

Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

Summer 2014
Volume 33
No. 3

30 Years of Care and Connected Hearts

Thirty years ago Ronald Reagan was President. *Terms of Endearment*, a heartrending story about mothers, daughters and loss, won the Academy Award for Best Picture. Two American astronauts became the first humans to make an untethered spacewalk. Nineteen Eighty-Four was also the year that two Alaskan sisters formed what would eventually become known as Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska.

No one intends on journeying down the difficult path that Alzheimer's Disease presents to patients and families alike. But Sisters Rebecca Clement and Beverly Tallman felt themselves very much untethered and alone as they searched for answers, information, assistance and comfort in seeking ways to care for their beloved mother, diagnosed with Alzheimer's at the age of fifty-two.

In 1978 the sisters had to transport their mother from Anchorage to Seattle to receive a basic diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. The disease was identified and named in 1906, and yet there was no independent national non-profit organization dedicated to making an effort against Alzheimer's until 1980. The possibility of obtaining a

diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease anywhere in this country was difficult at best; in Alaska it was nearly impossible. The doctors in Seattle had little advice for caregiving beyond the diagnosis.

Little was known and less was disseminated regarding the care for Alzheimer's patients; this was a disease as mysterious as it was pervasive. Six years after Ronald Reagan left office he would announce to the world that he was suffering from Alzheimer's, a stark warning to the entire nation that not knowing about the disease did not mean you were out of its reach.

Today, it is projected that in Alaska there are approximately 8,000 people living with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementias. The support system that currently exists for Alaskan families touched by Alzheimer's would be almost unimaginable to a family in the same circumstance in 1984. And yet, Rebecca and Beverly did imagine a future where families would not be alone in the struggle to care for their loved ones.

The plan was as powerful as it was fundamental, a desire to honor and care for their mother even as they lived their own lives.

Caring for a person with early onset Alzheimer's is never less than daunting, doing so before there was a name for it amounted to a succession

of closed doors and dead ends. Raising their own families, working jobs and financing the care of their mother led Rebecca and Beverly to the conclusion that they could not be alone in this struggle. There must be other Alaskans like themselves looking for a better way of caring for loved ones who cannot care for themselves.

A grassroots movement was born when the South Central Counseling Center put the sisters in touch with a social worker looking to complete her Master's degree by facilitating a Caregiver's Support Group. A handful of caregivers came together, compared notes, shared experiences and proved that initial hunch to be on target: they were not alone.

With an early and incisive decision to focus on Alaskans suffering from Alzheimer's, the next obvious move was to find out where these individuals were and who their caregivers were. There was no playbook. Resources were pooled and a grand total of

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

Copper River Basin

(907) 822-5620

Statewide

Toll Free within Alaska
(800) 478-1080

www.AlzAlaska.org

Stay connected via Facebook and Twitter
@AlzAlaska





Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate our 30th year we reflect on our mission: *To unite Alaskans affected by Alzheimer's disease and related disorders to ensure quality of life until a cure is found.* By the very nature of our mission we are a forward looking organization and so it is with great interest that we stay current with efforts of other organizations, scientists, agencies and individuals striving to alleviate the burdens inflicted upon those affected by Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD).



It is interesting to note that more than thirty years ago our founders Rebecca Clements and Beverly Tallman had to take their mother out of state for a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. Today, Alaskans are vastly better informed and better positioned to benefit from the resources and expertise surrounding ADRD; due in great part to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska. Nevertheless, the need to expand services and create innovative solutions to the devastating problems posed by Alzheimer's Disease continues.

The numbers are daunting; an estimated 44 million people worldwide suffer from ADRD, a number set to almost double every twenty years. In addition to the emotional and physical toll, the world-wide economic cost of the disease is roughly \$640 billion dollars a year. The G8, the group of industrialized nations, has made a public commitment to find a cure or therapy for ADRD by 2025. "Mutual efforts to stimulate and harness innovation at the global level need to be strengthened. Consequently, we call for greater innovation to improve the quality of life for people with dementia and their caregivers while reducing the emotional and financial burden," because in ADRD we are facing, "one of the greatest enemies of humanity."

