

The Alzheimer Society of York Region

The Connection

Special points of interest:

- Coffee Break update, page 2
- The new Walk for Alzheimer's, page 3
- Tax tips for people with dementia, page 3-4
- Accreditation update, page 5
- Caregivers-how to take better care, page 8

January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

Did you know that 72% of Canadians living with Alzheimer's disease are women? You know these women. They are the special women in your life – mothers, wives, sisters, grandmothers and friends.

That's why during Alzheimer Awareness Month this January, the Alzheimer Society has launched a nationwide campaign called *The 72%* to get women talking about Alzheimer's disease. We want women to take action, know the warning signs and take steps to reduce their risk – not only for themselves but for those they care about.

**Why women?**

Women live longer than men and age is a significant risk factor. That's why there are more women living with Alzheimer's disease than men.

Yet the impact on women is twofold. They also account for 70% of the family caregivers which takes a tremendous toll on these women who eventually provide round-the-clock care. The burden is especially high for women raising families and holding down jobs.

"With this campaign, we're making Alzheimer's disease a women's issue," says Loren Freid, CEO, Alzheimer Society of York Region. "Women lead busy, hectic lives, often paying the price with their own health and well-being. We're asking them to invest time in understanding the warning signs. Whether they're concerned about getting Alzheimer's, have just been diagnosed or are a caregiver, we want women to reach out to the Alzheimer Society of York Region. We can support them throughout the disease."

Starting January 6, the Alzheimer Society of York Region invites all Canadians, especially women, to visit www.alzheimer.ca/york/the72percent.

While January is Alzheimer Awareness Month, our campaign runs throughout 2015.

Inside this issue:

A day well spent	2
New leaves of absences	4
Family support groups	6-7
First-time super donor credit	9
Charitable tax receipts	9
How you can help	10

A day well spent

This past fall, we had our 5th annual Professional Staff and Wellness Day. There was laughter and tears and a wonderful time spent connecting with fellow colleagues. A highlight was a touching testimonial from Wayne Smith, a lovely gentleman who shared his Alzheimer's journey from a caregiver's point-of-view. He spoke fondly of the wonderful care his beloved wife, Ann received while attending our D.A.Y. program. Sadly, she passed away early last year but her memories continue to live in Wayne and their children.

On a lighter note, the staff was also treated to a session on *How to Laugh your Stress Away* facilitated by Laugh Coach, Marjorie Moulin. It was an opportunity to use laughter to alleviate stress. It appeared to have worked as approximately 40 staff members in attendance laughed so enthusiastically, the noise echoed through the halls.

The staff enjoyed a day well spent and look forward to the next professional staff day in the spring.



Coffee Break update

With a goal of \$30,000 at the start of Coffee Break last September, we have raised over \$26,500 to date. The much needed funds will be used to provide the necessary services and support to those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias in York Region.

Valerie Bennett from Brookside and Hilltop Place Retirement Residences hosted a Coffee Break at both locations and raised \$1,600. Her approach was not limited to coffee but also included lunches-to-go, nail salon, baked goods, raffle tickets and the list goes on.

Eagle Terrace, a long-term care facility in Newmarket took what could have been a challenging time for the staff and turned Coffee Break into a "fun-raising" contest. Eagle Terrace recently had their elevator replaced, and during construction, they turned this opportunity into a "use the stairs challenge". Eagle Terrace's Coffee Break raised over \$1,000.



L to R: CEO Loren Freid with Valerie Bennett and Jacqui Locke

Special thanks to our corporate sponsors, Bulk Barn and FreshCo who combined, helped raise over \$15,000 at their store locations. Coffee Break was hosted in over 50 locations across York Region and the support we have received from the community has been tremendous. We appreciate everyone's efforts in making Coffee Break another huge success.



The new Walk for Alzheimer's



You have walked for one cause – family members and friends living with dementia – and the belief that you can do something about the disease. You have walked with your parents, your kids, your neighbours and your colleagues. And you have walked with tens of thousands of Canadians united in this journey of help and hope.

What you know as the Walk for Memories has been rebranded the Walk for Alzheimer's, with a totally new look.

Why? Because Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are on the rise. We can't hide from that fact, and we need to be there for one another. By saying the name of the disease publicly, we are fighting the stigma attached to it. By introducing a new look, we want Canadians to feel united under one movement. Your amplified voice will contribute to greater awareness for the disease.

