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President's Message

By Sheryl Ashby



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We had a wonderful Caregiver's Conference on November 6th. Thank you to all of you who made it a success. We had David Troxel as our Keynote Speaker. He is the author of 'The Best Friend Approach to Alzheimer's Care'. He was a very dynamic speaker who told us of a lovely lady (who was in Assisted Living). She was a hand full when she arrived. With David's help, they put on a tea and invited her.

She attended and wore a beautiful hat. She was told she looked lovely in the hat and asked if she liked wearing hats. She said "Yes, people treat you better when you are wearing a hat." As time went by, the

facility made her the ambassador and as such, she was in charge of inviting people to the (what were now daily) teas. She blossomed like a rose and felt pleased to have a purpose (which she took seriously).

Our thanks to Del Oro for sponsoring Lilia Mendosa. She was the leader of one of our break-out sessions. She was instrumental in starting Alzheimer's Mexico and has been a consultant for over 30 countries world wide. Her break-out class was titled 'Alzheimer's—Best practices from around the world.

We had other Break-out classes: Max Perry offered advice on how to

advocate for your loved one while you still can. Paul Scholl talked about Hospice and planning for the end before the tears. Alan Fisher talked about End of Life Planning and Sandra Ewers and Kim Alsop presented a session titled 'Dining for Dementia.

Our Second Speaker of the day was Salome Mora who spoke to us on 'Activities—A Caregiver's Approach.

Our Conference came to a close with Maria Cisco who spoke to us on 'How to Speak Dementia'.

I know that I left the Conference wanting to hear more from all our speakers.

From the Board of Directors

The Alzheimer's Aid Society's Board of Directors has seven members. Combined we have over 150 years experience in the field of aging and dementia. Six have been caregivers for their own loved ones.

All seven share a passionate commitment to our mission:

We exist to provide support, education and compassion to patients and caregivers throughout the journey of Alzheimer's Disease, to support medical research, and to promote public awareness.

Best wishes to all for a prosperous new year. We join you in hoping for medical breakthroughs in the fight against Alzheimer's in 2011!

Sheryl Ashby, President

Sal Arrigo, Jr.

Cindy Den Brave

Steve Gianandrea

Clara Jackson

Max Perry

Cynda Rennie

Kim's Korner

By Kim Winters, BSG, M.Ed.

Kim Winters is the Community Education and Family Services Director for Primrose of Sacramento.

Alzheimer's Disease is Challenging

Alzheimer's disease is challenging in itself, let alone the development of behaviors associated with the progression of the disease. The challenge is really to try and understand the reasons why the behavior of others can frustrate us so very much.

Challenging behaviors is a term often used and associated with maladaptation. Maladaptation is a term used when discussing human behaviors associated with survival. Survival is the mode in which persons with Alzheimer's adapt to their environment due to the cognitive impairment. It can also signify that with time the maladaptation may become more of a degeneration. Over time, maladaptation or the inability to adapt to situations becomes detrimental to the persons health and safety, and may require interventions. In reality, only rare decisive forms of survival can be balanced without other forms of synergy. Synergy refers to how two things together combined can produce a better outcome.

Challenging behaviors can range from yelling, screaming, biting self or others, kicking, hitting, verbal abuse, constant moaning, tearing at clothes, removing clothing, anger, disturbed sleep patterns, flirtatious behavior, and refusal of care. These are just to name a few of the behaviors that can become challenging throughout all stages of the disease process.

There are reasons for the behavior that becomes frustrating for us, and caring for those that develop the disease. Alzheimer's disease can cause the person to act in unpredictable ways. These unpredictable behaviors cause tension in the relationship between the person with Alzheimer's and the caregiver. The caregiver needs to understand that this is not the person, it is the disease process, and not done on purpose.

