Alzheimer’s Family Organization

Caregiver’s Companion

Winter 2018  Vol. 21, No. 1

ALZHEIMER’S FAMILY SUPPORT WALK

Walk With Us On February 24, 2018

For Details See Page 14.

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Happy New Year!

I hope this 2018 Winter issue of The Caregiver’s Companion finds you filled with new beginnings and putting 2017 in the past. I look forward to what new and exciting things await the AFO in 2018. One thing you will notice is the new name we have given to this newsletter. That decision was made after receiving input from various individuals that feel this newsletter is just that, a companion for caregivers, so it seemed fitting to make this change in the name.

I hope that as we listen to caregivers and the communities we serve, we will make other subtle changes throughout the year to serve our local communities as best we can. Another change we are making in 2018 is that there will no longer be a fee for attending our Caregiver Learning events for participants! We have seen attendance fall a bit this year and the feedback we received was that in part, the fee was impacting caregivers. We hope this change will bring more of you into these events which can aid in supporting you as caregivers to have a more fulfilling and enjoyable life with your loved one.

As I reflect on 2017, many wonderful things happened for the AFO. New partnerships were made, we had new events such as the four-day Citrus Walk Aware featuring beautiful Floral City, and The Valerie Theatre in Inverness, just to name a few. The AFO Golf Tournament was a great success with a change in location to Pinellas County as was The Villages Walk & The Alberta’s Fashion Show in Pasco County. We look to expand on these events and welcome feedback and volunteers to be on committees.

One change we will make in 2018 is the Pasco Challenge. The Pasco Challenge will not be held this year as it has been in the past. This event has had very low participation and is too costly and has not been profitable the last few years. We are considering perhaps organizing a Walk, in Starkey Park in place of the Pasco Challenge, but this is in the discussion phase currently. We want to reach out in Hernando County and Hillsborough County to hold fundraising events and welcome suggestions.

As you may or may not know, the AFO survives by memberships, fundraising, and donations to provide local services to families with loved ones with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease. We depend on our community to think of us and keep us in mind with continued support, so we can carry on the much-needed work to support for the increasing number of individuals affected by this disease. The number of individuals being diagnosed is increasing at a rapid rate, and we want to be here to keep on supporting caregivers and their loved ones at the local level.

I wish you each the best for the coming year and please know, we are only a call or a click of the mouse away if you need us!

Respectfully, Kathleen
We try to correctly spell all names. However, if we have not done so, please let us know and we will correctly spell it for our next issue. Also, if you do not want to have your name listed, please let us know when you make your contribution. We appreciate each and every one of you who have donated, contributed, or become members of our Organization. Where would we be without you? Thank you for believing in what we do, and for helping us fulfill our commitment to preserve the independence, quality of life and personal dignity of persons afflicted with Alzheimer’s disease and other related dementias, and their caregivers throughout the Central Florida area.
AFO SUPPORT GROUPS

People touched by Alzheimer’s disease and other related disorders come together in a non-judgmental, safe environment to vent their frustrations, share coping techniques, learn more about the disease and discover what resources are available to them.

CITRUS

Cornerstone Baptist Church
1100 W. Highland Blvd., Inverness, FL
3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30 PM
Leader: Debbie Selsavage 352-422-3663
Crystal Gem Manor ALF - You Must RSVP
10845 W. Gem St., Crystal River, FL 34428
Last Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM
Leader: Debbie Selsavage 352-422-3663
Crystal River Library
8619 Crystal St., Crystal River, FL 34428
2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM
Leader: Debbie Selsavage 352-422-3663
Highland Place - You Must RSVP
700 Medical Ct. E., Inverness, FL 34452
4th Thursday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Debbie Selsavage 352-422-3663
Seven Rivers Regional Medical Center
Senior Circle Center
6201 N. Suncoast Blvd., Crystal River, FL 34428
last Wednesday of the month 10 am to 12 noon
Leader: Sue Simone 203-725-6888
Coming Soon! Sugarmill Manor
8985 S. Suncoast Blvd., Homosassa, FL 34446
Contact Samantha for more information - 352-382-2531

HERNANDO

Atria Evergreen Woods - Pool House
7030 Evergreen Woods Trail, Spring Hill 34608
2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:00 PM
Co-leaders: Lori Rocchi 352-397-1212
Mellaney Lesniewski 352-596-2055
Bayfront Health Brooksville
Medical Arts Bldg. – Ste. 120
172222 Hospital Blvd., Brooksville, FL 34601
Meets the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month
Co-leaders: Bill Tuttle 813-712-9058
Donna Alford 813-469-5024
Brookdale Spring Hill
10440 Palmgren Lane, Spring Hill, FL 34608
Tuesday’s from 10-11 am
Leader: Susan Myres 352-584-8591
The Residence at Timber Pines
3140 Forest Road, Spring Hill, FL 34606
3rd Monday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Bill Tuttle 352-835-7191
Timber Pines Country Club – Oak Room
(Gated Community – must register with Sue to attend)
6872 Timber Pines Blvd., Spring Hill, FL 34606
2nd Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Sue Simone 203-725-6888

HILLSBOROUGH

Arden Courts of Tampa
14950 Casey Rd., Tampa, FL 33624
FTD Support Group
2nd Sunday of the month at 10:00 AM to Noon
Leader: Maryann Upham 813-963-6100
Caregiver Support Group for Spouses
3rd Wednesday of the month at 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Leader: Teresa Jackson 813-963-6100
Brookdale Northdale
3401 W. Barrass Avenue, Tampa
2nd Monday of each month at 10:00 AM
4th Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM
Leader: India Shilo 813-961-1044

LAKE

For Caregivers Dealing with Newly Diagnosed Patients
Atria Senior Living
930 County Rd. 466, Lady Lake, FL 32159
1st Wednesday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Nancy Ghee 352-245-3930
Avante at Leesburg Nursing & Rehab Center
(Free Respite Care During Meeting – RSVP to Dori)
2000 Edgewood Ave., Leesburg, FL 34748
3rd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM
Leader: Doreen Watson-Beard 352-217-6476
Bridgewater at Waterman Village
(Free Respite Care During Meeting)
500 Waterman Ave., Mt. Dora, FL 32757 3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30 PM
Co-leaders: Chaplain Alan Jones 352-385-1133
Coleen Connolly 352-383-0051 x 313
Brookdale Clermont
650 E. Minnehaha Ave, Clermont, FL 34711
1st Wednesday of the month at 4:00 PM
Leader: Pam Schmitz 352-396-6927
Chapel of Christian Faith
1401 Paradise Drive, Lady Lake, FL 32159
3rd Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Martha Hyatt 352-748-7633
Clermont Arts & Recreation Center
3700 S Hwy 27, Room 7, Clermont, FL 34711
1st & 3rd Tuesday of the month at 4:00PM
Co-leaders: Deb Smith 352-449-9449
Lindsay Collins 352-484-8420
Cooper Memorial Library
Room 221 (upstairs)
2525 Oakley Seaver Dr., Clermont, FL 34711
3rd Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Deborah Snow 352-406-8465
Elan Senior Living at Spanish Springs
930 Alverez Avenue, The Villages, FL 32159
2nd Wednesday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Cathy Jackshaw 352-300-1089
The Fellowship
25900 Us Hwy. 27, Leesburg, FL 34748
1st Monday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Pamela Schmitz 352-396-6927
Lakeport Square/A Brookdale Community
800 Lakeport Blvd., Leesburg, FL 34748
4th Wednesday of the month at 2:00PM
Leader: Allison Church 352-728-8525, Ext. 1232
Lakeview Terrace
331 Raintree Drive, Altoona, FL 32702
2nd Thursday of the month at 1:30PM
Leader: Cheryl Fletcher 352-409-5360