The challenge is immense, but so is the promise of innovation and new technologies in terms of treatment, therapy and a possible cure. Our commitment to looking and leaning forward takes concrete form this fall as we host the two day conference: Vision to Reality – Breaking Barriers, Embracing Diversity, Growing Together. This conference is discussed in greater detail on page 6 of this newsletter, as well as through regular updates on our website: AlzAlaska.org.

In keeping with a forward looking spirit, I would like to recognize our newest board members. Returning to the board is Ken Acton, a self-employed Aviation Consultant and a longtime supporter of the organization, first serving as a board member in 1991. Retired Executive Assistant Nancy Jones volunteered with us before becoming a board member in 2001. Nancy returns to the board after a one year hiatus, an interval where she still found time to serve on our Nominating Committee. Natasha Pope is the Community Relations Manager at First National Bank of Alaska and joins us for her third term as a board member, first serving in 2007. While away from the board, Natasha lent invaluable support to the Finance Committee. Lynn Van Vactor, from Dillingham, is the Executive Director of Washington and Alyeska Vocational Services; an organization that provides support and rehabilitation to persons experiencing disabilities and barriers to independent life in Alaska and Washington. This exceptional group of volunteers brings to our organization a continued dedication to serving frail elders and those with ADRD throughout Alaska.

Best regards,

Karl Garber
Executive Director

Redesigning Long Life

Today, more people are living longer than at any time in human history. Adapting our culture to this rapidly aging population will put entire societies to the test. The Stanford Center for Longevity is at the forefront of efforts to meet the challenge of making certain that quality of life keeps pace with increasing lifespan.

Commercial technological innovations too often overlook a segment of the population that might benefit from it the most, the elderly. This past April, the Center for Longevity sponsored a Design Challenge showcasing the talents of young designers intent on revolutionizing how we solve the problems of aging.

The inaugural Design Challenge put students to a particular test by demanding that they “design new solutions that will keep individuals with cognitive impairment independent for as long as possible.”

The top two prize winners of the Design Challenge didn’t reinvent the wheel, but they did reimagine the spoon.

A research and design team from the National University of Singapore made a winning impact by taking a practical look at the mysterious relationship of taste, memory and emotion. They came up with the Taste+ Electronic Spoon.

The taste of a long lost recipe can evoke memories of childhood, of family, friends and even places. That the lust for life can be extended and enriched by so basic a human need as flavor proved an insight worth exploring to the Singapore team.

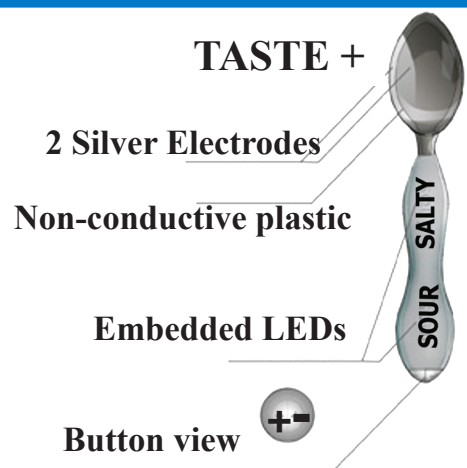
Scientific research has long recognized the mysterious and persistent link between memory and taste. The Singapore team harnessed this mystery for a practical solution to a problem that has long vexed care givers.

A pervasive problem in caring for those affected by Alzheimer’s and related dementias is malnutrition. Taste sensitivity can become severely diminished and make a person less likely to enjoy and consume an entire meal.

Taste+ is essentially a “smart” spoon that stimulates and simulates taste sensations on the tongue. Two simple buttons on the spoon’s handle are connected to electrodes at the tip of the spoon, one for sour and the other for salt. Like increasing the volume on a remote control, a few presses of the spoon handle can liven up an otherwise bland tasting chicken soup. The tongue is fooled, but the belly is not.

The joy of a good meal brings vitality to life.