Unpredictable behavior can be triggered for many reasons. Memory loss is the most com-

mon. Some people forget the most basic things in their life, like spouses. This can trigger the person with Alzheimer's to become flirtatious with others, which can be very embarrassing for the spouse, or caregiver. When this type of behavior is displayed, it is easiest to try and distract the person, however difficult it may be, it is not impossible. Change the subject of conversation, try and remove the person from the target. This too shall be forgotten, yet may happen again and again. Therefore, caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease requires flexibility, patience, and an appreciation for the power of the brain. The brain is the source of all of our thought processes; emotions, personality, and behavior. The key to managing challenging behaviors is to keep a compassionate and open mind.

The caregiver needs to understand that this is not the person, it is the disease process, and not done on purpose.

There are three links in the behavior chain, with the first being the antecedent. The antecedent is the trigger before the actual behavior, or what was happening before the challenging behavior began. These can be internal, such as hunger, emotional upset, or illness. Or they can be external, such as environment, immediate surroundings, or overwhelming activities.

Try keeping track of the antecedents. When a behavior occurs write it down. For example, does the person with Alzheimer's disease become agitated after a visit with his/her sibling? Is he/she more likely to wander away from the home after being taken to an appointment outside the home? Does he/she have more movement before having to use the restroom? These are the antecedents to the behavior.

This can be a wide range of very common, and difficult behaviors among people diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. The most frequent behavior that is common, and holds many smaller behaviors under one umbrella is aggression. Aggression can include yelling, screaming, kicking, hitting, verbal abuse, tearing at clothing, or an actual physical attack on you or someone else. It is im-

portant to immediately try and calm the environment, or remove the person with aggression out of the environment. When talking with the person with Alzheimer's disease, address the issues as if they were of sound mind and body. This is important, in order to restore integrity, and dignity to the immediate situation. It also allows you to focus on their emotional state. These may not always be easily spotted, however, if you continue to track these periods of aggression, the consequences or outcomes may be different.

The consequences are what happen after the behavior. These can be positive or negative. The positive outcomes or consequences can reinforce the behavior as helpful. For example, if your loved one has difficulty taking a shower, and resists frequently, the reward for finally complying could be dinner out, or another type of reward that you know they will enjoy. The negative outcome may be that we discourage the behavior, and try to modify the outcome. For example, if your loved one prefers to take the trash out to the garbage can, and habitually spills the content, a negative intervention may be that you insist on taking the trash out yourself. While giving your loved one another task to complete, perhaps a task that may not have such an impact if failed. This may lessen the chance for the behavior to be repeated. The person with Alzheimer's disease cannot control or manage these behaviors on their own, they need guidance, and support. Remember, these are challenges for caregivers and loved ones alike.

So as we continue to take care of our loved ones in the home, their maladaptation, or their ability to adapt to a continuous cognitive impairment become more and more difficult. We need to assist them with the process, to assure that the challenging behaviors are minimal to assure health and safety in the home.

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease requires flexibility, patience, and an appreciation for the power of the brain.

FORGET ME NOT

Looking Back...

2010 was a busy year for the Alzheimer's Aid Society. We look back with gratitude for the people who make everything we do possible. Our Peer Counselors are volunteers who answer phones and take care of day-to-day operations in our offices. Support group leaders give their time in facilitating our many support groups for caregivers.

Our heartfelt thanks to those of you who were able, in this difficult economy, to support the Alzheimer's Aid Society with your donations and memorial gifts.

Last year's Annual Conference in Sacramento was hosted by Jesuit High School. Colleen Arrigo did a fabulous job of coordinating the set-up and supplies for the venue. Dr. Barbara Gillogly of American River College co-chairs the event with the Alzheimer's Aid Society. She provides the CEU's for professionals and school credit for students, as well as giving valued consultation on the conference content. Our speakers were outstanding; you can read more

about them in the President's Message on the front page of this issue.

The Annual Joey Lopes Crab Feed was a great success. Our thanks to Silvestre Gilmete, Jr., and the Lopes family who host this event each year to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Aid Society in memory of Silvestre's uncle, Joey Lopes.

