

Alzheimer Society
CALGARY 30⁺
years



NEWS &
UPDATES
FOR YOU

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2018



MUSIC AND CARE

FINDING SOLACE IN SONG



Music can be immensely powerful for a person living with dementia. It has the ability to awaken parts of the brain that are otherwise dormant and can revive memories thought to be lost long ago. It's a chance to connect back to a happy or momentous time in an individual's past, bringing them to life and creating feelings of deep contentment.

The MUSIC & MEMORY® program is designed to help transcend cognitive barriers so that anyone, whatever stage of the disease they are in, can find meaning and connection. For one of our Club 36 Adult Day Program members, the program has proved especially beneficial. Having immigrated to Canada decades ago, she built a life here and raised a family. Later in life she was diagnosed with dementia. With English not being her first language, her communication skills have deteriorated and some days, being able to express simple thoughts and wishes is a real challenge. Thanks to MUSIC & MEMORY®, Club 36 staff have discovered a new way to engage her in a more meaningful way.

Staff and volunteers at Club 36 work with members and their families to unearth

details about their personal history, their experiences and preferences; the findings from this enable them to create personalized playlists for the member – selecting songs from their childhood or from memorable times in their life such as their graduation, wedding, or when they had kids. This process generates new opportunities to engage with members and rejuvenate enthusiasm that is often times lying just under the surface.

Since its introduction at Club 36 in 2017, the MUSIC & MEMORY® program has seen great successes – with members reacting positively to rediscovering long-forgotten songs that trigger happy memories. It's clear that music seems to connect deeply with people with dementia. And it's thanks to these connections we are reminded that a diagnosis doesn't mean that the person is no longer there. Every individual has a story and has led a unique life.

The Alzheimer Society of Calgary supports people in our community affected by dementia to live life well. Thanks to programs like MUSIC & MEMORY® delivered through our Club 36 Adult Day Program, local people living

with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia can receive the physical and psychological benefits of creative programming.

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LONG DISTANCE CAREGIVING.

ONE DAUGHTER'S JOURNEY

Struggling, emotionally drained and frustrated. These are some of the words that Roxanne would have used to describe her long distance caregiving experience before she reached out to the Alzheimer Society of Calgary. With her mother living in Saskatchewan and Roxanne living in Calgary, providing long distance care after her mother was diagnosed with dementia was a challenge far greater than she could have imagined.

After the diagnosis, Roxanne worked tirelessly to communicate with family members and friends to coordinate care for her mother – despite being in a different province. Working a high-stress job herself, the trips to Saskatchewan became more frequent. Frustration levels grew, emotions flared and a sense of helplessness became all too common.

Having moved around a number of care facilities, Roxanne's mother was becoming exhausted and was growing more confused. So was Roxanne. Emotional drain on caregivers is something that is often overlooked when we think about caring for a loved one. The truth is that with every diagnosis, 10-12 people are affected. With Roxanne being one of her mother's sole caregivers and living several hundred kilometres away, it's easy to imagine the pressure and the emotional drainage that was taking place.

In an attempt to find solace and look after her well-being, a friend recommended that Roxanne reach out to the Alzheimer Society of Calgary and see if she could benefit from the supports and services offered.

Exhaustion and frustration were affecting her daily life and she knew something had to change.

"I wanted to manage my expectations," explained Roxanne. She knew it was time to make a change and thankfully a friend encouraged her to reach out.

Beginning with a few workshops aimed at providing education and understanding of dementia, Roxanne boasts that she's taken every session available and explains that "not only were these sessions saving for me and my mom, it was also beneficial for some of my other family members."

"I was equipped with tools that allowed my communication to be more positive and to learn how to be around my mother. I was able to learn how to work with her and her workers – how to be able to calm her down," says Roxanne when asked about the immediate benefits.

The Alzheimer Society of Calgary was able to provide support and guidance for Roxanne and countless others in the community.

Positive stories like this one from Roxanne and countless others continue to motivate us to support Calgarians and ensure that caregivers and people with dementia are receiving the proper guidance and support they need.

A diagnosis doesn't change who you are and the life that you've led. The Alzheimer Society of Calgary is here for you and your family.



28TH ANNUAL INVESTORS GROUP **ALZHEIMER WALK & RUN**

Sunday, October 7, 10 a.m.
Not alone. Not silent.

Join us on Thanksgiving Sunday for the 2018 Investors Group Alzheimer Walk & Run! Coming together on October 7 is a wonderful way to support your local community while also spending time with friends and family. It's sure to be a fun and uplifting morning, and you'll be home in plenty of time for turkey! The funds raised stay in Calgary helping Calgarians.

Visit www.alzheimerwalkrun.ca to register.



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY STUDY

Are you a caregiver to
a senior citizen and
below the age of 65?

Do you live in the
Calgary area?

Earn \$25 per session to tell us
about your caregiving experience
for an important new study.

If interested, please contact
Akram Mahani at
Akram.mahani@ucalgary.ca
for more details.



WORLD ALZHEIMER DAY.....

Friday, September 21

With over 13,000 Calgarians living with dementia, the demand for support, education and care continues to grow. As our aging population increases, the number of people affected by dementia is set to escalate significantly. Are we ready?

Visit www.alzheimercalgary.ca to learn more and to see what can be done in your life. Living well with dementia is possible. We are all in this together.

*Follow us on Facebook

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THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We have the pleasure of working with incredible organizations that help to strengthen the community and create lasting impact for local families.

Funders



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UNITED WAY'S DAYS OF CARING

United Way's Day of Caring® connects corporate teams to volunteer opportunities in the community. Colleagues team up for a specific cause, bringing people together and creating bonds that last much longer than the day itself.

At our Club 36 Adult Day Program, we have been happy to host several Day of Caring® groups since 2017. This has provided excellent opportunities for our Club members to engage with people in the community and for new experiences to come to life.

Creating artwork and sharing laughs is often the highlight of our members' day.

The United Way of Calgary and Club 36 Adult Day Program look forward to many more meaningful Day of Caring® experiences.

I'D LIKE TO HELP Your support ensures the Alzheimer Society of Calgary continues to provide quality support services, learning opportunities, Adult Day Programs, awareness and more for the local community.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Gift Amount: _____ Gift Payment Type: ☐ **Cheque** (please make payable to Alzheimer Society of Calgary)

☐ **Credit Card**

Credit Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Signature: _____

Please send me more information about: ☐ Monthly Giving ☐ Planning Giving/Bequests

The Alzheimer Society of Calgary respects your privacy and does not rent or sell our donor information. In the 2018/2019 fiscal year, the Alzheimer Society of Calgary is planning to raise \$1,202,250 through fundraising activities, with 15% in direct costs. If you have any questions, please contact Donor Services at 403-290-0110 or info@alzheimercalgary.ca. Charitable Registration Number: 13072 5740 RR0001