The Taste+ spoon is non-invasive and draws on recently developed digital tasting technologies. Sweet, minty and spicy tastes can be created through thermal simulation – but are not yet incorporated in the Taste+ spoon. Not commercially available at this time, Taste+ is



making the push from laboratory to the dining room in the near future. The cost is projected to be around \$40.

Continued on Page 5...

TECHNOLOGY & AGING

Notable Websites

longevity3.stanford.edu

The Stanford Center for Longevity
Scientific and technological research into Mind, Body and Mobility solutions to the problems of aging.

aginginplacetech.com

A comprehensive blog covering the latest products, trends and tech research.

aging2.com

Aging 2.0 educates and connects innovators in an effort to improve the lives of older adults.



Connected Hearts *continued from Cover*

\$300 comprised the entirety of the budget for the first outreach effort. Newspaper ads were placed across the state, from Cordova to Kotzebue, asking for any information from those caring for people who might have Alzheimer's or related dementias.

In an age before cellphones and the internet, the responses came at a trickle. But they did come – a statewide conversation had begun, a mission born and the need to create a non-profit became apparent.

Rebecca says of the individuals in the business community who helped in the official formation of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska: "The whole success of the organization is because of the grassroots we always had – a connection in our hearts. We found the right people with the right answers who had some personal connection to someone who had the disease."

The State of Alaska almost immediately recognized the new non-profit with a \$28,000 ADRD Education and Outreach grant – a crucial commitment in the creation of support services for caregivers.

In a distinctly Alaskan fashion, the all-volunteer force went on a bush storming tour of Alaska,

disseminating information, providing referrals, trainings, consultations and establishing support groups. In short, letting Alaskans touched by ADRD know that they weren't alone in the effort to care for their loved ones.

Where there were once closed doors and frustration, there are now offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and the Mat-Su Valley that seek to provide support and information. The Medicaid Waiver Program, grant funding, advocacy in the State Legislature, support groups, Art Links, a decade of Amblin' for Alzheimer's walks and a tireless team of staff, board and volunteers – the particulars of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska's mission are multifaceted, but the core of the mission has been consistent for thirty years.

Rebecca recounts a moment toward the end of her mother's life that goes to the very core of why the Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska was conceived. "She sat at the piano and put her hands on the keys. Suddenly, she began to play like she did when I was a child...Don't make decisions in a crisis. Seek the best services in the moment – because the moments will change. The road is terribly bumpy but you don't want to miss that last song."

Long Life *continued from page 4*

Another winner, Shao Yao of the Academy of Art in San Francisco was inspired to enter the Design Challenge because of an intimate connection to a grandmother who suffered from Alzheimer's disease.

While many Alzheimer's sufferers, and elderly persons in general, compensate for loss of taste by an unhealthy tendency to over salt or season their food; some suffers of dementia find the dining experience frustrating enough to avoid eating altogether.

Yao saw first-hand how a loved one's dignity at meal time can be of paramount importance. She designed a seven piece tableware set branded as "Eatwell". Utensils with extended and curved handles, non-slip bowls molded for ease of use and colors that make meals appear more inviting impressed the Design Challenge judges enough to earn Yao a first place award of \$10,000.

Yao's elegant, durable and thoughtful designs serve a real utility and contribute to that essential element of every memorable meal: ambiance. Caregiver and diner are able to focus on the joy of eating rather than the mechanics.

The mind is enlivened through the essential pleasure of taste and the body is strengthened by consistent nutrition.

Whether driven by altruism, compassion or market forces, the Tech Industry looks to be trending toward a new focus on the particular problems of aging.

Vision to Reality

Breaking Barriers, Embracing Diversity, Growing Together

A Two Day Conference

In celebration of 30 years of service, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska invites you to mark your calendars and join us in attending: *Vision To Reality*. This two day conference located in Anchorage on November 12th and 13th of this year, will be a heartfelt examination of what divides us and brings us together as human beings in the challenge of formulating a best practice in dementia care. Internationally renowned dementia and senior care expert, Dr. Bill Thomas, is fast becoming known as the "Dr. Spock" of aging through his revolutionary and visionary reshaping of traditional notions of eldercare. In his words, "The boomers are creeping toward elderhood, and I aim to help explain the terrain." Dr. Thomas will bring his considerable talents as a physician, author, storyteller, musician and farmer in exploring a vision for Alaska's aging population and those affected by ADRD. Day two will feature an assortment of breakout sessions tackling lesser known issues associated with ADRD, including Cultural Diversity and Sexuality. Also on Day Two, a discussion with Jocelyn McGee, M.S.G., Ph.D. and Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. A Neuropsychologist and Geropsychologist, Dr. McGee will speak about the latest innovations in non-pharmacologic care techniques. Visit AlzAlaska.org for more details, continual updates and registration information.