North Lake Presbyterian Church
975 Rolling Acres Rd., Lady Lake, FL 32159
1st Wednesday of the month at 1:00 PM
Leader: Louise Shuey 352-753-8262
3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:00 PM
Co-leaders: Louise Shuey 352-753-8262
Don Dati 352-259-5363

Early Stage Group (for early stage patients)
North Lake Presbyterian Church
Fellowship Center Room 2
975 Rolling Acres Rd., Lady Lake, FL 32159
1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM
Leader: Louise Shuey 352-753-8262

Osprey Lodge Assisted Living & Memory Care
1761 Nightingale Lane, Tavares, FL 32778
2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:00 PM
Leader: Ruth Cantillon 352-253-5100
Regency Park Assisted Living and Memory Care
(Free Respite Care During Meeting)
15000 U.S. Hwy. 411, Eustis, FL 32726
2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Rick Wiggins 352-661-9003
United Congregational Church
302 N. St. Claire Abrams Ave., Tavares, FL 32778
2nd Wednesday of the month at noon
Co-leaders: Cheryl Fletcher 352-409-5360
Lori Wintersdorff 352-267-4205

PASCO - CENTRAL

Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel
Wellness Center - 2600 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544
1st Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM
Co-leaders: Michele Bonneville 813-991-7524
Lynelle Bonneville 813-618-0578

PASCO - EAST

Baldomero-Lopez State Veterans Nursing Home
6919 Parkway Blvd, Land O Lakes, FL 34639
Last Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Jennifer Chianella 813-558-5000

CARES Crescent Enrichment Center
13906 5th St., Dade City, FL 33525
Day of week and time TBD - Call Darcielle Gray for more information
Day of week and time TBD - Call Melinda Norman for more information
The Edwinola
14235 Edwinola Way, Dade City, FL 33523
Day of week and time TBD - Call Dacielle Gray for more information
Leader: Melinda Norman 352-518-9300

Support Groups Continued
on bottom of page 5
Respite Care Financial Reimbursement Program

This program provides financial assistance reimbursement to qualified members for respite of their loved ones. The caregiver arranges for their own respite care needs using either in-home services provided through a home health agency, neighbor, friend, or institutionally-based, short-term respite such as adult day care, ALF, or nursing home care. Applications and documentation are required for reimbursement of funds.

Wanderer’s Reunification Program

The objective or goal of the Wanderer’s Reunification Program is to identify and reunite a loved one with Alzheimer’s disease or other form of dementia with their caregiver as quickly and as safely as possible, thus reducing the time of separation and trauma to the loved one. There are two options offered under this program:

1.) An Identification Bracelet or Pendant
2.) A Human Scent Kit

Contact our office for more information.

Support Groups

AFO support groups are for family members, caregivers, and others interested in learning more about Alzheimer’s disease and coping skills. The meetings are free and everyone is welcome. For more information and to verify meeting dates and times, please contact our office.

Companion Newsletter

Published quarterly, the “Companion” contains articles covering topics such as caregiving techniques, coping skills, and resources such as support group meeting times, the AFO educational calendar, and upcoming events.

Training / Seminars

Training is provided for caregivers and professional care providers to those suffering from Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. ALF, Nursing Home, and Home Health Agency Dementia Specific Trainings are available to professionals and approved by FPECA and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs.

Alzheimer’s Resources and Related Books

Helpful books in our library are available for viewing at the AFO office or may be loaned out. The ‘36 Hour Day’ is also available for $15.00 plus shipping.

Website

The AFO website is a one-stop resource – easy to use and full of helpful hints such as up-to-date community information, links, and educational videos.

Resource Guide

Our resource guide offers a variety of services by county, that support caregivers with the many issues that may arise while caring for their loved one. Services such as, but not limited to; Elder Law, Assisted Living Facilities, and Home Health Agencies.

Resource Line

Calling the office during regular business hours (M-F 8:00am - 4:00pm) provides information on caring for a loved one with Alzheimer’s or other dementia.

The Cottages

5905 Pine Hill Road, Port Richey, FL 34668
1st Wednesday of the month at the 1:00 PM
Leader: Vicky Hudgins 727-364-4214

First Baptist Church New Port Richey

6800 Trouble Creek Road, New Port Richey, FL 34653
2nd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM
Leader: Lois Peterman 727-849-4210

Gulfside Hospice & Pasco Palliative Care

2061 Collier Parkway Land O’Lakes, FL
Leader: Jennifer Chianella cell 727-992-8984 Jennifer.chianella@ghppc.org

Oakview Terrace Assisted Living

7220 Baillie Dr., New Port Richey, FL 34653
3rd Thursday of the month at 11:00 AM
Leader: Dina Giannet 727-204-0083

Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point

14000 Fivay Rd., Hudson, FL 34667
1st Tuesday of the month at 10:00 AM
Leader: Laura Arnold 727-863-0176 727-808-2053

Villas at Sunset Bay

7423 Kauai Loop, New Port Richey, FL 34653
1st Wednesday of the month at 1:00 PM
and Last Wednesday at 6:00 PM
Co-leaders: Laurie Pearce 727-359-0637 Rob Brady 727-376-6814

For Caregivers Who Have Placed Their Loved Ones

New Covenant United Methodist Church Room 1 (Free Respite Care During Meeting)
3470 Woodridge Drive, The Villages, FL 32162
First Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM
Co-leaders: Jackie Kuhn-Damron 352-259-1243 Nancy McGee 352-245-3930

Support Groups continued from page 4

Heritage Park
737135 Coleman Avenue, Dade City, FL 33525
4th Tuesday of the month at 4:00 PM
Co-leaders: Nila Premer 727-567-8615 Mary Beth Lumba

Regency Residence
6711 Embassy Blvd, Port Richey, FL 34668
Last Tuesday of the month at 2:30 PM
Leader: Jennifer Chianella 727-240-2907

