

Program helps identify lost loved ones

By Duane Hicks
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Having a loved one with dementia wander off and get lost happens more often than you might expect.

Three out of five people with dementia get lost at some point, and half of those who go missing for 24 hours end up seriously injured or dead.

Thankfully, there's a program called "Finding Your Way" which helps people living with dementia, along with their families, caregivers, and community members, recognize the risk of going missing—as well as provides tips on what to do if they do.

In conjunction with "Alzheimer's Awareness Month" (January), Mary O'Connor, local Client Services co-ordinator for the Alzheimer Society of Kenora-Rainy River Districts, will be busy promoting "Finding Your Way."

A "Finding Your Way" identification kit clinic will be held Friday, Jan. 19 from 1-3 p.m. at the Fort Frances Senior Centre (Sister Kennedy Centre).

A second clinic will be held Wednesday, Jan. 24 from 1-3 p.m. at the seniors' centre in Rainy River.

The clinic is to show people how to help keep their loved ones with dementia safe by completing an identification kit for them, O'Connor explained.

"If you come home and all of a sudden they're not there, the very first thing you do is call the police," she noted.

"And when you call the police, you'll have this [the kit]."

O'Connor stressed this is im-

portant because "there will be a lot of things, because you'll be in such a panic, that you won't remember."

Providing the kit to police conveniently will provide them with what they need to know.

The kit asks you to fill out an identification form, including your loved one's full name, nickname, age, languages spoke, home address, physical description (i.e., height, weight, hair colour, eye colour, etc.), and identifying features (i.e., eye glasses, hearing aid, tattoos, etc.)

It also asks for their medical information such as allergies, medications, family doctor's name, etc., potential places to look for them (previous homes, workplaces, hangouts, etc.), and vehicle information (if they drive).

It even leaves room for a recent photo of the individual.

"It's like insurance, only free," O'Connor reasoned. "Hopefully, you never have to use it but it's there and it's free."

"Every single person should have it."

The kit also includes tips on what to look for in a lost individual, such as not being dressed for the weather, standing still and looking around for a long time, pacing, looking confused or disoriented, and repeating the same question within a short period of time.

As well, it gives advice on what to say to such an individual if you meet them—and what to do after you've determined they're confused and lost.

O'Connor made a presentation on "Finding Your Way" last month at the Golden Age Manor in Emo and said it was well-received, adding people

love that it's free.



Mary O'Connor of the local Alzheimer Society showed off one of the "Finding Your Way" identification kits she is urging people with loved ones with dementia to fill out.

—Duane Hicks photo

love that it's free.

If you can't make it to one of the two upcoming clinics, but would like a "Finding Your Way" kit, contact O'Connor at 276-9105.

O'Connor also is available throughout the year to make presentations on the variety of topics.

These range from the top 10 warning signs of dementia to how to visit with someone who has dementia to how to care for someone with dementia who is dying, to name a few.

O'Connor also interacts per-

sonally with families and caregivers of those with dementia, and currently has about 90 clients in Rainy River District.

To arrange for a presentation or a visit, call her at 276-9105.

Other events

Looking ahead, the annual Linda Johnston Memorial roast beef dinner is slated for Saturday, Jan. 20 at 5 p.m. at the

Rainy River Legion.

The Red Hatters are organizing the popular dinner again this year, which will feature roast beef prepared by the Red Hat Society and Walter Wagner.

The cost is \$20 per ticket, which are available at the Rainy River Legion and from Deb Wagner.

There also will be a penny

table organized by Marlene McNally and chair raffles.

Penny table and chair tickets will be available at the dinner only.

Tom and Pam Irvine will deliver dinners for those unable to attend but would like to support the Alzheimer Society.

For further info or to purchase tickets, contact Wagner at 852-3687.

As well, the local Alzheimer Society's annual charitable dinner, "Forget Me Not," will be held Saturday, Feb. 3 at La Place Rendez-Vous here.

The evening will include fine dining, live entertainment by local duo "Entyrelly Mac," and a prize auction.

The guest speaker will be Dr. Barry Campbell, medical director of geriatric psychiatry at St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg.

This event will begin with cocktails at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6.

Tickets cost \$50 each or \$400 for a table of eight, which can be purchased at Northwoods Gallery & Gifts and the Rendez-Vous, or by calling toll-free 1-800-682-0245.

A \$25 charitable tax receipt will be issued.

Proceeds will go to the Alzheimer Society of Kenora/Rainy River Districts to deliver programs and services at no cost to those affected by Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.

'Flu outbreak declared at Rainycrest

Press release

Riverside, in conjunction with the Northwestern Public Health Unit, has declared an influenza outbreak at Rainycrest Long-Term Care here.

All admissions, transfers, discharges, and social activities have been cancelled until further notice.

Visitors are restricted to family members and caregivers only.

The health unit is urging

people to stay at home and refrain from visiting the home when feeling unwell to avoid spreading infections to those most vulnerable, including young infants and children, the elderly, and those with other chronic illnesses.

The public is reminded to prevent getting and spreading infections by:

- getting a seasonal 'flu shot;
- washing hands often, for at least 15 seconds with soap and warm water or by using an

alcohol-based hand sanitizer;

- putting all used tissues in the garbage right away; and
- staying at home if sick to avoid spreading infections to others.

Family members are asked to restrict their visits to the resident's room (not in common areas) and refrain from visiting other residents while at Rainycrest.

The Outbreak Management Team at Rainycrest will continue to monitor the situation.

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Celeste's and The Den

want to wish everyone a happy and healthy 2018.

On January 30, 2018, after 44 years of service to the district, Celeste's will be closing their doors.

Celeste Beck, founder of Celeste's Beauty Salon Ltd. first started her business on June 24, 1974. After her passing, daughters Cindy Allan and Debbie Perusse continued running the business.

They hope to see everyone as they embark on their new journey, opening under the management of Alicia Anderson as STYLUSHsalon.

On February 1, 2018 Cindy, Debbie, Angela Dokuchie, Heather Armstrong and Debbie Bird will be offering the same services they have in the past at STYLUSHsalon at 397 Scott Street, formally known as Celeste's Beauty Salon Ltd.

Cindy and Debbie would like to let everyone know that The Den will remain open and under their ownership and management. Carol Ewald, Denise Bragg and Ashley Boileau will be there for all your hair care and product needs.

It is at this time Cindy and Debbie would like to thank all their past and present clients and staff for their many years of dedication and friendship to Celeste's Beauty Salon Ltd.

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