Mat-Su Grant Renewed

In 2010, the Mat-Su Health Foundation awarded Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska a \$300,000 grant (\$100,000 per year for 3 years) to provide respite and chore services for frail elders and those with ADRD in the Mat-Su Valley. We recently finished the third year of the grant and applied for 3 more years of funding. The Mat-Su Health Foundation found great value in the services we provide for the fastest growing population of seniors in the state. The grant will fund 3 more years at \$135,000 per year, for a total grant of \$405,000. We are honored to continue to partner with the Mat-Su Health Foundation to serve those in need in the Mat-Su Valley.

**Thank you to everyone who has chosen to Pick.Click.Give.
in support of Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska!**



We would like to thank the generous participants in our 10th annual Amblin' for Alzheimer's this past May. We have so many to thank for making this year's walk a great success! With your contributions, the event raised more than \$60,000 for our programs and services.

We are the only organization in Alaska specializing in Alzheimer's disease, ensuring that all of your tax-deductible contributions stay in Alaska to support Alaskans! Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska cannot do what it does without the generous commitment of a caring community. Thank you again for your thoughtful support of Amblin'.

We would like to thank the following sponsors for their contributions of cash, food, and prizes that make our walk special:



Team Oil and Gas Supply



Team Gratrix



♣Alaska Airlines♣Alaska National Insurance Co.♣Alaska Railroad Co.♣Alaska Stairlift & Elevator♣All About Care, Inc.♣Anchorage Glacier Pilots, Inc.♣Anchorage Lodge No. 1534 Loyal Order of Moose♣Anchorage Sand & Gravel Co.♣Bryce Hyslip♣Burkeshore Marina Enterprises LLC♣Karl & Gail Garber♣Katie Holmes♣Jonell Snook-Holmes♣Chugiak Lions Club♣Company Grade Officers Council-JBER♣Credit Union 1♣Cruz Construction, Inc.♣Elena's Hair Design♣Geneva Woods Health Care Services♣Great Harvest Bread Co.♣Harry "Bing" Prichard♣Hearts & Hands♣IBEW Local 1547♣Jane M. Pallister♣Jeff Newell♣Joshua J. Wright♣D.D.S.♣Kaladi Brothers♣Leonard & Martens, LLC♣Lynden Inc.♣Marsh Creek♣Matanuska Telephone Association♣Mr. Prime Beef♣Northern Skies Federal Credit Union♣North-Wends Foods, Inc.♣O.E.S. Far North Chapter #4♣Oil & Gas Supply♣Parker Smith & Feek♣Phillips Cruises & Tours♣Piledrivers & Divers Local Union #2520♣PIP Printing & Marketing♣Princess Cruises Community Foundation♣Providence Extended Care♣Providence Horizon House♣Sal's New York Grill♣Sammy and Movin' 105.7♣Sons of Norway Bernt Balchen Lodge No. 46♣The Wilson Agency♣Theodoros & Barbara Kouris♣Totem Ocean Trailer Express♣University of Alaska Anchorage Department of Athletics♣YU Beauty Lounge♣

Thank You to our Teams!

Delightful Divas♣Burke Family♣Granny's Log Cabin♣Gratrix Hearts & Hands♣Providence House♣Hugs for Hazel♣Hunters♣Leonard & Martens♣Oil and Gas Supply♣Providence Senior Care Center♣Rowdy Roses♣Sons of Norway♣Spann Clan♣St. John Family♣Chugiak Lions Club♣Day Break♣Debbie♣Giddy-up♣Hansen and Friends♣Northern Skies♣Red & White♣Rose♣Star♣Wawrzonek♣Vanden Berg♣

Individual and Business Contributors

Alaska Travel Industry Association Fairbanks

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Laura & Harry Jung, Jr.