Zephyrhills Health & Rehab Center
38250 Avenue A, Zephyrhills, FL 33542
Call the Support Group Leader for day and time.
Leader: Chaplin Rick Barrisse 813-782-5508

Zephyrhills Health & Rehab Center
7350 Dairy Rd, Zephyrhills, FL 33540
Call the Support Group Leader for day and time.
Leader: Chaplin Rick Barrisse 813-782-5508

PASCO - WEST

Atria Park of Baypoint Village
7927 SR 52, Hudson, FL 34667
3rd Thursday of the month at 1:00 PM
Co-leaders: Lori Rocchi 352-397-1212 Rhonda Travland

The Watermark at Trinity
1960 Blue Fox Way, Trinity, FL 34655
1st Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM
727-777-5063

SUMTER

Brookdale Place at Freedom Pointe
RSVP to 352-674-3950 • Light Lunch is served
1700 El Camino Real, The Villages, FL 32159
2nd & 3rd Wednesday of the month at 12:00 PM
Leader: Zullie Oliveras 352-674-3950

Mission Oaks
10780 N US Hwy 301, Oxford, FL 34484
2nd Monday of the month at 2:00 PM
Leader: Cheryl Fletcher 352-409-5360

Sunset Place in the Villages
(Free Respite Care During Meeting)
1550 Killingsworth Way, The Villages, FL 32162
3rd Wednesday of the month at 1:30 PM
Leader: Sheila Dickmann 352-674-3500

New Covenant United Methodist Church
(Free Respite Care During Meeting)
3470 Woodridge Drive, The Villages, FL 32162
Every Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM
Co-leaders: Louise Shuey 352-753-8262 Rochelle Holcombe 352-259-1243 Leslie Switzer 352-274-3673

For more information please call 352-616-0170

Alzheimer’s Family Organization - Companion 5
Learn helpful information about Alzheimer’s and dementia at our FREE Caregiver Learning Events! These events last from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm unless otherwise noted and include FREE Breakfast and Lunch! To register, visit www.AlzheimersFamily.org/Caregiver or call the AFO office at 352-616-0170. Senior Helpers Mobile Virtual Dementia Tour will be featured at some events. See below for more information!

### Caregiver Learning Events

**Hillsborough - January 26**
- Arden Courts of Tampa, 14950 Casey Road, Tampa, FL 34624

**Sumter - March 9**
- New Covenant United Methodist Church, 3470 Woodridge Drive, The Villages, FL 32162

**Lake - April 20**
- First United Methodist Church-Wesley Center, 950 7th Street, Clermont, FL 34711

**East Pasco – June 15**
- American House 38130 Pretty Pond Road, Zephyrhills, FL 33540
  - The Virtual Dementia Tour will available!

**Citrus - July 20**
- Citrus Memorial Hospital (Historic School House Building) 502 West Highland Boulevard, Inverness, FL 34452
  - The Virtual Dementia Tour will available!

**Hernando – August 10**
- The Residence at Timber Pines, 3140 Forest Rd., Spring Hill, FL 34606
  - The Virtual Dementia Tour will available!

**Pinellas - September 14**
- Market Street: A Memory Care Residence, 833 East Lake Road N., Tarpon Springs, FL 34688
  - The Virtual Dementia Tour will available!

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**The Virtual Dementia Tour**

The VDT is a science-based simulation of what a person in mid-stage dementia experiences. It can help caregivers better understand what patients and loved ones with dementia are hearing, seeing and feeling. If you have not had the chance to experience the tour – please see our schedule above for Caregiver dates that feature the VDT.

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**Support Group Leader Training**

For New/Present Support Group Leaders • Free to the Public

**CALL OFFICE FOR LOCATION AND DATES**

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**Dementia and Alzheimer’s Training**

**Our trainers...**
- Are committed to serving caregivers and patients.
- Relate to the needs of your staff.
- Their knowledge is based on the latest research and data.
- Are part of a community based local organization – a resource that continues after the training is completed.

**State Required Dementia-Specific Training**

Alzheimer’s Family Organization’s (AFO) Dementia-Specific curriculum has been approved by the Florida Policy Exchange Center On Aging (FPECA) for the Florida Department of Elder Affairs for purposes of meeting the training requirement of S.400.452, F.S. and Rule 58A-5.0191, F.A.C.
Don’t Become A “Secondary Patient”

Recently, I read a statistic on the National Institute of Health website about family caregivers that really got my attention. For individuals over 65 years of age who are in family care, the average age of the caregiver is 63!

When we start families, we are usually in our late teens or early 20s, and we bring a child into the world whom we know will require around-the-clock attention for more than a year. But we are young, we are strong, and we have energy.

This is not the case for family caregivers for loved ones with Alzheimer’s. Our sixties and seventies are not a good time in our lives to take on a new task that will require around-the-clock attention. What’s worse, the person to whom we give care is not a light, weak child that we can carry in the crook of one arm. It is an adult who in many cases is heavy and strong. And, unlike the relatively brief total dependency of an infant, we can expect that our caregiving task could on average last eight to twelve years! And add to this the fact that a child’s skills and cognition will improve. With your loved one with Alzheimer’s, it is just the opposite.

Little wonder then that many caregivers end up unwell to the extent that too often they will die before the person they are caring for. This is the worst possible outcome for a family living with Alzheimer’s. And if they don’t succumb, caregivers may end up a ‘secondary patient’ whose physical and emotional condition leaves them less capable of performing their caregiving duties.

The importance of a caregiver staying healthy cannot be overstated. If you are flying in an airplane with a child and the oxygen masks deploy, you are told to put your mask on first. If you, the caregiver, cannot take care of yourself first and foremost, you will not be equipped to take care of your loved one. This is not selfish; it is realistic.

One of the best ways I can think of for taking care of yourself is to attend caregiver support groups. Those who are on a similar journey may have useful advice for how you can keep a focus on your health. And, they can serve as friendly monitors to tell you when they hear the words or see the signs that indicate that you are neglecting yourself and succumbing to physical and mental exhaustion. They can be your sense of perspective.

Among other caregiver services, the Alzheimer’s Family Organization has more than 50 caregiver support groups throughout its eight-county service area. You will find them listed in this newsletter. They can be your oxygen mask to help keep you going in caring for yourself as well as your person with Alzheimer’s.

Join, make friends, and benefit from the knowledge of those who know the ways to keep you from becoming a secondary patient. And when you meet someone who has begun this journey, pay it forward by urging them to join the Alzheimer’s Family Organization.
AFO INFORMATION

Meet The Board – A Series:

Karen Mercer

Karen was born and raised in Bethany, Connecticut and relocated to Florida as a newlywed, residing in Fruitland Park since 1991. She has two children, Dana who lives locally and Cason who went home to Jesus in 2015. She has three beautiful grandchildren whom she adores. Karen’s hobbies include boating, kayaking, Gator football and spending time with family.

