

alzheimer's association®

Midlands Chapter

Perspectives

December 2008 Issue

Boston Legal Brings Alzheimer's Center Stage

William Shatner, a.k.a. Captain James T. Kirk and Denny Crane, brought Alzheimer's Disease research center stage. The Monday, December 1st episode of ABC-TV's "Boston Legal" prominently featured an Alzheimer's disease related story line. According to abc.com: "A drug which could slow Denny's deterioration is available but not FDA approved. Alan tries to convince the Supreme Court to let Denny have access to it."



This is an exciting time for Alzheimer's research. Roughly 90 drugs to treat Alzheimer's disease or slow its progression are in clinical studies. There are currently five drugs approved by the FDA to treat Alzheimer's disease. Our hope is that research will lead to our Vision of a World Without Alzheimer's Disease.

If you would like more information on drugs currently in clinical trials visit www.clinicaltrials.gov

The Alzheimer's Association, Midlands Chapter has staff and local experts who can provide information about:

- (1) Warning signs of Alzheimer's disease. / When and how to get a diagnosis.
- (2) What are Alzheimer's disease clinical studies? / How do I participate?
- (3) Becoming an Alzheimer's disease Advocate and adding your voice to our call for more research dollars.

The Midlands Chapter's information and referral line provides information, education and support 24/7 to individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias their families and caregivers. Please give us a call at 402.502.4300 or at 800.272.3900.

Make a Holiday Gift of Hope

By Micah Evans, Development Director Midlands Chapter



The Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter has remained faithful to our mission of battling Alzheimer's disease for over twenty-five years. During this economic downturn, however, the need is even greater than before. People are desperate for information, up-to-date dementia education, and quality care. Even though we have made great strides in treating the disease, we still have a long way to go to find the cure. Over 5.2 million Americans and their families cope with this destructive disease each day, and the number is expected to explode, affecting as many as 16 million people by 2050.

Won't you help provide the gift of hope? Your gift will mean so much in the fight against Alzheimer's disease. I earnestly hope we can count on your generous financial support as we work toward our vision: A world without Alzheimer's disease.

Please support our Annual Fund and help us give the gift of hope for those with Alzheimer's disease and for their families this Holiday Season.

Dementia Care Training at Its Best

The Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter dementia care training program for residential communities will give your direct care staff the specialized knowledge and skills to be more productive and deliver a higher quality of dementia care. Our affordable, field-tested training gives your staff:

- Person-centered approaches to respond to individual preferences and abilities
- Modules on the most critical aspects of dementia care, such as pain management and getting enough food and fluids
- Practical, problem-solving skills staff can use immediately on the floor
- CEUs for nurses, social workers and nursing home administrators



We will work with you to select the best training options for your staff needs, scheduling and budget. The care practices your staff will learn are based on the latest research and expert evidence in the dementia care field. Leading health and senior care organizations back these practices, which are described in the Alzheimer's Association Dementia Care Practice Recommendations for Nursing Homes and Assisted Living Residences, available at www.alz.org.

For information on our complete dementia care training program, contact [Clayton Freeman](mailto:Clayton.Freeman@alz.org) by e-mail or call 402.502.4301.

OSCAR NIGHT[®]
A M E R I C A
F E B R U A R Y 2 2 , 2 0 0 9



Join the stars on the red carpet and experience the magic of the Academy Awards at the Alzheimer's Association Midlands Chapter Oscar Night on February 22 at Harrah's Hotel & Casino. Hollywood's most elegant evening has come to the Midlands Chapter, and you can join the excitement of Oscar Night. Please call Jana at 402.502.4301 or [e-mail](mailto:jana@alz.org) her for more information TODAY!

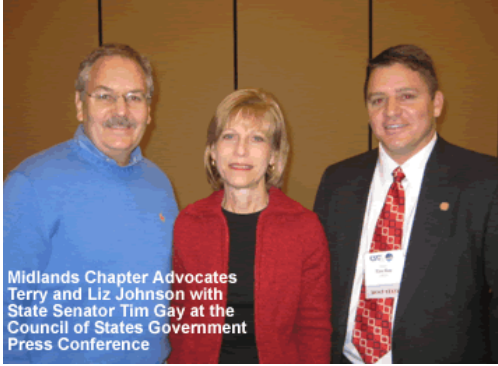
This year, our silent auction items include:

- One night's stay and passes for four to CoCo Key Water Resort, combining the fun and excitement of an enormous water park with all the amenities of a nationally known hotel!
- Omaha Royals Baseball birthday party package, including an autographed baseball for your baseball fan, "Happy Birthday" on-field during the game, 10 Coke Fun Zone passes, 10 reserved seat tickets, and more!
- An 18-hole foursome at Pacific Springs, a par 70 championship golf course
- A Lied Lodge getaway at Arbor Day Farm, including a night's stay and breakfast for two
- A beautifully framed print of Memorial Stadium, highlighting Nebraska's biggest city on game day - Memorial Stadium
- Golf lessons from the world leader in golf improvement, GolfTEC
- A beautifully framed wildlife print from world renown photographer Thomas Mangelsen

You can reserve your seat/table now if you [register on-line](http://www.alz.org) TODAY!!

