

Alzheimer Society

PETERBOROUGH, KAWARTHA LAKES, NORTHUMBERLAND & HALIBURTON



Farewell Letter

On May 2, 2014, I will have completed 14 years and 4 months as an employee of the Alzheimer Society (known as Victoria County back then). I am retiring but, retaining the wonderful memories gained as Client Support Coordinator for the entire time as well as, the temporary role I played as a Public Education Coordinator for 6 months in my early days with the Society. The decision to retire was a difficult one. I was however, unknown to many, planning this day for at least 2 years. I am ready yet sad to leave all the wonderful people I have grown to know and love during my career. The Alzheimer Society holds a very special place in my heart and always will.

I can't express how much I have learned from the hundreds of individuals who came through our doors during my time here. Both men and women, each unique in their own ways, caregivers and individuals affected by dementia, all traveling the dementia journey.

I have witnessed an incredible desire from many, to learn more about this disease by regularly attending local support groups and /or taking part in the Alzheimer Society's teaching modules to learn more effective ways of coping. In my role as a Public Educator for a 6 month period in the very "early days" of my career, the most rewarding experience was to hear time and time again from participants that "knowledge is indeed, power". These roles enhanced my support skills and understanding of the dementia journey and for that I am very grateful.

I want to express many thanks to a large number of people at this time. Firstly, I want to acknowledge the Alzheimer Society Board of Directors who are dedicated individuals and professionals who graciously volunteer their time to ensure that this organization remains

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strong. Thank you to David Webster, our Executive Director, who while still overcoming many challenges and financial obstacles has managed to move the organization with the leadership of the Board to a stable level.

Secondly, I want to thank the priceless and wonderful volunteers for your incredible dedication and love for our cause, the ways in which you help out in a variety of programs to meet our clients' needs. Without YOU, the Society would face a much bigger dilemma which could hinder our growth. You are true "GEMS".

Thirdly, I want to thank all staff of the Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes offices which includes our Client Support Coordinators, Fund Development Coordinators, Public Education Coordinators, Volunteer Coordinator and Administration Staff/Payroll for your ongoing support during my time with the Organization. Thank you, you are "heroes" and I love you all.

Lastly, but certainly not least, thank you to the many caregivers/individuals with memory loss, who trusted me enough to provide support and share your fears. I have witnessed the courage and the dedication shown by your family members in light of the numerous daily hurdles. The first call is always the most difficult one and you have done it. I have learned more from YOU than I ever thought possible and the journey has definitely been "worth traveling".

Now a little update on "what am I going to do with myself?" Well, in case I have failed to tell you, I am pursuing my love of "music" (in no way too seriously) wherever it will take me. So you will likely see me around for a preview sometime in the late fall 2014 / early winter 2015. You never know, Show Biz may be my thing after all. In addition to pursuing my musical dream, the item on my busy planned retirement agenda is to spend more time with my growing family. I have asked staff to refrain from organizing a "retirement party" for my departure as this is not my style. I welcome your best wishes while I am still here and beyond. Those can be directed to the Society.

I appreciate the tremendous effort from each staff and know "first hand" what it takes to make this organization a success. I want to give back in any way possible and in order to continue with ongoing programs and in light of a freeze on the LHIN Funding, monetary donations are always a welcome gesture. This organization will exist for years to come and until such time a cause and cure are found.

To all, "keep smiling" and make the very best of every day". The privilege of working with you and being a part of your lives has been my most wonderful experience.

With much gratitude,

Sylvianne Young (known as Sy)
Client Support Coordinator (2000 to 2014).

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