Koris ALH

Nila Morgan

Holly Parks

Raven's Landing

Linda Shepard

Mae Ann Smith

Rosemarie Spencer



Memorials & Tributes

Vivian Beuford

Laurence L. Margaret D.
Soden

Sally Driscoll

Kathleen Driscoll Braun
Fine Pearle Assisted Living

Gene Everette

Edward D. Ryan

Herbie Green

G.W. Keyl

Cheryl Irvine

Agassi Foundation
High Performance
Auto Supply
Joseph Kaminkow

Midge Keil

Carrie Keil

Wayne Larson

Sandra Dewey

John "Jay" Lipse

Nancy Reagan

George Lori

Constance Lee Carey

Dorothy Magette

Jackie & John Brunton

Tony Pollock

Mike & Mark Pollock

Conrad Rudd

Beverly Dalzell

Marge Rush

Chugiak Lions Club

Liz Svensson

Pauline A. Nebel

Mary Troll

Timothy Troll

Mable Ulrich

Diane Haggerty

Arnold Victor

Philip & Marilyn Freitag
Frances Victor
Marcia A. Wakeland

Aileen Wilson

Michelle Wilson & Sean
Hogan

In Honor of Mother's Day

Adam & Melinda Staley

In Honor of Betty Sells

Chugiak Lions Club

To go paperless, email us
at contact@AlzAlaska.org
to sign up for electronic delivery
of this newsletter, training
opportunities and other
announcements.

GRANTS AVAILABLE APPLY TODAY

Mini Grants (up to \$2,500) are available for
individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related
dementia (ADRD) to purchase items or services
that are not covered by other funding sources.

Visit AlzAlaska.org or call 1-800-478-1080



The TRUST
The Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

**Alzheimer's
Resource
of Alaska**

Classes around the state

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

ANCHORAGE

1750 Abbott Rd.
561-3313

- **Is It Alzheimer's Disease?**
10AM-12:00PM OR
5:30-7:30PM
Monday, August 25
- **Lewy Body Dementia**
10AM-12:00PM OR
5:30-7:30PM
Monday, September 22
- **Savvy Caregiver**
12:00PM-2PM
Wednesdays, 6 week course
September 24 - October 29
Free, Registration Required
- **Art Links**
Fridays, 11AM-Noon
- **Mind Matters**
Tuesdays, Screening Required
10AM-11:30AM

MAT-SU VALLEY

10355 E. Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.
746-3413

ABC's of Caregiving

- **The Dementias**
10-11:30AM OR 1-2:30PM
Tuesday, August 26
- **Seniors Need Connections**
10-11:30AM OR 6-7:30PM
Tuesday, Sept 16
- **Savvy Caregiver**
1:00PM-3:00PM, Wednesdays
Sept. 17 - Oct. 29
Free / Registration Required
- **Art Links**
1-2 PM
Every Friday
- **Mind Matters**
10:30AM - NOON
Wednesdays, Screening Required

FAIRBANKS

565 University Dr., Suite 2
452-2277

- **Art Links**
Thursdays, 1:30-2:30PM
- **Filling the Day with Meaning I**
5:30-7PM
Tuesday, August 12
- **Filling the Day with Meaning II**
5:30-7PM
Tuesday, August 19
- **Our Aging Selves
Myths and
Realities of Aging**
5:30-7PM
Tuesday, September 16
- **Savvy Caregiver**
5:30-7:30PM
Thursdays, September 11 and
October 16

JUNEAU

3225 Hospital Dr.,
1st Floor Conference Rm
586-6044

- **Complaints of a Dutiful Daughter**
12-1:30PM
Wednesday, August 27
- **Honoring Connection:
Communication
Tips for Caregivers**
Tuesday 5:30 - 7PM
September 30
- **Art Links is Coming to the
Juneau Office in September!**
Contact Amber for more info
- **Savvy Caregiver Workshop**
October/November
Contact Amber if interested

