals with Alzheimer's disease. However, dementia can lead to poor nutrition that may be related to different reasons such as a diminished sense of hunger and thirst, or a difficult time eating or swallowing. Talk with your father's doctor about your concern, for it's possible his poor appetite is due to depression, or other treatable problems. You might try serving finger foods; they are easier to handle than eating with utensils. Add more proteins and healthy fats. His doctor may also recommend nutritional supplements. Be sure he gets enough fluids because dehydration is a real issue for individuals with dementia. A light walk or some type of exercise before a meal might increase his appetite. In later stages, don't worry so

Do you have a question for our experts? If so, write in to aging@alzalaska.org All personal information is confidential. much about offering choices, just serve foods that your father likes. Personal preferences *are* important - remember your father is an adult not a child. Never force him to eat or punish him for not eating.

Caregiver's

Holiday Helpers

The holidays are just around the corner and now is the time to consider your "wish list." Some of the best gifts for busy caregivers aren't things - but the gift of time. Consider:

Respite - some time off from caregiving duties.

Home Repairs - perhaps there's something a handy person can fix for you that you can't do yourself.

Something Special - a therapeutic massage, a facial, a walk in the woods, a ticket to the symphony - something just for you.

:::: Caregiver Support ::::

How to Avoid Caregiver Burnout

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that may be accompanied by a change in attitude -- from positive and caring to negative and unconcerned. Burnout can occur when caregivers don't get the help they need, or if they try to do more than they are able -- either physically or financially. Caregivers who are "burned out" may experience fatigue, stress, anxiety, and depression. Many caregivers also feel guilty if they spend time on themselves rather than on their ill or elderly loved ones.

What Are the Symptoms of Caregiver Burnout?

The symptoms of caregiver burnout are similar to the symptoms of stress and depression. They include:

- Withdrawal from friends and family
- Loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed
- Feeling blue, irritable, hopeless, and helpless
- Changes in appetite, weight, or both
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Getting sick more often
- Feelings of wanting to hurt yourself or the person for whom you are caring
- Emotional and physical exhaustion
- Excessive use of alcohol and/or sleep medications
- Irritability



What Causes Caregiver Burnout?

Caregivers often are so busy caring for others that they tend to neglect their own emotional, physical, and spiritual health. The demands on a caregiver's body, mind, and emotions can easily seem overwhelming, leading to fatigue and hopelessness -- and, ultimately, burnout. Other factors that can lead to caregiver burnout include:

• Role confusion -- Many people are confused when thrust into the role of caregiver. It can be difficult for a person to separate her role as caregiver from her role as spouse, lover, child, friend, etc.

• Unrealistic expectations -- Many caregivers expect their involvement to have a positive effect on the health and happiness of the patient. This may be unrealistic for patients suffering from a progressive disease, such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

• Lack of control -- Many caregivers become frustrated by a lack of money, resources, and skills to effectively plan, manage, and organize their loved one's care.

• Unreasonable demands -- Some caregivers place unreasonable burdens upon themselves, in part because they see providing care as their exclusive responsibility.

• Other factors -- Many caregivers cannot recognize when they are suffering burnout and eventually get to the point where they cannot function effectively. They may even become sick themselves.

How Can I Prevent Caregiver Burnout?

Here are some steps you can take to help prevent caregiver burnout:

• Find someone you trust -- such as a friend, co-worker, or neighbor -- to talk to about your feelings and frustrations. Continued on next page...



...Avoid Burnout, continued from previous page

• Set realistic goals, accept that you may need help with caregiving, and turn to others for help with some tasks.

• Be realistic about your loved one's disease, especially if it is a progressive disease such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's.

• Don't forget about yourself because you're too busy caring for someone else. Set aside time for yourself, even if it's just an hour or two. Remember, taking care of yourself is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity if you're going to be an effective caregiver.

• Talk to a professional. Most therapists, social workers, and clergy members are trained to counsel individuals dealing with a wide range of physical and emotional issues.

• Take advantage of respite care services. Respite care provides a temporary break for caregivers. This can range from a few hours of in-home care to a short stay in a nursing home or assisted living facility.

• Know your limits and do a reality check of your personal situation. Recognize and accept your potential for caregiver burnout.

• Educate yourself. The more you know about the illness, the more effective you will be in caring for the person with the illness.

• Develop new tools for coping. Remember to lighten up and accentuate the positive. Use humor to help deal with everyday stresses.

