



THE ALZHEIMER  
SOCIETY of IRELAND

# OASIS

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Newsletter of the Alzheimer Society of Ireland

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World Alzheimer's Day  
Spending Time Together  
Challenge Yourself!



# Message from the CEO



Dear Friends,

World Alzheimer's Day™ 2009 (WAD) falls on Monday 21st September with a focus on the need for earlier diagnosis of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. Themed 'Diagnosing Dementia: See it Sooner', Alzheimer Societies and families worldwide will rally together on WAD

to highlight the importance of getting a diagnosis and encouraging medical professionals to recognise the signs of the disease in order for people to receive the treatment they need as soon as possible.

Dementia presents one of the greatest health and social care challenges of our time, affecting 44,000 people in Ireland and close to 30 million people throughout the world. For every person affected there are several carers, family members and friends impacted upon too. Many countries are now prioritising dementia as a public health issue and implementing integrated dementia strategies to improve policy, planning and provision of services. The Alzheimer Society continues to campaign for such recognition here and we are hopeful that the Department of Health will convene a dementia strategy working group during the winter months.

The current economic crisis has put enormous financial pressure on everyone, particularly families caring at home. The Alzheimer Society is implementing a range of cost saving measures throughout the organisation including the frequency (now only three per year) and style of this

newsletter. I'd like to thank staff and volunteers for their support and innovation during this process.

The HSE programme of cut backs has resulted in a ban on recruitment and as a consequence access to multi-disciplinary teams and short term respite services has become more difficult. Home care packages have become thinner on the ground too. While HSE funding for the Society's services has been cut, our services on the ground are continuing to be supplemented by money raised locally and through Tea Day activities.

However the need for dementia-specific community services is constantly growing and there are over 900 families waiting for our services. Over the coming weeks we will be lobbying for increased funding in Budget 2010. We will be contacting politicians nationally and through their constituencies to state our case and we will be encouraging affected families to write letters as part of this campaign. Your support will be of huge help.

Maurice O'Connell

For details of World Alzheimer's Day™ activities in your area contact your local services or visit [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie).

World Alzheimer's Day™ is coordinated by Alzheimer's Disease International and supported by the by the 71 Alzheimer associations throughout the world



## Research Update

The Alzheimer Society of Ireland is in partnership with the Irish Hospice Foundation, who is the lead partner, in a two year exploratory research project. The project aims to devise, implement and evaluate palliative care responses appropriate to people with dementia within residential and/or community settings. The research is being undertaken by Clare Mental Health Services for Older People, on site at Cappahard Lodge, Ennis.

For further information and regular project updates see: <http://www.hospice-foundation.ie>

## Elder Mediation World Summit & Symposium

Ms Aine Brady T.D, Minister of State with Responsibility for Older People launched a pilot Elder Mediation Project on behalf of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and Mediation Northside in June 2009. This project will provide elder mediation services to older people living with dementia in the Dublin area. Selected mediators are currently finalising their training and the service is expected to be operational from October 2009.

The project was launched as part of the second annual Elder Mediation World Summit & Symposium. The Society was delighted to partner with Elder



Mediation International Network to bring this international summit to Dublin and raise awareness about elder mediation and its benefits, particularly for people living with dementia.

For further information please contact Avril Dooley, Social Inclusion Officer at 01 207 3800.

# Branch News

- Noel Bergin and friends organised a 2 day cycle from Longford to Sligo and back again. Raising an impressive €2,353 for the Longford Branch of the Society. Congratulations to everyone that took part.
- The Lions Club in Athy joined forces with the Society and held a benefit night in the Hazel Hotel. By all accounts a fun filled night was had by all, and €1000 was raised.
- Mary Walsh and Fran Havens were among the 'A' team who took part in this year's mini marathon. Both ladies raised money for our day care centre in Monasterevin.
- The Society's 5th Social Club has opened in Ballyfermot, Dublin 10. Contact: Adrienne McAivenne, tel: 086 8381215.
- There was great excitement in the Wexford Branch on Sunday 31st May as Olympic Boxing coach Billy Walsh helped Matty Murphy launch the CD 'Songs at Random' in Whites Hotel.
- The Alzheimer's Society of Ireland, along with the Irish Motor Neurone Association have been announced as the two charities to benefit from the 5th Annual Great Honda Step-Thru Run. The event takes place at the 20th Annual Culchie Festival this year in Ballyjamesduff Co Cavan on Sunday 25th October. Check out <http://www.culchiefestival.com/> for further details.