See you there!!!

Midlands Chapter Hosts Press Conference



Midlands Chapter Advocates Terry and Liz Johnson with State Senator Tim Gay at the Council of States Government Press Conference

On Thursday December 4, 2008 the Midlands Chapter hosted a Press Conference announcing that the Conference of State Governments has addressed the impact of Alzheimer's disease on state governments during their annual meeting at the Qwest Center in Omaha.

Dr. Duane Gross, PhD, President and CEO of the Midlands Chapter, welcomed the Press and recognized Nebraska State Senator Tim Gay, member of the health and human services committee, Debra Miller, Director of Health Policy for the Council of State Governments, representatives from the Centers for Disease Control and Alzheimer's Association advocates and staff. Senator Gay expressed his support to address the needs of the 33,000 Nebraskans with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers.

The Council of State Government brief educates state legislators about the broad human and economic threat of cognitive impairment and Alzheimer's disease. The brief also offers innovative actions state policymakers can implement to confront these threats.

The Midlands Chapter invites you to become an Alzheimer's advocate and add your voice to the cause. Chapter Advocates work to increase funding for research for a cure, ensure that those with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias receive quality care in facilities and build strong partnerships that ensure that elderly concerns are appropriately addressed at governmental and community levels.

Join our [Advocacy Network](#) and **become an advocate TODAY!** Or call the Chapter office at 402.502.4300 for more information.

The Unknown

Submitted by Helen McGill, Caregiver



Who knows for sure when it started, but Mom was never the same after heart surgery. She came out of the anesthesia in a psychotic state, and had never been the same since the operation. It was the final act that pushed her into the dark maze we call Alzheimer's disease.

It was very difficult for us all when Dad and Mom sold their lovely home belongings so they could move into a retirement community. Mom and I had spent many great moments selecting each piece of furniture, and they held a special memory of happier times. But when I saw my Mom's lovely clothing priced and laid on a table for sale, I was overwhelmed with loneliness for the person she use to be. It broke my heart.

Eventually, Mom needed special care so she and Dad were separated. He lived three blocks away from her care center and drove to see her every day for five years. Dad would help with the rosary and mass, and the residents would enjoy this memory from their past. He was a light in the darkness at the home, and everyone loved both of my parents.

Dad was so devoted to Mom and promised to care for her 'til death do us part'. Even though the disease had robbed her of her memory Mom's eyes would light up when she saw Dad. The love was obviously still there. They celebrated every wedding anniversary at a special service in church all dressed up-a beautiful couple and shining example of the vow 'for better or for worse'. Their 65th anniversary was so special and as they danced to the music we could almost forget for the moment the thief that was stealing our mother's life. Theirs is a beautiful story that deserves telling and recognition.

Alzheimer's . . . the anger, the loss, the outbursts, the loneliness, the non recognition, the caring, the eternal love and devotion-a long journey.

Their daughter,
Helen

Maintain Your Brain

By Rosalie Shepherd, Program Staff

In search for the fountain of youth, researchers keep coming back to one fact: What you eat has a tremendous impact not only on your health but your longevity. The idea that food is the best medicine has been proven time and again by modern medicine.

Rickets-once a bone crippling disease in children, now immunized with the lactic acid in milk

Scurvy-for centuries a destroyer of gums and teeth, now immunized by citrus fruits

These are only a few examples of the incredible immunizing powers made possible by the enzymes in natural foods.

In the past it was thought that it was not humanly possible to avoid the ravages of dementing disorders like Alzheimer's disease. However, mounting evidence shows that making a few life-style changes may help keep a healthy brain into old age. Researchers named ten basic things we can all do to maintain our brain.

Future articles in this column will address these issues, give healthy recipes, puzzles to challenge the brain, and tips on healthy living. Stay tuned.



Are You Feeling Frazzled?



Are you feeling tired? Overwhelmed? Caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease can be stressful. Do something nice for yourself and attend a caregiver support group meeting. There are many dates, times and locations available. Go to the [Support Group page](#) on our web site for a complete list or call the Chapter office for more information.