• Stay healthy by eating right and getting plenty of exercise and sleep.

• Accept your feelings. Having negative feelings -- such as frustration or anger -- about your responsibilities or the person for whom you are caring is normal. It does not mean you are a bad person or a bad caregiver.

Where Can I Turn for Help With Caregiver Burnout?

If you are already suffering from stress and depression, seek medical attention. Stress and depression are treatable disorders. If you want to prevent burnout, consider turning to the following resources for help with your caregiving:

• Home health services -- These agencies provide home health aids and nurses for short-term care, if your loved one is acutely ill. Some agencies provide short-term respite care.

• Adult day care -- These programs offer a place for seniors to socialize, engage in a variety of activities, and receive needed medical care and other services.

• Nursing homes or assisted living facilities -- These institutions sometimes offer short-term respite stays to provide caregivers a break from their caregiving responsibilities.

• Private care aides -- These are professionals who specialize in assessing current needs and coordinating care and services.

• Caregiver support services -- These include support groups and other programs that can help caregivers recharge their batteries, meet others coping with similar issues, find more information, and locate additional resources.

• Agency of Aging -- Contact your local Agency on Aging or your local chapter of the AARP for services available in your area such as adult day care services, caregiver support groups, and respite care.

• National organizations -- Look in a phone directory or search online for local agencies (such as Family Caregiver Alliance), chapters of national organizations dedicated to assisting people with illnesses such as Parkinson's disease or stroke. These groups can provide resources and information about respite care and support groups. - *From* WebMD



Eat at Lonestar Steakhouse and Support the Alzheimer's Resource Agency

In support of the Alzheimer's Awareness Month, Lone Star Steakhouse has generously offered to donate a percentage of their proceeds for an entire week!

From November 5-12, Lone Star Steakhouse will donate 15% from each dinner receipt to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska to participate, visit www.alzalaska.org print off the flyer and present it to your server.



ConocoPhillips Quilters Create Warm Memories



Every year the creative quilters at ConocoPhillips make beautiful lap quilts and share them with the elders in our community. The wonderful gift of these quilts gives our elders something that is truly theirs. Even for those with no words, the look in their eye, or the soft "petting" of the quilt lets us know just how cherished it is. You have brightened the lives of so many – what a gift.

A Night to Remember

For the third year in a row, the *New 35 Plus Singles Club* held a formal fundraiser to benefit our organization. Couples danced cheek-to-cheek under the sparkly "sky" and enjoyed delicious food. The event was a wonderful success due to the club, and sponsors of the event: Alaska Water Technologies, Arctic Epoxy Floor Coatings, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services and Alaska Chocolate Foundations. Thank you for being our partner in the community and on the dance floor.



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Page 9

Writing Contest

Memories Through My Eyes

Memories. We make and remember them differently as we age. As a part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month, we'd like to hear your perspective on memories and what they mean to you. The Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska as a part of Alzheimer's Awareness Month is proud to announce our very first writing contest.

Our theme this year is "*Memories through My Eyes*." Journey with us as we learn from individuals at different ages what their memories mean to them and how they view their importance. Please review the following rules for formating guidelines and relevant dates.

Rules:

10)

- 1) Limit one (1) entry per person.
- 2) All entries must be original work completed in English.
- 3) Entries may be up to 1000 words (4 pages typed and double spaced) in length and must be typed or legibly written.
- 4) Entrants must reside in Alaska and be a member of one of the age groups.
- 5) Entries must include the entrants name, age, and contact information including mailing address, email, and phone number. Pages must be numbered with the entrants name on each one, though names will be hidden from judges.
- 6) Entries must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday November 16, 2012.
- 7) Judging will take place following the deadline and will be decided by a panel selected by Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska; judging will be anonymous and all decisions are final.
- 8) Judging will be based on: creativity; representation of theme; and flow of ideas.
- 9) Winners will be announced on November 30, 2012; one winner will be selected from each age category and one grand prize will be awarded to an overall winner.
 - Age categories are:Prizes12-18Aspiring Writers Package19-35Digital Camera Package36-50Scrapbooking Package51-74Alaska Railroad Tickets75+Cash Award

Grand Prize: Travel on Alaska Airlines with excerpt of the winning entry published in the Senior Voice and the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska winter newsletter.

- 11) All entries become the property of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska which retains the right to use and publish the work in whole or in part. Permission will be sought if entries are published elsewhere and the applicant may choose to remain anonymous. Entries will not be returned.
- 12) ADRAA staff and their immediate family are not eligible to enter.

