

“I don’t let what is going to happen 5 years from now define today.”

Pat Delmenhorst, Caregiver, Glendale, WI

Pat has a very positive approach to how she lives each day. “I don’t let what is going to happen 5 years from now define today,” says Pat. “I used to work at Interfaith in the caregiver program so I know what we have to look forward to, but I don’t dwell.” Pat, like many caregivers, faces a changing future supporting a spouse with a neurological diagnosis. Four years ago, Pat’s husband Fred was diagnosed with primary progressive aphasia (PPA). It is a neurological syndrome in which language capability becomes progressively impaired and is caused by neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer’s. “Fred was a Vice President at Marcus Corporation and an attorney, so for his language to be taken is cruel,” says Pat. “You can’t really appreciate what we go through until you have to deal with it.”

“I would encourage other caregivers to engage their friends for support,” says Pat. “My friends want to support me and it helped me to share with them how they could help. It’s easy to get closed off if you don’t make an effort. Just don’t be afraid to ask.”



The Longest Day

This is the first year Pat and her family participated in The Longest Day. “The longest day is so accurate for this diagnosis – very long,” says Pat. “It made us feel good to do something to raise awareness. We hadn’t shared with everyone about Fred’s diagnosis and we had very positive feedback.”

On June 20th Pat’s whole family helped raise funds. Pat hit 200 golf balls, her son did 250 pushups (with his 2-year old on his back), her daughter biked 25 miles and her 8-year old grandson biked eight miles and went door to door soliciting neighbors for donations. Their family raised over \$2,300 and earned the title of Solstice Champion.

The Longest Day is the day with the most light — the summer solstice. On June 20, people from across the world fight the darkness of Alzheimer’s through a fundraising activity of their choice to help advance Alzheimer’s care, support and research.

We honor Pat and other caregivers throughout Wisconsin who help to create awareness for Alzheimer’s and other dementias.