Karen is the Community Outreach Coordinator for Cornerstone Hospice & Palliative Care in The Villages, Florida. Karen is an energetic and happy person who loves people and strives to help others. In 2008 when Pastor Sidney Brock asked her to help “birth” Project Legacy, a 501c3 organization in Fruitland Park, FL, Karen immediately accepted and has played an active role ever since. Karen pursued a degree in Marketing at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut, she was the Marketing Director for Chick-fil-A, The Villages for five years and has been very active in the senior market since 2009.

In September of 2017 Karen joined the AFO Board and is active with the events in the community in her area. While employed at Parady Life & Annuity, Karen was able to secure sponsorship and support for the AFO Support Walk that is held at The Polo Club in The Villages on Buena Vista Blvd. This sponsorship has been carried over to the 2018 Support Walk which is a huge support to the organization. Karen brings with her knowledge of the needs of the individuals living in The Villages and Sumter County and is a true asset to the Board of Directors.

Volunteer Spotlight

By Pam Schmitz

Lucille Jesaitis

Lucille Jesaitis was born the fifth of eleven children in Long Island, NY. She was the second in her family to go on to a higher education, choosing a career in nursing. During her training, she discovered an affinity for the young and the elderly. Her career includes med-surg, emergency department, home health, long term care, and discharge planning experience. Having leadership positions in many of those areas, she developed organizational and team building skills.

From an early age, Lucille had the desire to help hurting people. She put that desire, and her nursing skills, to work in the mission field when those opportunities arose.

Upon retirement, Lucille settled in The Villages, FL with her husband Dave Terry 12 years ago. In The Villages, there is a strong spirit of volunteerism. While walking in the pool one morning with a friend, she happened to mention the Alzheimer’s Respite Care Ministry at New Covenant United Methodist Church. She invited Lucille to go and observe one Thursday, and she never turned back, because this program combined her love of the elderly with the young at heart. Eventually Lucille moved into the position of Leader/Coordinator of Alzheimer’s Respite Care Ministry. There was a small group of loved ones in the beginning. Lucille had the idea of a weekly theme to add structure to the sessions. The activities to support the theme include history of the topic, games, arts and crafts, projects, music, dancing, and even a related snack. For instance, on National Good Humor Ice Cream Day, the facilitators dressed like Good Humor men, had a replica of a Good Humor truck on a wagon, and passed out Good Humor Bars.

Lucille believes the program, (which is the only AFO support group which offers respite care during support sessions) would not be a success without the commitment and creativity of all the volunteers. The goal of each session is for the loved ones to experience joy. When they experience joy, it flows over into the volunteers. Lucille feels she can speak for the group in saying how each one of them feel blessed beyond words at the end of each session.
Tips from the Family Caregiver Alliance offer some great ideas on how a caregiver of a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or dementia can try to have a better-quality relationship during this difficult journey.

**Incontinence**

The loss of bladder or bowel control often occurs as dementia progresses. Sometimes accidents result from environmental factors; for example, someone can't remember where the bathroom is located or can't get to it in time. If an accident occurs, your understanding and reassurance will help the person maintain dignity and minimize embarrassment.

- Establish a routine for using the toilet. Try reminding the person or assisting her to the bathroom every two hours.
- Schedule fluid intake to ensure the confused person does not become dehydrated. Know that some drinks (coffee, tea, cola, or beer) have more of a diuretic effect than others. Limit fluid intake in the evening before bedtime.
- Use signs (with illustrations) to indicate which door leads to the bathroom.
- A commode, obtained at any medical supply store, can be left in the bedroom at night for easy access.
- Incontinence pads and products can be purchased at the pharmacy or supermarket. A urologist may be able to prescribe a special product or treatment.
- Use easy-to-remove clothing with elastic waistbands or Velcro closures, and provide clothes that are easily washable.

**Repetitive Speech or Actions (Perseveration)**

People with dementia will often repeat a word, statement, question, or activity over and over. While this type of behavior is usually harmless for the person with Alzheimer's, it can be frustrating for the caregiver. Here are some tips to help manage this behavior:

- Acknowledge the behavior and redirect the person to a more productive activity.
- Use simple, short sentences to communicate.
- Limit the amount of information you give at any one time.
- Create a quiet, peaceful environment.
- Offer visual cues or reminders.
- Reward positive behaviors.

**From Your Editor: DID YOU KNOW?**

**By Kathleen Winters, Executive Director**

Welcome To Administrative Assistant Alicia Vegerano!

I was born in Queens, NY and lived there until my family moved to Spring Hill in 1987 at the age of twelve. I was raised under the influence of my Dad's Trinidadian culture – so I enjoy curry, calypso, reggae, and all island vibes. I am the youngest of three children, with my sister Peggy being the oldest and my brother Rudy being the middle child. Unfortunately, my sister passed away from Leukemia when I was sixteen years old. That was a difficult time for our family.

I am a graduate of Springstead High School, and shortly thereafter moved to California. I missed my family, so I returned to Hernando County. When I returned home I returned with my husband Ed that I had met and married in California and who was enlisted in the military (Marine Corp.) Three months later his service brought us to North Carolina. After my husband left the military in 2000, we moved back to Hernando County. We have seven adult children, three boys and four girls as well as four grandchildren, three girls and one boy. My mother lives with us as well as our two dogs, Chewy and Twixy. My Mom and myself were caregivers for my dad who was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease and eventually passed from the disease in 2006.

I learned my Diploma in Bookkeeping and Payroll and went on to earn a Bachelor’s in Science in Accounting. I received my Master’s in Business Administration in 2015. It was when I worked for Keller Williams Elite Partners that I began to want to learn more and do more within the community. I developed a passion for giving to the community and went on to work for the Hernando County Chamber of Commerce and enjoyed my time there meeting new people and businesses in the community. I was able to learn so much about Hernando County during my time with the Chamber and could see the various strengths and needs of this community.

Having a deep understanding of the affects that Alzheimer’s disease has on caregivers, families, and the community overall, having had cared for my Dad, when the opportunity to come to work at the Alzheimer’s Family Organization came about, I knew that was where I needed to be. In my personal time I love the football season and am huge fan of GREATEST TEAM OF ALL – the Patriots!!! I also enjoy crocheting, reading, and crafting of any kind – Pinterest is my addiction!
Happy New Year! I can’t believe we are entering 2018...where did last year go? Our previous quarter was busy with presentations, educational events and health fairs.

I want to thank Rev. Alan Jones and Waterman Village, Mount Dora for hosting our Caregiver’s Learning Event in October. Also thank you to sponsors Bay Pharmacy, Cornerstone Hospice, Leesburg Regional Medical Center, The Fidgets & Mid-Florida Community Services. If you see an AFO Caregivers Learning Event being held in your area, I strongly recommend you attend. You will receive valuable information to help you care for your loved ones. Our next CAREGIVER LEARNING EVENT will be held on FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2018 at the First United Methodist Church in Clermont.