With your support, the Walk for Alzheimer's will remain the Alzheimer Society's biggest annual event helping fund local programs and services that improve the quality of life for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.

We have planned two walks this spring. Our first walk is set for **Saturday, June 13, 2015**. We are well underway with plans to make our 2nd annual Walk for Alzheimer's at Richmond Green Sports Centre and Park even bigger and better than the year before. We guarantee a day of fun and fitness and promise that your fundraising efforts will continue to make a difference to people in our community.

Our second walk is planned for Georgina. We are in the midst of confirming the date so please visit our website at www.alzheimer-york.com often for more information.

Together, we will make memories matter.

Tax tips for people with dementia and their caregivers

Although it doesn't seem like spring, one of its important deadlines has come all the same: tax time. To help you with the process, we've assembled a basic list of tax benefits available for people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

The first step of your tax strategy is to procure the **T2201 disability tax credit** certificate from the Canada Revenue Agency website. This will entitle whoever has Alzheimer's disease or another dementia to a tax credit. It must be filled out by a medical professional and filed as a hard copy during the first year of your claim. The document is also important for claiming other tax benefits for someone with a disability and those caring for them.

This credit, along with others mentioned below, is a non-refundable tax credit. Once such credits have reduced your taxation rate to zero, you won't derive any benefits from them this year. Some of these credits are transferable; any relative or spouse upon whom the person with Alzheimer's disease is dependent can file these credits and reap those tax benefits.

There are two other important tax credits, but for caregivers rather than people with the disease: **the eligible dependent** and the **caregiver credit**. Both can be claimed if so long as either have not been by another person. The caregiver credit has also been increased for family members in that role by \$2,000 in the 2012 federal budget. (continued on page 4)

Tax tips for people with dementia and their caregivers, from page 3

Claims against money spent can also be made. Many medical expenses are deducted as a non-refundable tax credit. These expenses must add up to 3% of total income or \$2,100, whichever is less, in order for the person to qualify:

- payments to a medical doctor, dentist, nurse, or certain other medical professionals or to a public or licensed private hospital
- premiums paid to private health services plans
- premiums paid under a provincial or territorial prescription drug plan
- payments for artificial limbs, wheelchairs, crutches, hearing aids, prescription eyeglasses or contact lenses, dentures, pace-makers, prescription drugs, and certain prescription medical devices

Costs for the following attendant care are also included, such as:

- food preparation
- housekeeping services for a resident's personal living space
- laundry services for a resident's personal items
- health care (registered nurse, practical nurse, certified health care aide, personal support worker)
- activities

Travel expenses required for treatment may also be covered if the following conditions are met:

- A medical service is not available nearby
- If you had to travel at least 40 kilometres (one way) from your home, you may be able to claim the public transportation expenses you paid (taxi, bus, or train). If no public transit was readily available, you may be able to claim vehicle expenses.
- If you have travelled more than 80 kilometres, you may be able to claim accommodation, meal and parking expenses.

It is important to note that this is just a guide; there is much more to filing a tax return than basic arithmetic. It is best to meet with a tax specialist to find an approach that will maximize your benefits and take a long-term view of your finances.

New Leaves of Absences for Ontario Employees

The *Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000* allows employees to take various leaves of absences from work without the fear of losing their job. The most recognizable of these types of leaves are the pregnancy and parental leaves. Effective October 29th 2014, the Ministry of Labour have included an amendment for:

- Family caregivers leave
- Critically ill child care leave
- Crime-related child death or disappearance leave

Specifically, family caregiver leave is unpaid, job-protected leave of up to eight weeks per calendar year per specified family member. Family caregiver leave may be taken to provide care or support to certain family members for whom a qualified health practitioner has issued a certificate stating that he or she has a serious medical condition.

If you would like more information on these leaves and how they impact you, please visit the Ministry of Labour website at <http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/newleaves.php>.

The path to accreditation — a progress update

We are actively seeking accreditation through an internationally accredited body known as Accreditation Canada. Accreditation is an internationally recognized evaluation process used to assess and improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of healthcare and community service organizations. It is also a way to publically recognize that a community service organization has met national quality standards and make funders feel better about supporting programs and services.

