



Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska

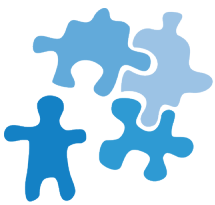
**Living with Dementia and
the Rhythm of Life** *p.4*

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Caregivers - Part I** *p.5*

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Find more helpful stories and perspectives
on our website blog @ alzalaska.org/blog

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Offices & Contact Information

Anchorage

1750 Abbott Rd.
Education (907) 561-3313
CCRA* (907) 677-6789

Fairbanks

565 University Ave., Ste. 2
Education (907) 452-2277

Mat-Su Valley

777 N. Crusey St., B101,
Wasilla, AK
Education (907) 746-3413
CCRA* (907) 746-3445

Juneau

2354 Mendenhall Loop Rd.
Education (907) 586-6044
CCRA* (907) 500-7456

Copper River Basin (907) 822-5620

Statewide

Toll Free within Alaska
outside of Anchorage
(800) 478-1080

* Care Coordination
Resource of Alaska

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www.alzaska.org

www.ccralaska.org

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Upcoming Events

MAYOR'S CHARITY BALL

JOIN US OCTOBER 8, 2022

At The Dena'ina Civic Convention Center

Tickets can be purchased through mayorscharity.org.

* Auction proceeds benefit Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska *



THE ANCHORAGE SOCIAL CLUB PRESENTS:

"A Night to Remember"

September 17, 2022

Doors open at
7:30 PM

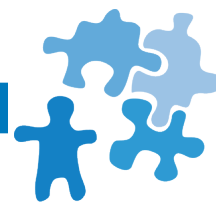


Dance the night away for Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska



Funds raised stay in Alaska, supporting those affected by Alzheimer's, related dementias, and other disabilities.

Letter *from the* Executive Director



Dear Friends,

We are enjoying this beautiful summer full of gratitude, having launched it with the season of long days and bright skies with one of our most successful Amblin' for Alaska events ever. More than two hundred neighbors, friends and supporters joined us at the Anchorage Golf Course for breakfast sponsored by Sal's Catering before our walk along the cart paths of the back nine. The pure joy of assembling in person, after two years of Virtual Amblin,' set the mood. Together we raised more than \$90,000 to help us continue our important work.



Over the last year, Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska has taken a leading role in the [*Alaska Dementia Action Collaborative*](#). One of the first tangible products of the Collaborative, with funding from the Alaska Mental Health Trust and AARP-Alaska, is a 41-page **Caregiver Resource Guide**. You'll see a copy of the [cover on p.5](#), and for those of you reading online it's a live link [to the Guide](#). This comprehensive guide offers simple to use guidance for family caregivers no matter what stage they may be at on the journey. Caregivers might be "Worried and Wondering", or "Definitely Concerned". They might be noticing "Obvious Changes – Now What?", or recognizing "I Need More Help", or acknowledging "Acceptance and Support". Each of these stages, and more, are explored in respectful and helpful ways.

ARA's active participation in groups like The Alaska Dementia Action Collaborative, where I chair the steering committee, or AGenet, where I serve on the Board of Directors, are beneficial to those we serve. A coordinated advocacy effort this year with AARP-AK, AGenet (the statewide network of senior service providers) and the Alaska Commission on Aging to encourage creating an Alzheimer's and dementia awareness program within the Department of Health's Division of Public Health. This successful effort will position the state's Division of Public Health to participate in federal funding to increase dementia and brain health awareness.

Finally, please join me in welcoming Kara Thrasher-Livingston, Sheryl Cook and Larry Duffy to the ARA Board of Directors! We know their commitment and enthusiasm will help advance our mission in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pam".

Pamela Kelley
Executive Director

[Make a Donatetion](#)

Living with Dementia and the Rhythm of Life

The power of rhythms can be harnessed to help us through many illnesses, including dementia and other neurological disorders and can help relieve the stresses of daily living.