Angels Care Home Health sponsored a learning event in Clermont. Christen Wilson-Lierman put together a panel discussing home health care, fall risks and rehab, hospice and palliative care and the Clermont Police Department, all participated to let the community know what services are available. There was a Q & A period for the attendees and additional vendors had information available. AFO received a generous donation from this event.

We also had some fun...Crane’s View Lodge Assisted Living & Memory Care in Clermont held an Antique Car Show with the proceeds being donated to AFO. I was there serving hot dogs and hamburgers until Mother Nature intervened and the rains came. Thank you Colleen McArthey, Kristy Cullen and Staff for a great day!

We also have to mention the holidays...I hope you had a joyful Christmas. Osprey Lodge Assisted Living & Memory Care in Tavares held a Festival of Christmas Trees to benefit AFO. Local businesses and organizations were invited to set up Christmas trees and decorate them. The public was invited to view the trees and vote on their favorites. My favorite was the AFO Tree because it was purple...yes I found and decorated a “purple” Christmas Tree! Thank you Ruth Cantillon, Michele Trinidad and Staff for a great hard work.

January through March is “Health Fair” season in Lake and Sumter Counties. If you see an event being held in your community, I strongly urge you to attend. You may not need the information being made available right now, but a great way to build your own resources is to collect brochures & business cards for services you may need in the future. Start a binder with the information so if the need arises, you have the contact information at your fingertips. Don’t wait for a crisis situation, your options may be limited. Talk to the professionals that participate in these events. They are a great source of valuable information—don’t be afraid to ask questions or for suggestions or recommendations. Look for the Alzheimer’s Family Organization table and please stop by and say hello!

Also, remember to save the date-FEBRUARY 24, 2018 for our 6th Annual Walk at The Villages Polo Field. Hope to see you there.

Resources:
Family Caregiver Alliance
National Center on Caregiving
(415) 434-3388 | (800) 445-8106
Website: www.caregiver.org
Email: info@caregiver.org(link sends e-mail)
FCA CareJourney: www.caregiver.org/carejourney
Family Care Navigator:
www.caregiver.org/family-care-navigator
Community Educator’s Report: The Villages
By Jackie Kuhn-Damron

I don’t know about you, but I am happy to put the holidays behind me and start planning new adventures for 2018. It is hard to believe another year has gone by. Where does the time go?

I had the privilege of training two additional support leaders for Marion County. One in Bellview and one in Ocala. It is exciting to see us spreading our wings.

Many support groups had their holiday gatherings with many in attendance. To see them celebrate, laugh and make memories was heartwarming. We all know that many times the holidays are not celebrated by all going on this journey.

A big thank you to Brookdale for their outstanding breakfast event for their employees that benefited AFO. Your financial contribution is greatly appreciated. Brookdale also hosted our Alzheimer’s Memory Candlelight Service in November. Though we did not have many in attendance, many names were read and remembered as the candles were lit. Thank you also to Ellen Pollock from NCUMC for your sincere prayers and words that you shared. We also would like to thank Elan Spanish Springs for sponsoring a “Magical Holiday Bus Tour” through the Caregiving Resource Center with the proceeds benefiting AFO. We appreciate all these kind gestures to support AFO. We know that the funds that get donated to AFO goes back to the county in which it was received.

Alzheimer’s Family Support Walk is now on the fast track. Save the date cards have been mailed and are being distributed. Mark your calendars and begin to organize your teams and fund raisers to support this momentous event on February 24th. Let’s make it the event ever!!!

Looking ahead to 2018 we have already scheduled our “Caregiver Day” for Caregivers and Support group leaders on March 9th, 2018 at NCUMC (New Covenant United Methodist Church). “Your Key to Senior Living Options” is also having a fund raiser for AFO Called “Spring Bling Fling”. This is gently used jewelry and accessories. This will be hosted by Sumter Grand Independent Living on March 20th, 2018 from 2-5. If you have jewelry or other accessories you would like to donate, please contact me for pick up. So, mark your calendars. Wonderful things are happening!

If you have a need to have someone speak at your club, organization or group and learn more about Alzheimer’s Family Organization and Alzheimer’s/Dementia, please contact me as it would be a privilege to serve you.

A Servant’s Heart, Jackie
Raising expectations for memory care.

Atria is proud to serve Florida families facing the challenges of dementia in our Life Guidance® neighborhoods. Our forward-thinking approach to memory care offers thoughtfully designed spaces, engaging programs and specially trained caregivers.

Come see how people with dementia can lead engaging, meaningful and joyful lives. Schedule a visit today at AtriaSeniorLiving.com/CentralFlorida.

Atria Senior Living

Independent Living | Assisted Living | Memory Care

Four communities serving Hernando, Lake and Pasco Counties
UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 24th 2018
10:00 AM
The Villages Polo Field
703 Buena Vista Blvd,
The Villages, FL 32162

Alzheimer’s Family Organization & Parady Financial
Presents the 6th Annual

ALZHEIMER’S FAMILY SUPPORT WALK
“We walk because we care”

www.AlzheimersFamily.org/WalkVillages

March 20th 2018
2:00 - 5:00 PM
Sumter Grand Independent Living
1490 Killingsworth Way,
The Villages, FL 32162

Spring Bling Fling
Gently Used Jewelry & Accessory Fundraiser
Please Call Lisa or Bonnie at 352-446-5749
to RSVP or make a donation

www.AlzheimersFamily.org/SpringBlingFling

April 3rd 2018
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Heritage Springs Country Club
11345 Robert Trent Jones
Pkwy, Trinity, FL 34655

14th Annual AFO
Alberta’s Fashion Show
• SPONSOR • DONATE • VOLUNTEER
Fashion, Food & Fun | $35 /ticket

www.AlzheimersFamily.org/Fashion2018

For Educational Events, see page 6.

For more information on upcoming events or to purchase event tickets:
www.alzheimersfamily.org
Presents the 6th Annual

ALZHEIMER’S FAMILY SUPPORT WALK

“We walk because we care”

JOIN US ON: FEB. 24, 2018 | 9:00 AM

LOCATION:
THE VILLAGES POLO FIELD
703 Buena Vista Blvd,
The Villages, FL 32162

SCHEDULE:
8:00 AM.....Registration/Check-in
9:00 AM......Opening Ceremonies & Prize Ticket Sales
9:30 AM.................Walk To Begin

WALK PRICE:
Kids 5 & Under.....................FREE!
Junior 6-12..............................$10
Adults 13 & Up.........................$20
Teams (10 or more) .................$20 Each

Join the AFO for a 1/4 Mile or 1.5 Mile Walk to show your support for those affected by Alzheimer’s disease or dementia.