In October, the first Annual Harvest Moon Dinner and Auction was held at the Greek Orthodox Church in Modesto. Any new event requires thrice the work in coordinating every detail, and that's what Cindy DenBrave of our Modesto office gave! The Harvest Moon was fabulous thanks to Cindy and her committee.

Chris Schoonveld co-chaired the Annual Golf Tournament and Dinner, Drive for the Cure, with Sal Arrigo, Jr. Mather Golf Course hosted the event again in 2010. Big Jim Hall of K-Hits 92.1 FM was the emcee for the silent auction. Many thanks to Big Jim, Chris, Sal and their committee for all the hard work!

The 5K Run/Walk, in July, was a phenomenal event hosted by Alan Fisher and East Lawn. Eileen Javora from KCRA Channel 3 and Mike Simpson from KFBK 1530 AM were the co-emcees. This event grows bigger each year. We had excellent news coverage which helps to spread awareness of our cause.

We are so fortunate to have the help of Max Perry, an assistant in the Benavidez Law Firm. Max donates two full days each month, one to our Modesto office and one to our Sacramento office. He is available to meet with families to answer questions about MediCal, Power of Attorney, Veteran's benefits and more. Just give either office a call to schedule an appointment, free of charge.

*If you see ten troubles coming
down the road, you can be sure
that nine will run into the ditch
before they reach you.
—Calvin Coolidge*

Looking Ahead...

In 2011 a conference will be held in Modesto. Modeled after our annual Sacramento conference, it will be informative for caregivers and professionals alike. Look for details in upcoming issues. We are looking forward to adding this conference to our annual events!

In Sacramento, our Forget Me Not Club began in December of 2010. We now have two classrooms so we can host caregiver support groups and patient support and activity groups at the same time. The meetings are held every Tuesday from 10:30 to noon at the Sacramento office location.

All of our annual events are already in the planning stages so check our website or see future newsletters for more information.

Both of our locations are open Monday through Friday. Modesto 9am to 3pm, Sacramento 9am to 4pm. Don't hesitate to call or drop in for resource information, someone to talk to, or information about Alzheimer's Disease and tips on caregiving. Our peer counselors and staff are here for you.

There is probably a caregiver support group near you! We are adding new groups in new locations as we are able. There are also support groups for patients in Sacramento and Modesto.

We are hoping to offer more mini-seminars this year in both locations. These are usually held on Saturdays and each features two important topics related to dementia.

Our Newsletter goes out to over 6,000 addresses bi-monthly. We welcome submissions and suggestions! Any submission must be accompanied by permission of the author to reprint. Call or email Cynda Rennie with suggestions. Email Cynda or mail submissions to our Sacramento office at 2641 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA. 95621. Phone: 916-483-2002 or toll-free 800-540-3340. Cynda's email address is: cr.eldercare@yahoo.com Your feedback is always welcome.

FORGET ME NOT

The Importance of a Proper Diagnosis In All Forms of Dementia

When someone exhibits the symptoms of dementia (memory loss, changes in language and math skills, disorientation) it is essential to have a thorough medical evaluation. Alzheimer's Disease is diagnosed through the process of ruling-out other conditions which can cause similar symptoms. **Some of these conditions, unlike Alzheimer's, can be cured or reversed.**

Examples include:

- ◆ Low Blood Sugar
- ◆ Low or High Sodium
- ◆ Low or High Calcium
- ◆ B-12 Deficiency
- ◆ Dehydration
- ◆ Low Thiamin (B-1)
- ◆ Interaction of Meds
- ◆ Lyme Disease
- ◆ Meningitis /Encephalitis
- ◆ Untreated Syphilis
- ◆ Untreated Infection
- ◆ Brain Tumor
- ◆ Medication Interaction
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- ◆ Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus

The evaluation for cause of dementia symptoms, including Alzheimer's, should include:

A complete history – To evaluate the person's lifestyle and history of head injury (even as a child,) military service, visits to foreign countries, and family health history.