By: Ann Farris

The human relationship to sound and rhythm starts early. In fact, even before you were born, you began to develop an auditory system. Already, you were in a world of sound: of breath and heartbeat, of rhythm and vibration. When you heard a lullaby as a toddler, it offered comfort and a feeling of happiness. As a young adult, songs that provided a beat and rhythm offered you meaning and enjoyment. As an older adult these are the special songs stored in your brain and bring back fond memories.

There is a strong connection between music and the mind. This powerful connection explains why a man in the later stages of dementia, barely able to communicate, will liven up when listening to his favorite music. Closely related to music is rhythm, “a strong, regular, repeated pattern of movement or sound”. In fact, rhythm is as elemental to breathing and other bodily functioning as it is to singing and dancing. Our lives are driven by rhythm.

In her Master’s [Thesis](#), “Music Therapy and Percussion for People with Dementia”, Jaclyn Bell focuses on the potential of percussion and

other rhythm-based music therapies. She writes, “People with dementia may gradually lose the ability to sing as the disease progresses and the use of percussion may allow for continued musical participation...”

Studies have shown that rhythm interventions can sometimes elicit more of a response than singing.”

There are a variety of ways to utilize rhythm to enhance the quality of life for someone living with dementia: start a drum circle with friends, keep the beat while listening to music, dance, exercise. Creating homemade instruments is always fun: fill an empty medicine bottle with rice and you have a maraca; books, pots, and tables make great drums. Finally, utilize rhythm to assist in the desired outcome of an activity: soft music before bed; relaxing music while bathing, upbeat music while folding laundry or cleaning.

There are ways to incorporate music into activities for everyone. The key to assisting those living with dementia is



selecting music that meets the need. For those in later stages of dementia, a more measured approach can be helpful. In her article, “How to use music to help a loved with dementia”, Jan Maier suggests starting slow and tailoring the activity to the response of the person living with dementia: “Keep sessions short, perhaps up to a half hour. Tailor the length of the sessions to how much your loved one enjoys them.”

A powerful visual of how rhythm can assist those with dementia or other neurological disorders is the video of a man living with Parkinson’s disease. During physiotherapy sessions, the man’s gait is enhanced first by the therapist counting “1. 2, 1, 2...”, and secondly by

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listening to a favorite song. These rhythmic cues assist the brain in going through the motions of walking.

The beat of our hearts, the rise and fall of our breathing, the movement of our bodies through each day demonstrate the natural rhythms of life. The power of rhythms can be harnessed to help us through many illnesses, including dementia and other

neurological disorders and can help relieve the stresses of daily living. In his book *Musicophilia*, renowned neuroscientist Oliver Sacks writes that rhythm is one of the most basic and fundamental parts of the human experience and remains with us until the very end. We agree, and to quote from the musical *Sweet Charity*, “The rhythm of life is a powerful beat!” ★



Alaska
Dementia Action
Collaborative

Caregiver Resource Guide

We're excited to have a new resource to offer care partners – family members, friends, and neighbors – who care for someone with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.

The new Alaska Caregiver Resource Guide was published by the Dementia Action Collaborative, a coalition of public-private partners committed to preparing Alaska State for the growth of the dementia population.

Find out more and download the guide at <https://www.alzalaska.org/caregiver-resource-guide/>

The Stigma of Dementia and Its Impact on Caregivers – Part I

December 17, 2019 — Rhonda Feldman, Ph.D., C.Psych
Reitman Centre Team, dementiacarers.ca

What is the stigma of dementia?

In a general sense, stigma is something that sets a person apart from others, something that takes away from one's character or reputation. Stigma carries with it disgrace and humiliation. Stigma around dementia refers to the concept that dementia diminishes someone or makes them worth less than others. Stigma implies that cognitive functioning defines a person's value. Even the word “demented” is an insult in common use. Some cultures see dementia as contagious. When someone has dementia, the disease becomes the family's shame, and they keep it hidden.