REGISTER & SPONSOR AT:
www.AlzheimersFamily.org/WalkVillages

CHANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE!
Visit our website for your chance to win one of 4 great prizes valued at over $400 each!

ENTERTAINMENT
BY SCOOTER THE DJ

Proceeds to benefit the Alzheimer’s Family Organization

DONATE VOLUNTEER

ALZHEIMER’S FAMILY ORGANIZATION - 461 MARINER BOULEVARD, SPRING HILL, FL 34609
PHONE: 352-616-0170 FAX: 352-616-0174 WWW.ALZHEIMERSFAMILY.ORG
RECENT EVENTS

17th Annual Tampa Bay Charity Golf Tournament

Our 17th Annual Tampa Bay Charity Golf Tournament was held in Tarpon Springs at Crescent Oaks Golf Club on November 4, 2017. With the help of AFO staff, 17 volunteers, 15 Sponsors, 28 Donors and 88 Golfers- we were able to raise a total of $15,075.07! The money raised will go towards continuing AFO’s support and education programs for the 8 counties that we serve! See page 5 to learn more about what we do.

A group shot with our wonderful golfers and the AFO staff. In total we had 83 registered Players

AFO had a silent auction, live auction, gift basket giveaway and 50/50 prize - all thanks to our wonderful donors and supporters!

Visit our facebook page for more photos!

Thank you, Sponsors

ACE - $5,000
EAGLE - $2,000

Full Circle Financial

THANK YOU, SPONSORS

BIRDIE - $500
BNY Mellon Bank
Hands Across the Bay
Construction Pros

PAR - $250
Mark Obman, DDS, PA
Elder Assistance
New Image Dermatology
Palm Gardens of Clearwater
The Daily Group, Inc.

Hole Sponsors - $100
Kathleen & Bill Simington
Patrick & Kathleen Winters
Executive Care
Coping with Dementia, LLC
Beth Powanda, PA Remax Marketing Specialist

Media Partners
Tampa Bay Times
Hits 106.5

Citrus Walk Aware For Alzheimer’s

AFO’s FIRST EVER Support Walk in Citrus County was held in Historic Floral City on October 21. We called it the “Citrus Walk Aware for Alzheimer’s.” The Walk featured a ¼ mile, 1.5 mile or Historic Walk which was guided by members of the Floral City Heritage Council. In addition to the Walk, we hosted a unique art show, TWO special screenings of “I’ll Be Me,” (the farewell tour documentary on Country Music Legend Glen Campbell) and the grand reveal of Coping with Dementia, LLC’s “Famous with Alzheimer’s” photo exhibit.

All in all, with the help of AFO staff, 28 volunteers, 18 Sponsors and 15 Donors - we were able to raise a total of $22,966.85! The money raised will go towards continuing AFO’s support and education programs for the 8 counties that we serve! See page 5 to learn more about how we help our community.

Visit our facebook page for more photos!
Resolutions! An abundance of online information exists on the history, origins, definition and guidance on successfully nurturing the chosen annual resolution, which many of us enjoy as an accompaniment to New Year celebrations. However, it is sometimes helpful to contextually remind ourselves about resolutions and if necessary to reframe our process to help achieve better outcomes.

**Definition - Resolutions:** (plural noun) a firm decision to do or not to do something. Synonyms: resolve, determination, perseverance, tenacity; strength, fortitude. Resolutions are common throughout the globe, where a person resolves to change an undesired trait or behavior, to accomplish a personal goal or otherwise improve their life. Babylonians made promises to their gods at the start of each year that they would return borrowed objects and pay their debts. The Romans began each year by making promises to the god Janus. At watchnight services, many Christians prepare for the year ahead by praying and making resolutions. During Judaism’s New Year, Rosh Hashanah, through the High Holidays and culminating in Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), one is to reflect upon one’s wrongdoings over the year and both seek and offer forgiveness. The common theme is self-reflection and self-improvement.

Approximately half of us participate in a New Year’s resolution tradition of some sort. Popular self-improvement goals include resolutions to:

- Improve physical well-being: eat healthy food, lose weight, exercise more, eat better, drink less alcohol, quit smoking, stop biting nails, get rid of old bad habits
- Improve mental well-being: think positive, laugh more often, enjoy life
- Improve finances: reduce debt, save money, make small investments
- Improve education: learn something new (such as a foreign language or music), study more often, read more books, improve or increase talents
- Improve self: become more organized, reduce stress, be less grumpy, manage time,
- Take a trip
- Get along better with people, improve social skills, enhance social intelligence
- Make new friends
- Spend quality time with family members
- Pray more, be closer to your God, or be more spiritual

The most common reason for participants failing their New Years’ Resolutions was setting themselves unrealistic goals (35%), while one third didn’t keep track of their progress. Success is more likely to occur when we engage in goal setting or a system of setting small, incremental but measurable goals such as, a pound a week, instead of a lofty goal to “lose weight”. Some individuals and groups achieve greater success when their goals are made public and they receive mutual support and encouragement from their friends online or in person.

Caregivers often feel a loss of control and decision-making ability due to the needs of their loved one and their sense of duty and service towards them. A personal resolution is one way in which a caregiver may be able to regain that sense of control and autonomy —especially when it is about taking care of themselves. Such resolutions improves the quality of life for both your loved one and yourself. As with most of your activities, your planning and attention to detail is often the distinguishing determinant of success. Resolutions can be undertaken

**Resolutions, continued on page 17.**
In a similar way. Be thoughtful and deliberate in your personal self-reflection and personal annual review. Explore areas that you have been successful with during this past year, and consider some of the reasons why. Equally, evaluate those challenging areas where you believe it did not result in the outcome that you had anticipated. By exploring a little deeper and reflecting on some of the possible reasons or contributors we can learn from our experiences and begin to plan a more successful strategy for accomplishing your goal for this year.

To avoid the French adage; A goal without a plan is a wish, we must identify action-steps that are smart. SMART goals are ones that are Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, and Time based. Positive goals (an action that you want to perform) are more likely to be successful than negative goals (something you want to stop doing). Just like your detailed planning for the upcoming holidays, celebrations, travel, or spiritual events, plan your resolution and identify smart action-steps to help you get to where you would like to be. Visualize what that would look like, how it would make you feel, and the impact it would have on you and others. When considering your specific goal, making it personal, valuable, and relevant is important. Hold on to that goal and be kind to yourself, even during not so good days and those inevitable unexpected challenges. Tomorrow is always another opportunity to improve on today –including our work towards our resolutions.

More information regarding these and other support strategies for caregivers are available from one of the many dedicated staff from a caregiver support agency such as Alzheimer’s Family Organization who welcome opportunities to discuss help and support services for you and your loved one. Take great pride in your incredible efforts, as being a caregiver is not easy and those who do it are very special.