A thorough exam by a neurologist – which should include:

- ◆ Physical and neurological evaluation
- ◆ Complete review of all medications; prescribed, herbal, over-the-counter
- ◆ Neuropsychological testing, to assess thinking and memory skills
- ◆ Complete Blood Count
- ◆ Screening Metabolic Panel
- ◆ Thyroid function tests
- ◆ Levels of Vitamins B-12, B-1, B-6
- ◆ Urinalysis
- ◆ Electrocardiogram, to assess heart function
- ◆ Brain Scan –

The scan can be: Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI,) Computerized Tomography (CT,) Positron Emission Tomography (PET) or Single-Proton Emission Computerized Topography (SPECT.) Usually the doctor will order only one of these scans. Discuss with your neurologist which would be best, what is available, insurance coverage, and costs.

By Cynda Rennie, 2010

References: Mayo Clinic Alzheimer's Disease Center www.mayoclinic.org; American Academy of Family Physicians www.aafp.org; University of California at San Francisco www.ucsf.edu.

Sometimes when people are under stress they hate to think, and it's the time when they most need to think.
—Bill Clinton

Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase.
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

FORGET ME NOT

Donations received September 15 – December 15, 2010 in honor or in memory of:

Ralph Amerson
Flora Bench
Laverne Bowz
Hazel Boyce
Ruth Bradley
Marjorie Christy
Evelyn Collins
Helen Corter
Marguerite Carollo
Russell Pete Carollo
Ralph Cree
Douglas Dicker
Dr. Diamond
Marilyn Duval
Lee Ellington
Barbara Ernst
John Falduti
Grace Foley
Nancy "Berthena" Foster
Florence Francis
Julio Giardi
George Giovando

Rita Goltz
Dean Graham
Zetta Green
Eddie Harper
Rita Henry
Edeltraud Hoffman
M. Hoffman
Catherine Howell
Paul Huber
Jerry Jarret
Gabe Machado
M. Maxwell
Flora McDonald
Lillian Mendonca
Elvera Mendosa
Hilda Mettler
Mary Ann Mork
Bill Mullikin
Joe Nunes
Josie Perez
Betty Jo O'Brian
Fred Picchi

Ida Ramos
Harold Wayne Raney
Doug Rapier
Ron Redding
Mildred Reeves
Dave Roberts
Mrs. Rothkopf
Lewis Sadler
Mary Sanchez
Danny Schott
Merl Shelton
Joseph Silva
Jim Snodgrass
Lois Snodgrass
Theresa Spalding
Helen Stuart
John Sullivan
Coco Tավillo
Rose Ann Vuich
Alice White

Donation Information

Donations are always appreciated. This is what keeps the Alzheimer's Aid Society going and makes it possible for us to help those dealing with the relentless disease of Alzheimer's. If you would like to make a donation "In Memory of" or "In Honor of" a loved one or friend, please make sure you clearly indicate the name of the person remembered or honored, as well as anyone you wish to be notified of your donation along with their address.

All donations are tax-deductible and can be mailed to the Sacramento or Modesto office, or donate on line at www.AlzheimersAidSociety.org

Beatitudes for Care

By Pat Warner, RN, MSN of Roseburg Oregon

Blessed are the caregivers who understand Alzheimer's Disease as a reversing of the aging process. For they shall have a better understanding of my being "caught in a time tunnel."

Blessed is the person who comes up to me and tells me his/her name first and reminds me of some shared experience we've had. This may help me recall. For then I become reassured and less stressed.

Blessed are the caregivers who let me periodically withdraw and re-group. For loud noises of children, barking dogs, TV and radio set me into instant confusion and temporarily devastate my mind.