Small changes can make a real difference

We all have our own biases and vulnerabilities. Research has shown that stigma is best challenged through understanding and interaction. Instead of trying to end stigma, it is much more helpful to talk about realistic small changes. We want to connect with the person with dementia as an individual, rather than their symptoms.

Stigma is one of the factors that leads to caregiver isolation. For example, for the past few years a client of mine has been caring for his wife who has Alzheimer's dementia. Several years ago, a friend told him

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Grants Available



Funding is available for services and to support the needs of people with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias (ADRD).

The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority provides grants up to \$2,500 per fiscal year; available for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia (ADRD) to purchase items or services that are not covered by other funding sources to help improve quality of life and increase independent functioning.

Details at:
<http://www.alzaska.org/mini-grant>

For more information contact:
Kevin Silver at 907-561-3313
or email ksilver@alzaska.org



[Learn More →](#)

The Stigma of Dementia and Its Impact on Caregivers - Part I

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that she would not visit because she “didn’t like sick people.” A few years have passed since that conversation, and my client continues to carry feelings of rejection and shame. Even if his friend did not mean to hurt him, her comment sent the message that someone who is sick with dementia isn’t worth spending time with, and my client experienced stigma by association.

Shame and fear of dementia – real costs

We are talking about a complex issue with serious emotional and practical implications. Stigma impacts how people with dementia think about themselves, and what they expect from others in their lives. Sometimes people avoid seeing their doctor because of the stigma associated with a diagnosis of cognitive impairment. After a diagnosis of dementia people often feel ashamed of the label, because they expect others to treat them as though they have a shameful illness. Because dementia affects a person’s ability to communicate and engage with people, they might



worry that they seem “stupid” or “incapable.” I have a client whose husband did not tell his partners at his business firm that he was getting confused. He made a crucial and costly mistake and he was forced to retire. Informing his business partners about changes to health that would impact the business was in the partnership agreement. Ironically, if he had felt safe to share his diagnosis, he could have left the business with his reputation intact.

In reality, people with mild and moderate dementia can continue to live full and productive lives if they make appropriate modifications. Unfortunately, people with dementia are often defined by their symptoms. Dementia symptoms are not necessarily expressed the same way in all people, and symptoms change

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The Stigma of Dementia and Its Impact on Caregivers – Part I

(Cont. from previous page)

over time in a person with dementia. Variability adds to misunderstandings about dementia. I hear all the time how frustrating it can be when someone's family member with dementia cannot remember the answer to a question from 5 minutes ago but can remember the details of a vacation they took as a child. Sometimes people question whether their family member really has dementia because they are able to remember the past. In fact, this difference in recall happens because of differences in the way the brain stores memories. With dementia, the brain has difficulty storing new information. Accessing memories about the past is easier because the connections between brain cells are stronger.

Assumptions are a form of stigma. When someone with dementia has a lapse of attention during a conversation, people might assume that they are unable to remember anything or understand complex ideas. They might be left out of other discussions, even about things that are important to them. I often hear from my clients how frustrating it is that people talk to them and ignore their family member with dementia.

Stigma by association – impacts caregivers too

I mentioned a caregiver whose friend wouldn't come to visit him and his wife. Not only was it a rejection of the woman with dementia, it was also a rejection of her husband. This is stigma by association. Caregivers of people with dementia are also affected by stigma. It is easy enough to see how stigma leads to isolation, which is a strong contributor to caregiver burden.

Who to tell about the diagnosis is a dilemma for caregivers, because revealing the diagnosis can increase stigma. My clients tell me that they feel conflicted about sharing this information with friends or family. On the one hand, they crave the emotional and practical support that comes from having other people aware of the challenges. On the other hand, caregivers want to preserve their family member's dignity and privacy. I worked with one woman who had many compassionate people in her life who knew nothing about how much she was suffering. She was so good at hiding the extent of her husband's impairments that no one realized that he needed any help from her.