Please email entries to: aging@alzalaska.org or mail them to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska ATTN: Mariel Fonteyn 1750 Abbott Rd. Anchorage, AK 99507.

Individual and Business Contributors

June Adams Arctic Epoxy Flooring Alaska Fur Exchange Alaska Travel Industry Association Fairbanks Alaska Water Technologies, LLC Anchorage Sand & Gravel Co. Ramona Barker Mary Barton Marsha Buck Ellucia & Robert Boswell BP Foundation, Inc. P. Kay Branch Domelia R. Budd Charlotte Byers Lindel & Barbara Chasteen Alice D. Devine Betty Dodds Debra & Robin Eaton Fred & June Ebeling Robin A. Figueroa Lorraine & Robin Guyer Joan Hoeler John Van Hoesen Morris & Lorrie Horning Owen & Elaine Hughes Insights In Light Nancy Jones Frances Kelly Sandra & Chris Landis Brian & Christine McCaffery Nelly McGrody Midnight Sun Lazyman Triathlon Cynthia J. Miller Jane Newby Anthony C. Perley Alison Rail Cindy L. Ruth Susan Rae Shern-Holta Melody Springer John P. Valensi

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Have you had a good experience with us?

If you have received services from Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska we would like to invite you to share your experiences with others by reviewing us online. Give us a rating using any of the online consumer tools such as Google Places or Yelp . Be sure to leave a comment and let others know how we are here to serve Alaskans.

Memorials & Tributes

Evagene Boston Pamela Brawn Jim & Betty Dierkes Daniel & Brenda Martindale Diane Meyer Ty & Nancy Stillman

Mary Lou Bradford Sylvia Kuester

Virginia "Ginny" Clark Jackie & John Brunton Janice I. Gruhn Bill & Cheryl Thomas

Robert Dalzell Affiliates in Clinical Services, PC

Anna Epperson Doreen Brogden

Bruce Gannon Tyler & Katy Mjelde

Ross Jardine

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James Oviatt F. Timothy Dugan Jr. Valerie Oviatt



John Schillereff, Jr.

Evelyn Bloom Patricia Donnelly Carol Etcheverry Hazel R. Johnson Kristi Johnson Carolyn Korman Judith Larson Lily Marsh James & Susan Milne George & Caryl Morgan Jerene Mortenson Maryann P. Nagy Doris M Petersen Wayne & Betty Rockne Jackie & Don Sparrow Nancy & John Todd Winnie Treitline Ken & Tandy Wallack

Jerry Shrum Jean Lyford

Miriam Woodward Evelyn Mina

Mildred Renkert

Give at the Office

Support Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska through your workplace!

Workplace giving makes supporting Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska easy for you and helps us provide sustaining support and services to frail elders and their families in Alaska. We participate in the following workplace-giving programs:

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) promotes and supports philanthropy through a program that provides federal employees the opportunity to improve the quality of life for those in need of the health and human services around the world. To contribute through the campaign please use our CFC # 52943 on the pledge forms.

Alaska Community Share (ACS) Founded in 1985, ACS increases the involvement of citizens in issues that affect our communities. For more information, call 907-258-4576 they will answer any questions you have, and provide you with the information you need to include Alaska Community Share in your next workplace giving campaign.

CLASSES & EVENTS around the state

For more information on any of these classes or programs visit www.AlzAlaska.org or contact the office nearest you.

Anchorage 1750 Abbott Rd. 561-3313

• Partnering with Your Doctor by George S. Rhyneer, M.D. 10 - 11:30 AM Monday, October 22

• Alzheimer's Disease: Myths and Realities 10 - 11:30 AM or 5:30 - 7 PM Monday, November 12

• Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter 10 - 11:30 AM or 5:30 - 7 PM

Monday, November 19

• Being a Supportive Friend 10 - 11:30 AM or 5:30 - 7 PM Monday, November 26

Copper River Basin 882-5620 or 800- 478-1080

• Webinar Series 12 - 1:30 PM

> - Where to Turn? Tuesday, November 6

- Caring Through the Stages Tuesday, December 4

Fairbanks 565 University Ave. Suite 2 452-2277

• Healthy Body, Healthy Brain 5:30 - 7:00 PM Tuesday, November 20

• Savvy Professional

For Professionals 8:00 AM - 5 PM Friday, October 26 \$125 / CE available

• Dementia Essentials

For Direct Service Workers 5:30 - 7:30 PM Starts Wednesday, October 31 \$50 registration

