

August 2020

Alzheimer Society

S A R N I A - L A M B T O N

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Keeping Our Cool

The so-called “dog days” of summer stretch from mid-July into mid-August. Today, many people believe that we call these the dog days because we all feel as hot as a dog, or that the heat of the day is enough to make a dog go crazy. But to discover the real explanation behind the dog days, look to the night sky. This period earned its canine moniker during the age of ancient Greece. Mid-July coincided with the rise of the constellation Canis Major, the Greater Dog, which features the brightest star in the night sky, Sirius, also known as the Dog Star. During this time, Sirius rises just before the sun. No wonder the word *sirius* means “scorching” in Greek. The Dog Star was believed to be a harbinger of drought, plague, lethargy, fever, thunderstorms, and bad luck. Lucky for us, modern technologies have given us plenty of ways to beat the heat. Perhaps the Greeks and Romans would have thought differently about Sirius if they had air conditioning?

It is no coincidence that Air Conditioning Appreciation Days overlap with the dog days of summer, because for many this invention is the greatest source of relief from the oppressive heat. It was during the dog days of 1902 that Willis Carrier invented the first air conditioner. He did not set out to create artificial cooling but rather a machine that could lower humidity. A printing company came to Carrier with a problem. During summer, high humidity would wreak havoc with their color printing. Carrier designed a system of chilled coils, fans, ducts, heaters, and temperature controls that not only lowered the humidity inside the printing plant but created cool artificial breezes! Carrier's new industry changed the world.

Air conditioners did not become widely available to the public until the 1960s, but once they became common in homes, heat-related deaths decreased by 80%. Talk about life-changing! Air-conditioning cools more than air; it cools our tempers, too. Research shows that heat increases aggression, while air-conditioning actually helps calm us down. It may be much easier to enjoy Relaxation Day on August 15 with the air-conditioning on!

Celebrating August

Read-a-Romance-Novel Month

Happiness Happens Month

Civic Holiday *August 1*

International Clown Week *August 1–7*

Watermelon Day *August 3*

Elvis Week *August 8–16*

Creamsicle Day *August 14*

Senior Citizens Day *August 21*

National Park Service Day *August 25*

Matchmaker Day *August 31*



Tips for holding family meetings

Schedule them regularly, and bring in distant family by phone

or over computer. Choose a neutral party to moderate if necessary. The Alzheimer Society staff can facilitate this meeting. Draw up a clear agenda for each meeting, and agree on rules of conduct (if needed) — for instance: don't interrupt, stick to time limits, [avoid arguments](#), and focus the discussion on how to care for the person living with dementia. Having final action items sent out to everyone by email can help make sure that all involved are aware of decisions and directions being taken.

Let us know how we can help connect you. We have already arranged for family members to connect through “Zoom” or phone teleconferencing.

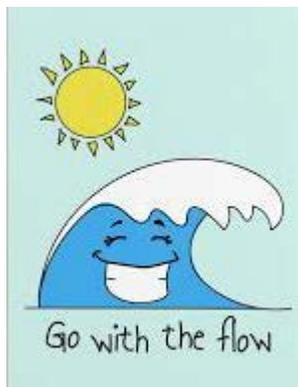
Tips for care: Go with the Flow

Avoid intervening when it is better to let things go.

Some behavior can be embarrassing, disruptive or uncomfortable to be around, but may not actually be harmful.

Avoid correcting, intervening or unintentionally escalating situations

by knowing when to let some things go. If Mom would rather wear two sweaters at a time and rummage through her closet, let her. Protect your loved one from harm and then allow some sense of freedom and control by creating space for your loved one to make their own choices when possible.



Flower Power

August 28 is Daffodil Day, a day celebrating this beautiful flower. The ancient Greeks, who called the flower a narcissus, acknowledged its beauty in their myths. A man named Narcissus was so taken with his own beauty that, after seeing his reflection in a pool of water, he stopped to admire himself. He was so obsessed with his beauty that he could not pull himself away from his own reflection. Alas, he died at the waterside, and in his place grew the first daffodil. It is from this myth that we get both the flower's name and the word *narcissist*, a word for those who admire themselves too much. But why shouldn't daffodils admire themselves? They are beautiful, after all. And because they are some of the first flowers to bloom in the spring, they are also associated with rebirth, renewal, new beginnings, and hope. For this reason, daffodils have become a potent symbol of hope in the fight against cancer. Cancer councils around the world use Daffodil Day to raise funds to support life-saving cancer research.