It is hard for caregivers to avoid the trap of all-or-nothing thinking when it comes to revealing the diagnosis, while actually telling a few valued people may be enough for a sense of connection. That phrase "at times like these you really learn who your friends are" holds true for dementia. People tell me that it is surprising who lets them down, and also how support sometimes comes from surprising places. ★

In [Part II](#) of this article (find it on our [website blog @ alzaska.org](http://www.alzaska.org)), we will continue to explore how we can make small changes to counter stigma to be helpful to people with dementia and their families.

For more information and assistance on caregiving challenges in managing dementia, please call us at 907-561-3313 or visit our website, [alzaska.org](http://www.alzaska.org).

Pick.Click.Give.

Alaskans may choose to add or adjust their pledges online through **August 31**, please consider making a gift to **Alzheimer's Resource of Alaska**.

visit: pfd.alaska.gov

Donations Made In Honor or Memory of

between January 1 - July 1, 2022 — alphabetized by honoree

Donate

Alice

Celia Koelsch

Amelia

Harry Prichard

Gil

Catherine Coon

Karen

Heather Jacox

Sharon

Sherri Roberds

Teresa's Mom

Keri Clark

Elva Amidon

Ronald & Sandra Amidon
Ann and Ray Rodgers

Chottie Angst

Susan Rymzo

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Jan Janzen

Rebecca Marinelli

Anita Kirk

Joanie Kirk

Sandy Knight

Tyler Woznica
Preferred Care

Charlene Konestago

Pioneers of AK Women's
Igloo #11

Victor LaForge

Cheryl Snyder

Lynne Larson

Judy Simonds

Dorothy Magette

John and Jackie Brunton *

Rev. Russell H. McConnell,

Beatrice McConnell,
& Robert McConnell

Ruth McConnell Benson

Rusty Moore

Michael Dunn

M. L. Morgan

Michele L. Berns

Kim Peterson

Teresa Richards

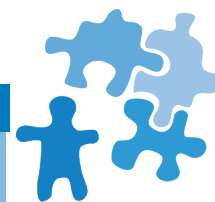
Cheryl Ponder

SWONAP

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Donations Made In Honor or Memory of, cont.

between January 1 - July 1, 2022 — alphabetized by honoree



Moveta Posma
Moveta Posma Trust

Charles Powers
Joan Cullinane

Irvine Pyett
Dennis Stock

Uncle Ralph and Aunt Mary
Carey Mills

Audrey Roberts
Susan June
Donna Piszczak
Pamela Kelley
Marta Zamiska

Macon Roberts
Elisabeth Fleischer

Gary Rupert
Teri Kostka

Jeff Schowen
Janet Pinter

Aunt Bev & Bobbie Scribner
Chris Wilson

Bobbie Adams Scribner
Steve Adams

Jim & Phyllis Serfling
Krista Shelby

Bette Shaver
Kathryn Stoltzfus

Paula Skvarch
Jacque Good

Robert Stewart
Linda Shepard

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Elena Hartford

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Abby McLane

Craig Thompson
Brad and Mary Reeve
Alaskan Brewing Co.

Phyllis Thompson
Kristin George *

Patricia Versnick
Rhonda S. Scott

Larry W.
Aunt Shelly Cassano

Evelyn White
Louise Smith

Regina Wilgus
Oma

Jim Wilgus

Gene Williamson & Marlene Ronnie Williamson
Carrie Berrey
Tom Williamson & Ann Farris

Joanne Younie
Robert & Melissa Burke

Susan Reading Pozzi

Bruce Pozzi

Shawn Abel

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Stacy Barnes

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Robert R. Richards

T.J. Sardy

Mario Scampoli

Carrie Schnell

Maribeth & Griff Steiner

Truman & Roberta Struck

Dolores Tamagni

Daniel Dieckgraeff &

Denise Thanepohn



[Make a Donatetion](#)

Caregiver Support Groups throughout Alaska

Groups are free to join. ARA logo  indicates an ARA facilitator.
Contact facilitator in advance for zoom link or call-in phone number.