Is it possible to sustain mental function affected by the early stages of Alzheimer’s?

Recent research suggests that a well-designed program, including cutting-edge technology, may be key to maintaining cognitive function and slowing the progression of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias. Clare Bridge Crossings offers innovative programming designed to engage residents, boost self-esteem, improve quality of life and help seniors to remain social. Our unique approach includes such mind enhancing activities as:

- InTouch, a unique technology that provides a virtual world of discovery
- Ventures Outings, our program that offers new learnings with lectures and trips

To learn more about Clare Bridge Crossings, call 1-877-885-6153.
Tips To Better Understand Your Medications

By: Molli L. Samuels, Angels Care Home Health

When we are sick, we turn to medications to make us healthy. Medications keep many chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and arthritis in check. They make pains go away, allergy symptoms disappear, viruses vanish, and feelings of depression and anxiety manageable. When used correctly, medications make our lives so much better. However, on the flip side, when medications aren’t used correctly, your health can take a major turn for the worse. According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 53 percent of hospitalized patients there for medication-related injuries are over age 65.

Following are some strategies to ensure your medications work for you, not against you.

**Strategy # 1: Communicate**

Communication is the key to making your medicines work for you. Be sure your health care providers know every single medicine you take including prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins and herbal supplements. Be sure all of your health care providers know about any allergies or adverse reactions you have had to medicines. Never assume your doctor already knows this information.

**Strategy #2: Be Smart at the Pharmacy**

Use one pharmacy for all of your prescription refills and do not hesitate to ask your pharmacist questions about the correct dose of your medicines, side effects, and to verify that you are getting the exact medicine your doctor prescribed. If the directions on your medicine labels aren’t clear, ask.

**Strategy #3: Ask These 5 Questions**

You should ask for information about your medicines in a language you can understand, both when your medicines are prescribed and when you get them, such as:

1. What is the medicine for?
2. How am I supposed to take it and for how long?

Medications, continued on page 19.
Medications, continued from page 18.

3. What side effects are likely? What do I do if they occur?
4. Is this medicine safe to take with other medicines or dietary supplements I am taking?
5. What food, drink, or activities should I avoid while taking this medicine?

Strategy #4: Get Support
Ask a family member or friend to go to your appointments with you. Your companion can serve as a second set of eyes and ears for you and may catch something you missed.

Strategy #5: Use a Medication Organizer
A slotted pill box may help you remember when to take your medicines. It also helps you to know how much medication remains in your stock bottles and allows you time to refill prescriptions.

Strategy #6: Store Medications Properly
Many people routinely store medications in the bathroom medicine cabinet, but temperature changes and moisture levels can alter the medication once it is opened. Be sure to read the packaging on prescription medications for storage instructions.

Strategy #7: Get a Yearly “Medication Check Up”
Get a “Medication Check Up” at least once a year. Ask your health care providers to review all of your medicines and determine whether all are needed, if there is the potential for drug interactions, or if dosage adjustments are needed.

Strategy #8: Take Your Medications as Directed
There are many reasons why people don’t follow a medication regimen prescribed by their doctor. Some may deny their illness and the need to take medications for it. Or, they may not have faith in the effectiveness of their treatment, so they find alternative methods of fixing themselves or they give up altogether. Contact your health care provider if you cannot afford your medicine. There is help.

For more information about Angels Care Home Health and the benefits of home health care, contact the Clermont office at 352-241-7476 or visit angelscarehealth.com/Clermont.
Clinical Research can be a scary endeavor. I am here to help guide your way to help determine if it is right for you and your loved one. 

First, some numbers. It has been over 17 years since the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) has approved a medication for Alzheimer’s disease. There are 4 that are currently on the market. Aricept, Namenda, Glamtamine, and Exalon. Nemzaric is a newer medication on the market, but is not new to the Alzheimer’s world. It is a combination of Aricept and Namenda.

There are different universities and pharmaceutical companies that are dedicated to furthering the development of new Alzheimer’s and other related Dementia medications!

How do you learn more? I always suggest starting with your local physician. Talk to them about your concerns and the desire to participate in a trial. Although participation in a clinical trial is 100% voluntary (meaning you do not need the permission of your provider) we strongly suggest keeping your provider in the loop.

Local facilities in the area are conducting clinical trials for patients with Alzheimer's Disease, Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), and other cognitive related diseases. At Meridien Research, we provide FREE memory testing for the community. By starting with a memory focused exam; we complete a comprehensive review of your medical history, medications, and review the memory changes you're experiencing, we can help determine if you qualify for a clinical trial.

Is there a cost to the patient? NO! One of the benefits of participating in a clinical trial is that there is ZERO cost to the patient and the caregiver. All study related services are covered. From your physical exams, to diagnostic testing, to medications. The majority of the clinical trials that are available also compensate you and your loved one for the time that you commit to participating in the trial!

Is it safe? Participation in studies can offer you these new treatments right away while also contributing the added care and support from the clinical trial staff. As a study participant, you work with certified medical doctors as well as your primary doctor to assess and ensure your overall health and safety during the study. The clinical trials, like the ones that are conducted at Meridien Research, have a Board-Certified Physician that coordinate the trials. They are specially trained on specific protocols.

But what if I get placebo? Let’s first start with what placebo is. Placebo is NON-active medication. Placebo is used to help develop data in controlled groups. Most studies are what we call double blind, placebo controlled studies. Double blind means that both the study site and the patient do not know if you are on active study medication and placebo controlled mean that there is a percentage of people that will be provided non-active medication. There are options for patients to enroll in extension studies. Where if they complete the requirements of the initial study, the patients have the option to enroll in an extension where they are guaranteed active study medication!

What’s next? Talk with your loved ones. There are several opportunities for people to participate in a clinical trial. Not every trial is best for everyone. Reach out to your local facility and start the conversation! Going to sites like www.clinicaltrials.gov (which is the national database) or your local facility like Meridien Research www.newstudyinfo.com will put you on the right track to learn more about what is available in your area.
How Can You Improve Your Financial Fitness This Year?

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If one of your New Year’s resolutions is to get healthier, you may already be taking the necessary steps, such as improving your diet and increasing your exercise. Of course, physical fitness is important to your well-being – but, at the same time, don’t forget about your financial fitness. Specifically, what can you do to ensure your investment situation is in good shape?

Here are a few “healthy living” suggestions that may also apply to your investment portfolio:

**Build Endurance**

Just as exercise can help build your endurance for the demands of a long life, a vigorous investment strategy can help you work toward your long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement. In practical terms, this means you will need to own some investments with the potential to provide long-term growth. These are the investments that, ideally, you can hold on to for decades and eventually reap the benefits of capital appreciation. Of course, growth-oriented investments, such as most types of stocks, will rise and fall in value over the short term, and there’s no guarantee of profits, or even preserving principal. But if you choose wisely, and you’ve got the patience and discipline to hold on to your investments through the market’s ups and downs, you may well be rewarded.