1. Tea Day in Carlow
2. Staff Member Eileen Walsh who took part in her 7th Mini Marathon in aid of the Society.
3. Nenagh Branch Chair Aggie Banes pictured with David Jones, Capt of Nenagh Golf and Vera O'Brien at the Nenagh Golf Classic in aid of the Society

4. Book launch Nenagh
5. The Society in Cork at a Presentation to the Lord Mayor Brian Bermingham in appreciation of all the work he has done for the Society.
6. Crux Vocal ensemble in St. Patrick's Cathedral.
7. Donegal Branch receiving a cheque from Northwest 10k run.

**When we seek for connection, we restore the world to wholeness. Our seemingly separate lives become meaningful as we discover how truly necessary we are to each other.**

*Margaret Wheatley*

## Visiting people with dementia in nursing homes.

People with dementia who live in nursing homes are very much a part of our community. As cognition changes for a person, relationships and feelings of connectedness become even more important. There is an opportunity for us all to support our loved one, family member, friend, neighbour or indeed someone we may volunteer to visit, in nursing homes, and improve their social connection with family and community.

Visiting in its most basic sense is about 'being present' with someone. It's about keeping them connected. Visits, however, can prove challenging if we do not know how to fill the time, how to 'be present' with someone we love in a different environment, or how to leave at the end of the visit.

People with dementia, as the condition progresses may lose some of their verbal communication skills which can make us feel at a loss as to what to do during a visit. Relying solely on conversation can be difficult if the person's verbal skills and memory have changed. It is important to remember that although a person with dementia may not always remember what you said, they will remember how you made them feel. Relaxed and positive body language helps to put the person at ease which will make the visit more pleasant for you both.

Below are some tips for visiting people with dementia in nursing homes.

### Plan your Visit

**When:** Think about how often you can visit and the time you have to give to a visit. This will help you plan when and what to do during the visit. Consistent times for visiting can help to orientate the person with dementia and establish a routine for them and the nursing home. Think about the routine of the nursing home and how your visit will fit with dinnertimes or other activities that the person may enjoy being involved in. Think about other visitors' times and if a rota can be arranged so that visits are paced and co-ordinated between family and friends.

#### **Location:**

Think about where your visit will take place. Is there an opportunity for you to change the person with dementia's environment during your visit - by going for a walk in the grounds, sitting in the garden or sitting in a quiet/family room? Remember to choose somewhere that has minimal noise and distraction and affords some privacy.

#### **Frequency and Duration:**

Think about what is manageable for you. One good visit may be better than two rushed visits. Keep the person with dementia informed about the length of your visit and let them know when you will be back next.

### Before Arriving

Prepare yourself for the visit. Use techniques that help you feel relaxed before the visit. As the person with dementia's condition progresses, you may need to alter your expectations of the visit.

It will help to talk to a staff member to find out how the person has been that day, what activities they've been involved in or what they've eaten etc. This provides information to help you converse with the person whilst you're there.

Give yourself permission to shorten the visit if the person has had a busy or tiring day.



## During the Visit

Have a focus for the visit. Relying on conversation alone can be challenging, as it depends on a number of factors – how tired the person with dementia is, their verbal skills and ability to follow conversation. Using activities can aid your visit, and assist with making conversation and creating a sense of well-being for the person. The following are some suggestions that may assist with the visit.

- Listen to music together - old favourites.
- Read a book, magazine or newspaper with the person with dementia.
- Use reminiscence tools like photo albums, old books or videos to prompt conversation.
- Give the person a hand massage, manicure, shave or use make-up or hairstyling to assist the visit.
- Use past hobbies like knitting, jigsaw puzzles or cards.
- Use a diary to log visits so that each person knows what the other visitor has enjoyed with the person.
- Leave visible reminders of your visit, ie. flowers, cards etc, to remind the person with dementia of your visit.
- Bring in favourite food, as allowed by the nursing home, to stimulate taste and memory.



## After you Leave

It is ok to feel upset after you leave a close friend or relative who are no longer living at home.

Reassure yourself that each visit counts and each one is important in keeping the person connected to their life and wellbeing.

Remind yourself that you are doing the best you can and that you will be back to visit again when you can.



## Leaving

Reassure the person with dementia that you'll be back to see them. Focus on the "I'll see you soon", rather than 'Goodbye' as you leave.