Support groups provide a way for people with a common experience to help and learn from each other. They can be an important source of social and emotional support, as well as a great way to see what works for others and learn about local services.

Most groups are currently available statewide over the  phone or via  Zoom. For this reason most people find it helpful to identify groups with days and times that work best with your schedule regardless of location.



You might also be interested in joining our Facebook Caregiver Support Group. This is a closed group and you will need to request

























MIND MATTERS

is an education and support program for individuals with early memory loss.



This program goes beyond the confines of a traditional support group and offers participants a chance to share experiences while engaging in a variety of meaningful activities including volunteering, gardening, writing and listening to guest speakers.

For more info contact: Debbie Chulick at [907-561-3313](tel:907-561-3313) or dchulick@alzalaska.org

Statewide Telephone Support Group Dial in using: Code 927989# No registration required	 Every 1st Saturday, 1-2:00 pm For additional info, contact  Gay Wellman, 822-5620 or 800-478-1080
	 Every 3rd Wednesday, 1-2:00 pm For additional info, contact  Debbie Chulick, 561-3313 or 800-478-1080
Statewide Care Partner Support	 Every 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 1-2:30 pm  Every 2nd & 4th Saturday 10:30am-12 pm  CONTACT:  Gay Wellman, gwellman@alzalaska.org 822-5620 or 800-478-1080
Grieving Caregiver Support	 Every 1st & 3rd Thursday, 1-2:30 pm  CONTACT:  Gay Wellman, gwellman@alzalaska.org 822-5620 or 800-478-1080
Anchorage	 Every 4th Thursday, 5:30-7 pm  CONTACT:  Debbie Chulick, 561-3313
Eagle River	 Every 2nd Thursday, 5:30-7 pm  CONTACT:  Debbie Chulick, 561-3313
Fairbanks	 Every 2nd Tuesday, 4:30-6 pm  Every 3rd Tuesday, 1:00-2:30 pm CONTACT:  Joan Adams, 452-2277
Homer	Call for current schedule CONTACT: Pam Hooker, 235-7655
Juneau / Southeast AK	Call for current schedule CONTACT: Aimee 463-6177
Ketchikan	Call for current schedule. CONTACT: Bernice, 255-8080
Kodiak	Every 4th Thursday, 12:30-1:30 pm CONTACT: 486-6181
Mat-Su Valley	 Every 2nd Tuesday, 1:30-3 pm  CONTACT:  Janice Downing 746-3413
Seward	Every 4th Thursday, 1-2 pm CONTACT: 244-5604
Sitka	Call for current schedule CONTACT: 747-4600
Soldotna	Every 2nd and Last Tuesday, 1-3 pm Every 1st Tuesday, 1-2 pm CONTACT: Dani Keschull, 262-1280
Sutton, Palmer, Chickaloon, Glacier View	 Every 1st Friday, 10-11:30 am  CONTACT:  Kim Jung, 746-3413
Talkeetna, Willow, Trapper Creek	 Every 1st Monday, 10-11:30 am  CONTACT:  Kim Jung, 746-3413



CAREGIVING 101

Making Visits Positive

Thurs, 7/7, 12pm-1:30pm

Juneau – In-Person

–OR–

Fri, 7/8, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Nutrition and Brain Health:

What we need to know

Wed, 7/13, 11am-12:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Alive Inside, movie showing

Wed, 7/20, 5:30pm-7pm

Fairbanks – In-Person

Frontotemporal Dementia

Tue, 7/26, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

–OR–

Thurs, 7/28, 1pm-2:30pm

Mat-Su – In-Person

When Does Forgetting Become a Worry?