Volunteer Profile



Virginia Daniel

Peer Counselor since 1992

Virginia met her husband, Marion White, in Kansas where they were both in college studying to become teachers. Marion served in WWII as a radio operator in the Navy, then returned to complete his education. The two teachers fell in love. They knew each other for exactly two months plus one day before they married in 1946. Marion and Virginia spent the next 45 years caring for each other.

The Whites moved to Sacramento in 1955. Until retirement, Virginia taught special education in the San Juan District. Marion taught elementary school until he had to retire in 1985, with the onset of dementia.

Marion was just 58 years old when Virginia began to witness the symptoms in her husband that would later be called dementia. As president of the Sacramento Mineral Society, Marion enjoyed the frequent camping trips the group organized. In the summer of 1985, Marion suddenly was completely disoriented in the RV they owned and stayed in on these camping trips.

A pivotal event came when Marion faced humiliation and shock when he suddenly could not help a fourth grade student with her math problem. It was that "blank moment" so many with Alzheimer's and other

dementias see as the defining moment. Marion said he had come to hate teaching and wanted to leave the profession.

Marion began a quest to keep working. He tried to take real estate courses but could not conquer the math. He went back to work in the school district as an instructional aide. Marion did well for a time, but within the year had to stop working.

Virginia was on a quest of her own: to find the answer to what had caused her husband to change so drastically. In 1986 Marion was diagnosed by a neurologist as having Alzheimer's. Dr. Charles Bernick would later call Marion's case, "the most unusual" he had ever seen.

Virginia began attending the Alzheimer's Aid Society support group in Carmichael in 1986. Sometimes Marion accompanied her. He sat on a sofa across the room from the group, having a sincere conversation with someone seated next to him, someone only he could see.

Marion's behaviors were, indeed, unusual for Alzheimer's Disease. He had many falls at home and walked with a pronounced shuffle. He never became angry, but anxiety was produced by his many delusions and hallucinations. Marion saw strange creatures painting the house. After a time he became obsessed with leaving food and water out for these creatures. He could not follow the most simple directions but could express his own thoughts well. On one occasion, Marion unbuckled his seatbelt and stepped out into traffic at an intersection.

In early 1992 Virginia understood that placement into a care facility was necessary. She could no longer keep them both safe. Marion fell and broke his hip shortly after moving into the care home. He did not recover in the hospital as was expected, and began a very rapid decline. Marion White passed away on February 14, 1992.

An autopsy revealed that Marion had suffered from Lewy Body Dementia, another progressive dementia that often mimics Alzheimer's

Disease in the early stages. Hallucinations are

common in Lewy Body Dementia, as are changes in gait and coordination.

In December of 1992, Virginia began volunteering at the Sacramento office of the Alzheimer's Aid Society. Virginia is very active in her church and feels the Lord has given her these experiences so that she can help others. For eighteen years now Virginia has been helping those who are facing the challenges she knows so well. Virginia is an excellent peer counselor, she has assisted hundreds of families to find their way in the journey of Alzheimer's and other dementias.

Virginia re-married after she lost Marion. Sadly, she lost her second husband to cancer. Virginia remains active in her church, takes care of herself, and remains committed to helping others. Recently, as she approaches age 86, Virginia considered retiring her post at the Alzheimer's Aid Society. After much thought and prayer, Virginia left this note in the office for her co-workers: "I am not quitting. I will keep working until God tells me no! Love you all, Virginia." We love you too, Virginia!

By Cynda Rennie

the summer of 1985, Marion suddenly was completely disoriented

Virginia was on a quest of her own: to find the answer to what had caused her husband to change so drastically.

They knew each other for exactly two months plus one day before they married in 1946.

I am not quitting. I will keep working until God tells me no!

Did You Know?

Imogene Coco had Alzheimer's?
Charles Bronson had Alzheimer's?
Winston Churchill had Alzheimer's?

