

# Blue 7's AS York's Honorary Family for the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's

## *Stouffville's the Schoenrock family is walking for two relatives living with dementia*

Dementia has come to the Schoenrock family twice – Mark Schoenrock's mom has early-onset dementia and his Oma, whom he lived with from age 17, is now living with dementia.

Both women are living on secured floors in long-term care homes in different locations. The changes in both women is hard on Mark, said his wife of 18 years Lorie, and their five children – Katlyn, 17, Emma, 15, Mackenzie, 13, Eric, 11, and Jenna, 9. The family lives in Stouffville.

"Men are fixers and Mark can't fix this," said Lorie. "It makes it very difficult for Mark to cope with."

"His mother (who is living with early-onset Alzheimer's) is far worse than his grandmother," Lorie said. But because Granny Val, as the children call Mark's mom, is so young – she is 67 – her disease is "harder for (the children) to accept."

Lorie said her older children find visiting their granny emotional, while the younger ones "don't know anything different any more," they don't really remember their granny being any other way.

Val was in her late 50s when she was diagnosed. Lorie said before her diagnosis, she and Mark would get frustrated as his mother, "always a character" would fail to show up at places or would miss birthdays.

After her diagnosis, Lorie said her mother-in-law handled it well.

"His mom was unbelievably strong about it. She took it in stride and kept on going."

**Q. What is the best part about the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's?**

**A. "Being with people with the same goal, to raise funds to help those who suffer because of this diagnosis."**

~ Lorie Schoenrock

It was her partner, John, now her husband, who had a hard time accepting Val's diagnosis.

"She did tell him about her family history. (Val's) own mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at a very young age," Lorie said.

"John is a wonderful man. The fact they found each other at that time is a huge miracle."

Val was at home for about four years before being admitted into a long-term care home in Beaverton, near Mark's sister Nicole's home. Nicole and John are the main caregivers of Val.

"It's divide and conquer," Lorie said – Nicole looks after her mom, while Mark and Lorie look after Mark's Oma.

Val is now in a wheelchair, is non-verbal and needs to be fed.

"When we do see her, she no longer

seems to know who we are, no recognition in her eyes, no random words now. Mark finds it extremely difficult."

With Oma, Barbara, Mark's father's mom, it's different.

"Oma is almost 92. She has lived a long life."

Diagnosed in her late 80s, Lorie said they first noticed Oma forgetting little things.

"We never saw her as an elderly person. She was always outgoing, very social and sharp as a tack. We were in denial."

It wasn't until Oma needed help with her bills, something she has always done on her own, that Lorie and Mark realized something was wrong.

"How long she must have know (about her dementia) and how long she tried to hide it," Lorie commented.

While cleaning out her home, Lorie said they would find money stuffed between tissues and inside books. They once found \$100 in \$20 in a box of envelopes.

"We started to find the humour in it, this Easter egg hunt for adults."

Oma was admitted into a long-term care home, eventually moving to the memory care floor at Sunrise Aurora in 2018 as she had

Introducing  
IG Wealth Management  
Walk for Alzheimer's  
Honorary Family

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# THE BLUE 7'S

Featuring Mark and Lorie Schoenrock and their children  
Katlyn, Emma, Mackenzie, Eric and Jenna.



Follow along to learn more about the Schoenrocks and why they walk to #MakeMemoriesMatter

Donate to the Blue 7's  
at [bit.ly/Blue7\\_19](https://bit.ly/Blue7_19)

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# Join the IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's and help raise awareness, funds

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several falls and staff feared she would wander and fall.

It was after Oma's diagnosis in 2016 that Lorie said she felt frustrated and helpless and decided she needed to do something about it. Lorie said she decided to sign her family up for the Alzheimer Society of York Region's (AS York) IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's, which takes place May 25 in Jackson's Point and June 8 in Richmond Hill, to raise funds and awareness of the disease that affects more than 15,000 York Region residents.

**"So many families are struggling to cope. Caregivers are often putting their own health at risk. The Alzheimer Society (of York Region) is a lifeline."**

This is the third year the family will participate in the walk.

"There are so many people with (dementia) now," Lorie said. "It needs to be talked about a lot more. There

will be a crisis down the road and we need a system in place for it now."

She said AS York is a great organization and by visiting [www.walkforalzheimers.ca](http://www.walkforalzheimers.ca), registering a team (or individually) and raising money, more York Region residents will be able to receive support and services, and change the stigma.

"The more people join, the more awareness will be raised."

The entire Schoenrock family is involved in walking and raising funds for their team, this year named Blue 7's in honour of Oma and Opa Fritz. Opa Fritz died nine years ago.

Blue 7 was the name of the couple's bowling team "and since we are a family of seven and the colour for the walk is blue, it fit perfectly."

Emma Schoenrock has been on the Walk for Alzheimer's committee for the last two years, raising the profile of the organization in the community, finding prizes and volunteering at the event.

A few years ago Emma, along with some friends, hosted a cupcake fundraiser at her school to raise funds for the Alzheimer Society of York Region and this year the family hopes to hold a bottle drive to meet their fundraising



From top left, Mark and Lorie Schoenrock; Eric, Mackenzie, Emma, Katlyn and Jenna, 9; Granny Val; and Oma.

**Photos courtesy of the Schoenrocks**

goal. Lorie said this year they are trying to "spread the word and help find new ways to fundraise."

For their ongoing support of the AS York and the IG Wealth Management Walk for

Alzheimer's, the Blue 7's, which includes Mark, Lorie, Katlyn, Emma, Mackenzie, Eric and Jenna, are the 2019 Honorary Family.

Thank you for your support in helping to #makememoriesmatter

## Walk for Alzheimer's details

- Saturday, May 25 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Briar's Resort in Jackson's Point
- Saturday, June 8 from 9 a.m. to noon at Richmond Green Park in Richmond Hill
- Both events include a walk, snacks and entertainment.

Visit [www.walkforalzheimers.ca](http://www.walkforalzheimers.ca) to register individually or as a team and to fundraise.

All money raised in York Region stays in York Region to provide programs and services to people living with dementia as well as their caregivers.