

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Volunteers Make a Difference for People Who Face Dementia

Vancouver, B.C. — In celebration of National Volunteer Week (Apr. 6-12), the Alzheimer Society of B.C. proudly honours its over 500 volunteers whose time and commitment contribute towards the vision of a world without Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

These dedicated volunteers are among hundreds who donate their time to make a difference in the lives of others. "All of our volunteers are truly invaluable," says Maria Howard, CEO of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. "They help people who face dementia build the confidence and skills to maintain quality of life, they promote public policy and perceptions that reflect the issues and reality, and raise funds for support services and research."

Three exceptional volunteers recently received volunteer recognition awards for significant contributions to their community and to the work of the Alzheimer Society of B.C. Vancouver's Barry Ritter, Victoria's Carolyn Herbert and Salt Spring Island's Margaret Monro are the 2013-14 recipients of the Mike Crowe Award of Hope, the Twigg White Award of Merit, and the Lola Turik Volunteer Award respectively.

Vancouver's Barry Ritter has inspired others to give generously to the Alzheimer Society of B.C. as a result of presentations he made as part of the Alzheimer Society of B.C.'s advocacy campaign. Once a dynamic and insightful participant in a past program, Barry now volunteers as facilitator of that same program called *Shaping the Journey: living with dementia*™.

Victoria's Carolyn Herbert has volunteered in a variety of roles including educator and support group co-facilitator and is a valued fundraiser through both the *Investors Group Walk for Memories* and *Coffee Break @* campaigns. A former nurse and caregiver to those on the dementia journey, Carolyn's innovate ideas have been integral to the growth of the Alzheimer Resource Centre in Victoria.

Salt Spring Island's Margaret Monro, a valued and trusted member of a close-knit community has shown leadership, reliability and respect for those impacted by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Thanks to her determination, she created a local support group in the late 1980s to ensure that people facing dementia do not have to travel the dementia journey alone.

Volunteers bring renewed energy to achieving our mission and are an inspiration to us all. To join hundreds of volunteers across the province in supporting those who face dementia, visit www.alzheimerbc.org/Get-Involved/Volunteer.aspx.

Interviews

- Maria Howard, CEO, Alzheimer Society of B.C.

Alzheimer Society

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About Dementia

Dementia is a general term that refers to a variety of brain disorders. Symptoms include the loss of memory, impaired judgment, and changes in behaviour and personality. Dementia is progressive, degenerative and eventually terminal. Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia accounting for almost two-thirds of dementias in Canada today.

About the Alzheimer Society of B.C.

The Alzheimer Society of B.C. provides a provincial network of support and education for families impacted by dementia and people concerned about memory loss. Communities across the province count on the Society for support services, information and education programs, advocacy to improve dementia care in B.C., and to fund research to find the causes and cures. As part of a national federation, the Society is a leading authority on the disease in Canada.



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