Use other methods such as distraction or other activities to ease the transition of you leaving. Staff in the nursing home might bring the person for tea or involve them in other activities as you leave.

Provide the person with something to hold, or have to keep as you leave.

Use a calendar on the wall that shows when the next visit is.

# Fundraising

## Challenge yourself for Alzheimer's!

The Society is currently working on a campaign to encourage people to "challenge themselves" to support people in Ireland living with Alzheimer's. One such challenge we are promoting is The Cuba Cycle Challenge 2010.

The Cuba Cycle Challenge 2009 was an enormous success; the funds raised for The Society as a result of the Challenge came to over €50,000 net profit. We had excellent feedback about the trip from the cyclists who took part and there were no injuries!

With this in mind we are delighted to announce that we are launching the Cuba Cycle Challenge 2010!

The Society would like to thank Stuart Bailey and Ailbhe Skay for all their hard work and dedication.



**Another way in which you can challenge yourself to help raise much needed funds for The Society is by signing up for this year's Lifestyle Sports – Adidas Dublin City Marathon.**

You can register online at [www.dublinmarathon.ie](http://www.dublinmarathon.ie) and nominate The Alzheimer Society of Ireland as your chosen charity.

If you want to find out more about challenging yourself for Alzheimer's contact Emily on (01) 207 3816 or email [ebrew@alzheimer.ie](mailto:ebrew@alzheimer.ie) and she will send you out a fundraising pack.

## Christmas Cards 2009

Although we are afraid to say it... the season of festive cheer will soon be upon us so don't forget to order your Christmas Cards from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland. We hope you like our new selection of cards, the brochure is enclosed with this edition of Oasis so fill out your order form and get it in early!



**Lost your brochure? Call 01 207 3800 or visit [www.alzheimer.ie](http://www.alzheimer.ie)**

## Mini Marathon

That sunny day in June seems like a long time ago now but the success of the Flora Mini Marathon 2009 is still fresh in our minds! The Society had a great presence in Dublin on the day, the purple t-shirts stood out really well in the crowd and really emphasised how many people support the work that we do.

We would like to thank everyone who took part this year and all those that supported them, through sponsorship and encouragement. Fundraising events like this are critical as they help us continue to provide the all important services for people living with Alzheimer's and their families.

If you registered to take part in the Mini Marathon on our behalf, and you have not yet sent back the sponsorship you raised, could you please send it to The Alzheimer Society of Ireland, National Office, Temple Road, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Thank you!

## Tea Day

The Society would like to extend a huge thank you for all your generosity in support of this year's annual Tea Day. The personal commitment of all those who hosted tea parties, attended tea parties, sold raffle tickets and volunteered was incredible.

Our final figures are close to being tallied and it looks like we will have exceeded the €500K!

We are also delighted to announce that Pat Kenny has agreed to be our Tea Day patron for 2010.



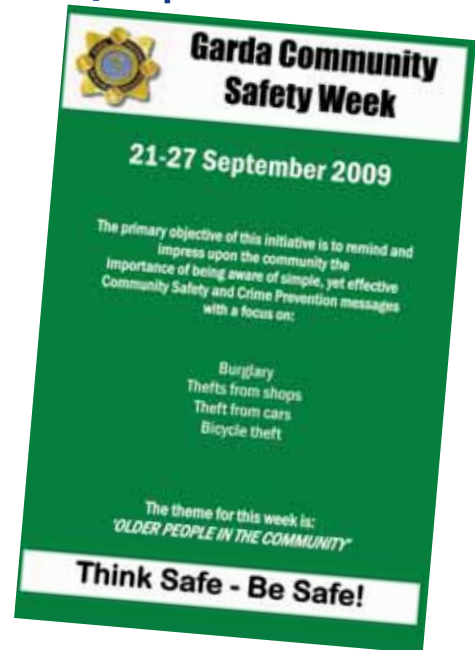
# Dates for your diary

## Garda Community Safety Week 21 -27 Sept

An Garda Siochana has always valued its close links with the community. They have placed a high priority on consultation and cooperation with community groups, as shown in the development of Community Policing over the years.

A **Garda Community Safety Week** will take place from 21 -27 September across the country. The theme for this year is 'Older People in the Community'. Gardai in your area will be hosting a number of Crime Prevention activities and events over the course of the week. These will include attendance at national events, meetings with community groups, visits to schools, Garda clinics as well as high visibility patrols. There will also be a feature on 'CrimeCall' on 29 September.