**Maintain An Ideal “Weight”**

You can help yourself stay healthy by maintaining your ideal weight. This can be challenging – as you know from the recently finished holiday season, it’s easy to put on a few extra pounds. And, just as inadvertently, your portfolio can tack on some unneeded weight, too, in the form of redundant investments. Over time, you may have picked up too many similar investment vehicles, resulting in an overconcentration, or “flabbiness,” that can work against you, especially when a market downturn affects the asset class in which you’re overloaded. So, you might be better off liquidating some of your duplicate, or near-duplicate, investments, and using the proceeds to help broaden your investment mix.

**Get Proper Rest**

Many studies have shown that we need adequate rest to stay alert and healthy. In your life, you’ve probably already found that if you over-tax your body, you pay a price in your overall well-being. If you look at your investment portfolio as a living entity – which, in a way, it is, as it certainly provides life to your goals and aspirations – then you can see that it, too, can be weakened by stress. And one of the main stress factors is excessive trading. If you’re constantly buying and selling investments in an attempt to boost your returns, you may rack up hefty fees, commissions and taxes – and still not really get the results you wanted. Plus, if you’re frequently moving in and out of different investments, you’ll find it hard to follow a unified, long-term strategy. So, confine your trading to those moves that are really essential – and give your portfolio a rest.

To enjoy your life fully, you’ll want to take care of your physical and financial health – and, as it turns out, you can make similar types of moves to help yourself in both areas.

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352-341-0579
A trip to the mailbox seemed like the perfect way to start the day for Ruth. At 71 years young, every morning after her coffee she slipped on her walking shoes and headed down her long driveway to see what goodies had arrived. This had been her routine for more than 5 years and today seemed no different.

As Ruth reached for the door, she noticed her cane neatly stowed in the corner. She had picked it up after her knee surgery 3 years ago. After a few weeks of walking with it, she was happy to put it in its proper place and leave it there. She hadn't used it since. Lately she had been wondering if she should use the cane as she had lost her balance a few times. She hadn't actually fallen, just a wobble here and there. She thought that was normal for someone her age. She had made this trip hundreds of times without that old cane and quickly decided that she wouldn't take it today either.

Ruth was about half way to the mailbox when she misjudged her step. In an instant she was lying on her back in the middle of her driveway. She didn't know exactly how the fall had happened, but she knew that her trips to the mailbox had been changed forever.

Ruth was just one of the over 600,000 people who fell this year. One in three adults over the age of 65 will fall. Since falls are the number one cause for injury and accidental death among seniors, some will never regain their normal lives.

Like most seniors, Ruth didn’t know the warning signs that could have helped prevent her fall. Those warning signs include:

• Using furniture or people to walk to feel safe walking around home.
• Tripping, near falling, or falls.
• Problems walking on grass, gravel, sand or other uneven surfaces.
• Trouble getting into/out of bathtub.
• Walking with feet wide apart instead of close together.

Ruth also wasn’t aware that in addition to telling her doctor about her fall, there are other steps she can take to make sure it doesn’t happen again.

• Schedule a balance screening by a licensed physical therapist every year or after any fall. Most people don’t think about their balance until it is too late. Yearly balance screenings can find and treat hidden problems that may result in falls.
• Keep moving. Exercising not only keeps the body strong, but it can also improve balance and reduce the risk of falling. There are many ways to exercise. Going for walks, golf, pickle ball, tai chi and even practicing standing up and sitting down are all great ways to enjoy moving and reap the benefits of exercise. Some gyms even have SilverSneaker programs that are designed for seniors and paid for by Medicare.
• Review medications. Some antidepressants, anti-anxiety drugs, blood pressure and heart medications, pain relievers and even sleep aids can affect balance. Primary care physicians and pharmacists can give detailed information about all of the side effects that may be experienced.
• Secure the house. Loose rugs, pets, small children and fading eyesight can create a perfect situation for a fall. Secure the environment by picking up loose rugs, training pets and teaching small children not to run in home and placing night lights in areas that tend to get dark.
• Have vision checked yearly in addition to balance screenings.

Falling was not part of Ruth’s plan. Knowing the warning signs and taking steps to reduce her fall risk would have made this trip to her mailbox like the hundreds before…except much safer.
Cheesecake Stuffed Strawberries

**Ingredients:**
- 24+ large, fresh strawberries (1½ to 2 lbs, depends on how much you fill them)
- 1 (8oz) package cream cheese, room temperature or softened slightly
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup fresh blueberries

**Preparation:**
- Cut the stems from the strawberries, so the strawberries can sit cut-side down.
- Cut a deep “X” from the tip down, being careful not to cut all the way through.
- Beat the cream cheese, powdered sugar, and vanilla in a bowl with a hand mixer until nice and fluffy.
- Gently open up each strawberry and pipe the filling inside using a pastry bag or zip-top bag with a star piping tip. Don’t have a pastry bag or piping tip? Just cut off the corner of a zip-top bag and squeeze the cheesecake filling inside the strawberries that way.
- Top each filled strawberry with a blueberry. These are best served after the strawberries have been chilled for at least an hour. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator up to 3 days depending on how firm/soft the strawberries are.
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Would you like to help support AFO?

The Alzheimer’s Family Organization needs your support to carry on all of the services we offer including support groups, the Helpline, the Newsletter and other activities to assist families coping with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

☐ YES, I would like to be a volunteer for the Alzheimer’s Family Organization.

☐ YES, I would like to support the work of the Alzheimer’s Family Organization through membership, which entitles me to receive the newsletter, updates on research and notification of caregiver days/seminars.

Name __________________________________________________________
Address _______________________________________ County __________
City_________________________ State _____ Zip _____________
Home Phone ___________________ Email ____________________________

Enclosed is my tax deductible membership contribution of:
☐ $50 Member
☐ $100 Friend
☐ $500 Lifetime
☐ $1000 Alzheimer’s Angel
☐ $300 Corporate (organization, agency, nursing home or ALF)
☐ $500 Corporate Plus (organization, agency, nursing home or ALF)

We accept MasterCard, Visa and Discover

How to Make a Bequest to the Alzheimer’s Family Organization

Speak with your attorney about the advantages of estate planning and how your will can benefit both your loved ones and the Alzheimer’s Family Organization. If you already have a will, your lawyer may add a codicil to it. If you don’t have a will, the bequest can be included when your will is drafted.

Enclosed is my tax deductible donation of $_________
Please dedicate my donation in honor of/in memory of: (Name)
And notify: Name ____________________________
Address _______________________________________ County __________
City_________________________ State _____ Zip _____________
Sent by ____________
Address _______________________________________ County __________
City_________________________ State _____ Zip _____________