Juneau 3100 Channel Dr. 3rd floor Conference Rm. 586-6044

• Behaviors That Challenge Us 12 - 2 PM Tuesday, October 30

• When Does Forgetting Become a Disease? 12 - 2 PM Tuesday, November 20

• Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter 12 - 1 PM Tuesday, November 27

Ketchikan Senior Center 1016 Water Street

• **Dementia and Activities** 5 - 6:30 PM Monday, November 5

Mat-Su Valley 10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy. 746-3413

• **Behaviors That Challenge Us** 1 - 2:30 and 6:00 - 7:30 PM Wednesday, October 17 • When Does Forgetting Become a Disease? 1- 2:00 PM Tuesday, November 13

• Savvy Caregiver Course 6 - 8:00 PM For six weeks, beginning Tuesday, October 23

Memory Screenings

We offer free, confidential memory screenings by appointment at all of our offices. In addition, we offer screenings at the following:

Anchorage ADRAA office 1 - 4:00 PM Tuesday, November 13

Fairbanks Office (by appointment) 9 - 5:00 PM Monday, November 12

Glennallen Crossroads Medical Center 10 - 2:00 PM Wednesday, November 14

Juneau Office (by appointment) 9 - 5:00 PM Tuesday, November 13

Ketchikan (Call Bo Stahl for appointment) 225-6578 10 - 2:00 PM Monday, November 5

Mat-Su Valley Office Trinity Barn 2 - 4:00 pm Tuesday, November 13

Mat-Su Valley Senior Services 8:30 - 11:30 AM Wednesday, November 14



SUPPORT GROUPS around the state

Anchorage				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	General Caregiver	4 th Thursday	5:30 - 7 PM	Mariel Fonteyn
1750 Abbott Rd.	Adult Child/Relative	2 nd Thursday	10 AM - 12 PM	561-3313
	Spousal Caregiver	3 rd Thursday	10 AM - 12 PM	
Copper River Basin - Prince W	illiam Sound		1	
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	General Caregiver	1 st & 3 rd Thursday	11 - 12 PM	Gay Wellman 822-5620 or 1-800-478-1080 x6
Eagle River				
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church 17545 N. Eagle River Loop Rd.	General Caregiver	2 nd Thursday	6:30 - 8 PM	Linda Shepard or Marilyn McKay 746-3413 or 561-3313
Fairbanks				·
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 565 University Ave. Suite 2	General Caregiver	1 st Tuesday	11:30 - 1 PM	Joan Adams 452-2277
Homer				
Friendship Center	General Caregiver	3 rd Thursday	5 - 6:30 PM	235-2295
Juneau				
KTOO 1st Floor Conference Rm 360 Egan Drive	General Caregiver	2 nd Wednesday	12 - 1 PM	463-6177 or 866-746-6177
Ketchikan	1		1	1
Southeast Senior Services	General Caregiver	Call Bernice for more information.		Bernice 225-8080
Kodiak		1		
Kodiak Senior Center 302 Erkskine Ave.	General Caregiver	4 th Thursday	12:30 - 1:30 PM	Kathy Drabek 486-6181
Mat-Su Valley		1 -		
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Mile 2.2 Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.	General Caregiver	2 nd Wednesday	1 - 2:30 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
Seward		1 -		
Seward Senior Center	General Caregiver	4 th Thursday	1-2 PM	1-800-776-8210 or 262-1280
Sitka				
Brave Heart Volunteers Pioneer Home Manager's House 120 Katlian St.	General Caregiver	2 nd Wednesday	12 - 1 PM	747-4600
Soldotna				
Soldotna Senior Center	General Caregiver	2 nd & Last Tuesday	1 - 3 PM	1-800-776-8210 or 262-1280
Sterling				
Sterling Senior Center	General Caregiver	3 rd Tuesday	1- 2 PM	262-6808



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Get Updates on News and Events

Like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter @AlzAlaska to stay up to date on the latest research events and opportunities throughout the state.

New! Caregiver Support Group in Eagle River Begins November 8th and meets every 2nd Thursday of the month. 6:30 - 8:00 PM Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, 17545 Eagle River Loop Rd.

Coming February 8, 2013: A Winter Workshop with Joanne Rader and Karen Stobbe

www.AlzAlaska.org