Fri, 7/29, 12pm-1:00pm

Webinar REGISTER

Being the Decision Maker

Thurs, 8/4, 12pm-1:30pm

Juneau – In-Person

–OR–

Fri, 8/5, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

For more information or registration assistance contact:
907-561-3313 from Anchorage, or 1-800-478-1080

Family Meeting

Wed, 8/10, 11am-12:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Downsizing and Decluttering

Fri, 8/19, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Common Challenges Faced by Dementia Care Partners

Mon, 8/22, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

–OR–

Tue, 8/23, 1pm-2:30pm

Mat-Su – In-Person

End of Life

Thurs, 9/8, 12pm-1:30pm

Juneau – In-Person

–OR–

Fri, 9/9, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Engaging People Living with Dementia

Tue, 9/13, 3pm-4:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

–OR–

Fri, 9/16, 3pm-4:30pm

Anchorage – In-Person

Clues & conversations: Understanding Alzheimer's Disease

Wed, 9/14, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

Honoring Connection: Improve Communication

Mon, 9/19, 1pm-2:30pm

Webinar REGISTER

–OR–

Tue, 9/20, 1pm-2:30pm

Mat-Su – In-Person

Creating Moments of Joy

Wed, 9/21, **CANCELLED**

Fairbanks – In-Person

PDF SAVVY CAREGIVER

Learn caregiver skills and knowledge to provide the highest level of care for loved ones and yourself.

REGISTER HERE

For more information or registration assistance:

Gay Wellman at
907-822-5620 or email:
gwellman@alzalaska.org

Saturday, 7/9-8/13
1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

PDF Art Links 1-1:45pm

To register contact:
Janice Downing at
746-3413 or email:
jdowning@alzalaska.org

Thursday, 4/7 & 4/21
Thursday, 5/5 & 5/19
Thursday, 6/2 & 6/16
Online meeting

Friday, 7/8 & 7/22
Friday, 8/12 & 8/16
Friday, 9/9 & 9/23
Mat-Su – In-Person

PDF Memory Café

To register contact
Ann Farris at
561-3313 or email:
afarris@alzalaska.org

Thursday, 7/14, 1pm
Thursday, 8/11, 1pm
Thursday, 9/8, 1pm
Online meeting

Voices of the Last Frontier

Chorus program to support people with dementia and their care-partners

To register contact:
Ann Farris at
907-561-3313 or email:
afarris@alzalaska.org

Professional Webinars

Contact: Amber Smith: 586-6044 or asmith@alzalaska.org

Activity Box Ideas for People Living with Dementia

Tuesday, 7/19, 12 pm – 1:00pm

Webinar REGISTER HERE

Music in Dementia Care

Tuesday, 8/23, 12 pm – 1:00pm

Webinar REGISTER HERE

Activities are Everywhere

Tuesday, 6/21, 12 pm – 1:00pm

Webinar REGISTER HERE



PDF Mind Aerobics™

Online meetings

12-week course meeting twice per week

For Alaskans worried about Memory Loss who want to keep their mind fit and engaged.

Contact: Ken Helander

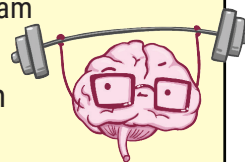
907-561-3313 or khelander@alzalaska.org

Mind Sharpener™

Tue & Thur, 7/12-9/29, 10am-11am

Mind Works™

Mon & Wed, 8/3-11/2, 1pm-2 pm



Thanks for Amblin'!



We were overwhelmed with gratitude at the turnout for our return to an in-person Spring event, Amblin' for Alzheimer's.

Thank you to our Beacon sponsor, **ConocoPhillips**, and all our supporters and **volunteers** that contributed to a successful event, helping us further achieve our on-going mission to support Alaskans affected by Alzheimer's disease, related dementias and other disabilities to ensure quality of life.