Activity Tips from a daughter

“I have had some success with dominoes. My mom likes counting the white dots. When playing cards, she looks at them and tries to put them in order... She likes to fold the clean laundry. She also likes looking at recipe books – ones with big, colour photos of the dishes. I've bought quite a lot of these from our local charity shops. I also bought a musical jewelry box and filled it with cheap pieces, mainly bead necklaces. Sometimes I can hear her playing with the box.”

Topical Tuesdays with Christine

Tips on Caring for Someone Living with Dementia

August 4th 3pm-Depression Warning Signs with Dementia – with special guest Susan Boyce Psychogeriatric Resource Consultant - CMHA

August 11th 3pm – Taking Care of the Caregiver

August 25th 3pm – Care Tips: Ideas for Care

Bonus Wednesday

August 26th 7pm – Understanding Dementia & Finding Your Way program

Email Christine at cwright@alzheimersarnia.ca to receive information on how to attend. If this time and date does not work for you, still email Christine and alternatives will be looked at. Individual or family educational sessions can also be booked.

Tips for Care Partners: The Importance of Stretching



Stretching is often overlooked in the world of physical exercise – however, it has numerous health benefits. Did you know that stretching can:

- Increase your flexibility
- Increase your range of motion
- Improve your performance in physical activities
- Increase blood flow to your muscles
- Improve your posture
- Help to heal and prevent back pain.

It can also be a great stress reliever and help you calm your mind.

The National Institute on Aging has a helpful series of short videos that can help you through a variety of stretches. Watch them [here!](#)

Please remember it's important to listen to your body and only do what feels comfortable.



For tickets and more information please visit Eventbrite: <https://its5oclockanywhere.eventbrite.com>

Please take laughter multiples times a day



Some days can be tougher than others, and in those moments laughter might be the last thing on your mind, but laughing and joking can be just the thing needed to get you through tougher situations and deescalate miscommunication. The benefits of laughter are numerous for the care partner and the person living with dementia.

Australian researchers did a 3-year study, aptly named SMILE to see if humour could improve the quality of life for 400 people living with dementia. Results showed that laughter therapy can have the same effect as taking antipsychotic medication, with a 20% reduction in anxiety symptoms. The frustration, confusion, depression and anxiety that someone with dementia experiences can often lead to an increase in behaviours such as: becoming lost, agitation or emotional responsive behaviours. Laughter can help someone with dementia redirect these negative emotions or at least be a pleasant distraction for a while. Anything that can reduce these anxiety related symptoms is worth a try, but is not a substitute for medications when needed.

As a care partner or person living with dementia, you may have many frustrating moments and difficult days. Laughter is a natural and effective way to release tension, diffuse difficult situations and lighten the mood. It allows you to enjoy a moment that could otherwise make your patience wear thin.

SOCIAL ACTIVATION via ZOOM

Inspirational Moments: 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 11:00am

Easy Moving: 2nd & 4th Thursdays at 10am

Get Your Groove On: 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 10am

Musical Memories: Thursdays at 2 pm

Armchair Travelogue: 2nd & 4th Fridays at 11am

For more information please contact Vanessa at vbarnes@alzheimersarnia.ca

How many tickles does it take to make an octopus laugh?



Ten-tickles!

"You don't stop laughing because you grow old, you grow old because you stop laughing."—Michael Pritchard

What did one hat say to another?



"You stay there. I'll go on a head."

Contact Information

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FINDING Your Way[®]

*For people with dementia,
every step counts.*

FindingYourWayOntario.ca

- Safety Planning
- Home Safety
- Sleeping Habits
- Staying Social
- Staying Active
- Assessing the Living Environment
- Driving
- Travel
- Medication
- Nutrition and Food
- Living Alone