Christel Galea, the Accreditation Consultant, spent some time with the staff to see where there might be slight improvements to ensure better outcomes for the organization, caregivers, students and volunteers. The staff spent some time discussing the importance of their role and Christel compiled the results and developed a “Word Cloud”. A word cloud is a compilation of words where the bigger the word, the more the staff identified with it.



Alzheimer Society of York Region Word Cloud of Values

From the word cloud of values, it is evident that **Respect, Excellence, Caring, Accountability, Compassion** and **Family** are drivers of the excellence in care, support and programming that staff and volunteers are known to provide. In the spring, we plan to have the word cloud made into a plaque and placed in our reception area.

As part of providing a safe, comfortable environment, we have committed additional resources towards Infection Prevention & Control (IPAC) in order to prevent and limit the spread of communicable diseases. Some highlights include:

- Increasing the number of hand sanitizer stations and pump bottles available for use at each location
- Mandatory self-screening for infectious disease at the reception
- IPAC education for staff, students, volunteers, clients and caregivers

First Link® memory café

The First Link memory café is a place where individuals with memory loss and their caregivers can get together in a safe, supportive, and engaging environment. It is a time and place where people can interact, laugh, cry, find support, share concerns and celebrate without feeling embarrassed or misunderstood. Our First Link Memory Café at Mosaic Home Health encourages friendship and acceptance. There is no charge to attend this event.

The next series of dates are:

February 24, March 31, April 28 and May 26, 2015

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
 Location: Mosaic Home Care Services & Community Resource Centre
 The Shops on Steeles and 404 (Shopping Mall)
 2900 Steeles Ave. East, Suite 218
 Thornhill, ON L3T 4X1



To register, please call 905-597-7000, ext. 223 to reserve your spot.

Early onset dementia support groups

A support group for caregivers and family members of people who are younger than 65 and have been diagnosed with early onset dementia.

2nd Tuesday of each month

(Group runs monthly)

1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

CHATS Day program

10132 Yonge St.

Richmond Hill

For more information, please contact Hemal Joshi at 905-850-5680, ext. 24 or hjoshi@alzheimer-york.com.

Next Steps education series

Next Steps, a new education program and part of First Link® offers an eight hour learning series spread over four weeks designed to create a more interactive learning experience for family members and friends caring for individuals with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. Topics covered during this education series will include: an overview of dementia, memory loss, changes to the brain and resulting behaviours, coping strategies, treatments, research, future planning (legal and financial), and community resources and support systems. Those attending these sessions will have an opportunity to share their experiences of caring for a loved one with dementia with others in the group. All information shared during these sessions are confidential. There are no fees to participate in these series. To register, please contact Jonathon Macri, Public Education Coordinator at 905-726-3477, ext. 235 or email at jmacri@alzheimer-york.com.

Session 1: What is Dementia?

Session 3: Planning Ahead

Alzheimer Society of York Region

2-240 Edward St., Aurora

Dates: **Jan 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2015**

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Session 2: Adapting to Brain Changes

Session 4: Building a Circle of Support

CHATS Richmond Hill Office

10132 Yonge St., Richmond Hill

Dates: **Feb 3, 10, 17, 24, 2015**

Time: 6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Family support groups

Family support groups provide information on caring for people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Contact 905-726-3477 (Aurora) or 905-731-6611 (Thornhill) or toll free at 1-888-414-5550.

<p>Aurora 1st Thursday of each month January to December 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. The D.A.Y. Centre 2-240 Edward St.</p>	<p>Thornhill 3rd Wednesday of each month January to December 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. The D.A.Y. Centre 10 Harlech Court, Unit 2</p>
<p>Markham 1st Wednesday of each month September to June 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Markham Public Library 6031 Highway 7</p>	<p>Stouffville 4th Tuesday of each month September to June 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Parkview Home 123 Weldon Road</p>

The following groups are offered in partnership with the Municipality of York Health Services Long Term Care & Seniors Branch.

<p>Keswick 3rd Wednesday of each month September to June 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Alzheimer Society of York Region 184 Simcoe Ave, Unit 4 905-476-5521</p>	<p>Maple 2nd Tuesday of each month September to June 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Maple Health Centre Alzheimer Resource Room 10424 Keele St. 905-303-0133</p>
---	---

Frontotemporal dementia (FTD) support groups

The new family support groups are for caregivers who have a family member diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia.