COPPER RIVER BASIN

822-5620
Glenallen Senior Center

- **Brain Fitness**
"Senior Scribblers" Time TBA
2nd Wednesday & Last Thursday
Starting 7/19

PROFESSIONAL WEBINARS

Free / Registration Required
email Amber at asmith@alzalaska.org

- **Storytelling and Reminiscence:**
12-1PM
Tuesday, July 22
- **Creativity and Dementia:**
12-1PM
Tuesday, August 26
- **The Dementias: Knowing the
Dementias Makes a Difference:**
12-1PM
Tuesday, September 30

FAMILY CAREGIVERS WEBINARS

Free / Registration Required
email Gay at gwellman@alzalaska.org
Thursdays from 7 - 8:30PM

- **End of Life:**
Helping with Comfort and Care
August 14
- **Introduction to Dementia /
Alzheimer's Disease**
September 11
- **Understanding Adult
Guardianship**
October 9
- **Behaviours That Challenge Us**
November 6
- **Holiday Connections;
The Holidays and Dementia**
December 11

ON-LINE SAVVY CAREGIVER for FAMILIES

Free, Registration Required
Wednesdays - October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and November 5
Email Gay at gwellman@alzalaska.org



Support Groups around the state

A safe place for caregivers, family and friends of persons with dementia to share experiences and solutions.

Anchorage				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 1750 Abbott Rd.	General Caregiver General Caregiver	2nd Thursday 4th Thursday	12PM-1:30PM 5:30-7 PM	Debbie Chulick 561-3313
Chester Park Cooperative 2020 Muldoon Rd.	General Caregiver	1st Friday	10 -11:30 AM	Kim Jung 561-3313
Eagle River				
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church 17545 N. Eagle River Loop Rd.	General Caregiver	2nd Thursday	6:30-8 PM	Marilyn McKay 561-3313/Linda Shepard 746-3413
Statewide Telephone Support Group				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska	General Caregiver	1st and 3rd Wednesday 2-3 PM Dial in 1-877-216-1555, Code 927989		Gay Wellman 882-5620 or (800) 478-1080 x6
Fairbanks				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska 565 University Ave. Suite 2	General Caregiver	1st & 3rd Tuesday	11:30AM-1PM	Joan Adams 452-2277
Homer				
Friendship Center	General Caregiver	2 Thursday's a month	2:30-3:30	Mary Jo 235-2295
Juneau				
Bridge Adult Day Center 1803 Glacier Highway	Family Caregiver	Thursdays	6:30-8 PM	Joylynn for INFO at 463-6177 or 866.746.6177
Ketchikan				
Southeast Senior Services	Family Caregiver	Call for more information		Bernice 225-8080
Kodiak				
Kodiak Senior Center 302 Erskine Ave.	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	12:30-1:30 PM	486-6181
Mat-Su Valley				
Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska Trinity Barn Plaza Mile 2.2 Palmer-Wasilla Hwy.	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	1-2:30 PM	Linda Shepard 746-3413
Seward				
Seward Senior Center	General Caregiver	4th Thursday	1-2 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sitka				
Brave Heart Volunteers	General Caregiver	2nd Wednesday	12-1 PM	747-4600
Soldotna				
Soldotna Senior Center	General Caregiver	2nd & Last Tuesday	1-3 PM	262-1280 or (800) 776-8210
Sterling				
Sterling Senior Center	General Caregiver	1st Tuesday	1-2 PM	262-6808



**Alzheimer's
Resource
of Alaska**

30TH ANNIVERSARY

1984–2014

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Anchorage, AK 99507

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**HELP ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE OF ALASKA EARN DONATIONS
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Fred Meyer is donating \$2.5 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, based on where their customers want them to give. Here's how the program works:

- SIGN up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska at www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards. Search for us by name or by our non-profit number 81744.
- SHOP and use your Rewards Card, you are helping us earn a donation!
- EARN your Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates just as you do today.
- Rewards Cards are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store.
- For more information, please visit www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ALZHEIMER'S RESOURCE OF ALASKA!