FORGET ME NOT

SUPPORT GROUPS

Auburn 1st and 3rd Friday
10 am – 11:30 am
Auburn Presbyterian Church
13025 Bel Air Drive
Facilitator: Sue Galvez
530-878-2428

Amador County 4th Wednesday
10:00 am
Senior Center
229 New York Ranch Rd., Jackson
Facilitator: Laurie Webb
800-540-3340

Carmichael 1st Wednesday
7:00 – 8:30 pm
Aegis of Carmichael
4050 Walnut Avenue
Facilitator: Cynda Rennie
916-723-4444

Folsom 3rd Wednesday
6:30 – 7:30 pm
Emeritus at Folsom
780 Harrington Way
Facilitator: Darlene Moeaki
916-983-9300

Lake County
Call Caroline Denny
707-263-9481
For information regarding
Days, times and location

Lodi 1st Monday at 2:00 pm
And 4th Thursday at 6:00 pm
Emeritus at Austin Gardens
2150 W. Kettleman
Facilitators: Jenanne and Stacey
209-333-8033

Manteca 3rd Saturday
1:00 pm
Merrill Gardens
430 N. Union Road
Facilitator: Sharee Thomas
209-823-0164

Manteca 3rd Wednesday
12 noon
Prestige Senior Living
1130 Empire Avenue
Facilitator: Taylor Mead
209-239-4531

Modesto Every Monday at 9:30 am
And Every Monday at 5:30 pm
Alzheimer's Aid Society
700 McHenry #B
Facilitators: Cindy DenBrave & Jill Aja
209-238-0538

Placerville 3rd Monday
10:00 am
Elder Options Annex
82 Main Street
Facilitator: Carol Heape
530-626-6939

Roseville 3rd Wednesday
7:00 – 8:30 pm
Palms of Roseville
100 Sterling Court
Facilitator: Cynda Rennie
916-723-4444

Sacramento Every Tuesday
10:30 am – 12:00 noon
Alzheimer's Aid Society
2641 Cottage Way #4
Facilitator: Janeece Sargis
916-483-2002

Sonora
Call Joan Peixott
209-533-7180
For information regarding
Days, times and location

Stockton 2nd Tuesday
10:00 am
Somerset Place
3530 Deer Park Drive
Facilitator: Chelease Adams
209-951-6500

Tracy 4th Thursday
6:00 pm
Astoria Gardens
1960 W. Lowell (at Coral Hollow)
Facilitator: Antonia Hoy
209-833-2200

Turlock Every Thursday
Covenant Village Community
2125 North Olive Avenue
Facilitator: Mike Zuniga
209-632-9587

Vacaville 2nd Tuesday
Emeritus of Vacaville
1111 Ulatis Drive
Facilitator: Sheena Merilos
707-447-7100

Yreka 1st and 3rd Tuesday
Oakridge Senior Park Clubhouse
400 Hiram Page Road
Facilitator: Ronda Moser
530-459-3501

Yuba City 4th Saturday
10:00 am
Summerfield Senior Care Center
1224 Plummas
Facilitator: Mike Fortwengler
800-540-3340

Special Interest Groups For the Patient

Modesto Every Monday
Support Group and Reminiscence
9:30 am
Alzheimer Aid Society
700 McHenry #B
Facilitator: Cindy DenBrave or
Sheryl Ashby
209-238-0538

Placerville
Support Group for Early Stages
Call Carol Heape if interested
530-626-6939

Sacramento Every Tuesday
1st, 3rd, 5th : Brain Exercise and Reminis-
cence
2nd and 4th : Support Group for Early
Stages of Memory Loss
Alzheimer's Aid Society
2641 Cottage Way #4
Facilitator: Cynda Rennie
916-483-2002

*People are as happy as they
make up their minds to be.
—Abraham Lincoln*



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Art Therapy provides patients with
Alzheimer's and other dementias
another means of expression.



Artist **Undean Parshey**, of Modesto, is a
retired Kindergarten teacher with a lifelong
love of gardening.