4th Tuesday of each month starting January 27
(Group runs monthly)
10:30 a.m. to noon
Alzheimer Society of York Region
2-240 Edward St.
Aurora, ON

For more information, please contact Hemal Joshi at 905-850-5680, ext. 24 or hjoshi@alzheimer-york.com

Caregivers: how to take better care of yourselves in the New Year

Taking care of someone with dementia requires time and energy. You always need to be ready for changes in behaviour. But studies show this constant diligence takes its toll, with 35% of caregivers reporting declines in general health and this rate increased to 60% for live-in caregivers.

As a caregiver, you need to take care of yourself. You are the most important person in the life of someone with Alzheimer's disease. Here are 10 tips that can help:

- **Learn about the disease.** Understanding about the disease and care strategies will prepare you for your Alzheimer journey.
- **Be realistic...about the disease.** It will help you adjust your expectations.
- **Be realistic...about yourself.** You need to prioritize and understand what you value the most.
- **Accept your feelings.** You can feel a vast range of emotions each day. This is normal.
- **Share information and feelings with others.** This will help friends and family understand more about the disease and what you are going through.
- **Be positive.** Your attitude can make a difference to the way you feel.
- **Look for humour.** It can be a good coping strategy.
- **Take care of yourself.** Your health is important. Do not ignore it.
- **Get help.** You will need support that comes from sharing. You will also need support that comes from help with the dishes. Don't be afraid to seek out help.
- **Plan for the future.** Review the financial situation of the person you care for and plan accordingly.

Sometimes, what every caregiver needs is some help with the chores or some time to themselves. Don't be afraid to ask for help. AS York can point you to a number of services available in your community, including:

- Support groups
- Respite care
- Adult day programs
- One-on-one counselling
- Education about Alzheimer's disease

If you experience a crisis situation, contact AS York at 905-726-3477 or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0007) if it occurs at night or on the weekend, when normal services are closed.

First-time donor super credit

Do you know someone who could be a super donor?

The federal government has approved a super credit for any first time donors.

The super credit for first-time donors is only for donations up to \$1,000.

The new First-Time Donor's Super Credit supplements the value of the charitable donations tax credit by an additional 25% on donations made by first time donors after March 20, 2013. Not a super donor anymore? No problem, you can still receive a substantial tax credit on donations you continue to make. The federal tax credit is equal to 15% on the first \$200 of donation receipts plus 29% on receipts in excess of \$200*. Add on any provincial credit (Ontario = 5.05% on first \$200 and 11.16% on remainder), your combined tax savings are substantial.

Please contact Jacqueline Locke, Development Coordinator at 905-726-3477, ext. 229 or jllocke@alzheimer-york.com for more details.

*The Alzheimer Society of York Region values your contribution. Please refer to your financial advisor or tax preparer for sound financial advice.

Charitable tax receipts

If you made a donation in 2014, you can expect a tax receipt in the mail no later than February 28, 2015. If you made a donation of less than \$20, please advise us if you are interested in receiving a tax receipt.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our Head office at 905-726-3477.

2-240 Edward St.
Aurora, ON
L4G 3S9

Phone: 905-726-3477
Fax: 905-726-1917
email: info@alzheimer-york.com

Charitable Registration #:
10670 5429 RR0001

The Alzheimer Society of York Region is a leader in actively supporting individuals and families coping with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias since 1985. Our history of delivering quality dementia specific day program services, an enriched social work program and education opportunities within the Region of York is well respected. We have a proven record of working collaboratively and in partnership with different agencies within the Region of York to service the needs of families and individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Mission Statement

The Alzheimer Society of York Region's mission is to alleviate the personal and social consequences of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and to promote research.

How you can help

By supporting the Alzheimer Society of York Region, you enable us to expand our reach and help even more people touched by dementia. Here's how:

- Make a Gift** (Donate by mail, phone or online)
- Volunteer** (Volunteer to help us with events and much more)
- Leave a Legacy** (Continue your tradition of giving with a bequest in your will)
- Plan your own Event** (Organize a fundraising event to support the Society)
- Join our annual Walk for Alzheimer's** (June 13, 2015)
- Give the Gift of Stock**

Alzheimer Society
YORK REGION

2-240 Edward St, Aurora, ON L4G 3S9

Tel: 905-726-3477 Fax: 905-726-1917 Email: info@alzheimer-york.com

●Thornhill (Markham) ●Georgina ●Whitchurch-Stouffville ●Vaughan

Funding provided by:



Supporters like You