For further details on Community Safety Week in your area visit [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)



### You heard it here first...

Team fundraising are preparing a special way for us to remember our loved ones this Christmas.

*Keep an eye on your letterbox...!*

### Raffle Winners

Congratulations to Maureen Salmon (Portlaoise), John Brown (Dublin) and Imelda Stephens (Roscommon) who were all winners in this year's tea day raffle.

## Dates for your diary

World Alzheimer's Day	21st Sept	Worldwide
NAPS Submission*	24th Sept	
Garda Community Safety Week	21st – 27th Sept	Nationwide
Positive Ageing Week	25th Sept – 3rd Oct	Nationwide
Culchie Festival	23rd – 25th Oct	Cavan
Dublin City Marathon	26th October	Dublin
Alzheimer's Tea Day	6th May 2010	Nationwide
Cuba Cycle Challenge	May 2010	Cuba
Women's Mini Marathon	June 2010	Dublin

\*National Positive Ageing Strategy – closing date for submission 24th September for further details visit [www.olderandbolder.ie](http://www.olderandbolder.ie)



**ROTARY CLUB**  
**DUN LAOGHAIRE**  
Service above Self

## Rotary

This year Rotary Ireland selected The Alzheimer Society of Ireland as their chosen charity of the year. Throughout the year and all over the country local Rotarians organised many activities to help raise vital funds for those living with dementia.

In Dublin, Rotary Dun Laoghaire organised a fun 5 mile sponsored walk which took place on the two piers in Dun Laoghaire Harbour. 'Pier2Pier' took place on 12th July, and many members of the local community dusted off their walking shoes and joined in the fun.

Fellowship and giving is at the heart of Rotary and the work they have been doing in communities across the globe for over. Their aim is to positively change people's lives; through opportunities such as the Pier2Pier sponsored walk, they have been enabled to fulfil their motto, service above self and to continue their work of helping others.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to the entire membership of Rotary. We have formed an excellent working relationship with each other that we hope we can develop well into the future.



*Pictured at the launch of Rotary Dun Laoghaire's Pier2Pier sponsored walk are Miss Universe Ireland Diana Donnelly, Rotary Dun Laoghaire President Hugh McEaney and Maurice O'Connell, CEO The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.*



## IN MEMORIAM

Vena Murphy	David Marcus	John Dempsey	Matthew Fitzpatrick	Mary Fitzgerald
John Hurley	Bernadette Farrell	Andrew Carrol	Esther Hargroves	Thomas Smyth
Robert Salter	Elizabeth Ryan	Mary Mullins	Eileen Keightley	Monica Montgomery
Colum McKeown	Kieran Dolphin	Gus Clair	James Mallick	Andrew Carroll
Kathleen Travers	Desmond Byrne	Bridget Madigan	Margaret Egan	Mary Mullins
Kathleen McAdam	Georgina Graham	Marilyn Scally	Sylvester O'Brien	Phyllis Tiernan
Pauline Cotter	Cora Barrett	James McDonagh	Sadie Kelly	Bridget Stackpoole
Dorothy Owens	Breeda Burdette	Oliver Conway	Michael Byrne	Geoffrey O'Kane
Richard Derek (Dick)	Brenda Wheeler	John Joe Nash	Wilie Timmons	John Cregan
Halliday	Una McQuillan	Rita Malynn	Tommy Murphy	Adolf Ganter
Alfred Bailey	Michael Hennebry	Joan Newman	Teresa Johnson	Leo O'Driscoll
Pat Grace	Maureen Teevan	Eleanor (Nellie)	Ann Roe	Thelma Cassidy
Ronald Vivian Good	Nora O'Sullivan	Burgin	Paddy Dillon	
William Gilmore	Mary O'Brien	Mary Ellen Hand	Michael Doody	
Peter O'Sullivan	Jack Cullen	Carol Halpenny	Breda Gleeson	
Kathleen Cronin	Frank Steele	Mary Miney	Margaret McLoughlin	
Herbert Norman	Victor Bond	Peggy Coggin	John (Sean) Guiney	
Greenlee	Elizabeth Cleary	Thomas Fox	Thomas Garland	

**May they Rest in Peace**

oASIs was edited by Emma Hamilton, Alzheimer Society of Ireland. Oasis is published 3 times per year.

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The comments and views expressed in this issue are often personal and do not necessarily represent the position of the Alzheimer Society of Ireland.