

# NEWSLETTER

Offering New Jersey Families a Better Today While Working for a Cure and a Better Tomorrow

## My Alzheimer's Story

JANUARY 2023

I am the caregiver for my husband, Lloyd, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease three years ago while we were living in Georgia. We had just celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and were looking forward to enjoying our retirement together.

One of the first things I noticed was that Lloyd was having trouble expressing his thoughts. He couldn't articulate and was struggling to speak to people, especially at church. This was so unlike him because as a track coach, an officer in the Newark police force, and a deacon at our church, Lloyd could speak to anyone. I could feel what he was thinking, but it wasn't coming out the way he wanted. I found myself naturally filling in Lloyd's sentences for him more and more. This made him increasingly frustrated.

Lloyd also knew that something wasn't right. Because we were so connected, we decided together to go to the doctor to figure out what was going on. We received the Alzheimer's disease diagnosis after a cognitive screening and a CAT scan which showed shrinkage of the brain.

I knew enough about the disease to recognize that we would both need lots of support. We decided to give up our Georgia retirement dream, downsize and move back to New Jersey to be closer to family and friends.

It was my daughter, who happens to work for Atlantic Health, who first connected us to the **Helpline** at Alzheimer's New Jersey®. My daughter and I were on the line with the Helpline staff person at Alzheimer's New Jersey for 45 minutes. We received so much helpful information and support during that first call.

We've made many follow-up calls since then and have learned about adult day programs, support groups, and the Alzheimer's New Jersey caregiver education webinars. We also attended an Alzheimer's New Jersey **Walk to Fight Alzheimer's®** fundraising event where we felt like we were part of a community and met other families who shared our story.

Thanks, in part, to the Alzheimer's New Jersey **Respite Care and Wellness scholarship** we received, Lloyd is now going to an adult day program twice a week, which allows me to do what I need to do and gives me some quiet time. I participate in a weekly support group and have attended Alzheimer's New Jersey's webinars.



Lloyd was always a person who helped others and challenged those around him to be the best version of themselves, and I want to be there for him.

To do that, I am also learning about the importance of taking care of myself. That includes speaking to a therapist to help

me deal with my feelings of grief as I watch my best friend slowly disappear before me. I know that if I don't take care of myself, who will take care of Lloyd?

Alzheimer's disease is life-changing. It's important to take each day hour by hour because things can change quickly. I have learned more patience. I try not to be bitter and try to keep a forgiving spirit, as it's not Lloyd that has changed our lives; it's Lloyd's disease. Each day I learn more about myself and walk closer to God.

**I am grateful to Alzheimer's New Jersey's caring staff for being so understanding and always being there when my family and I had questions and needed guidance. Alzheimer's New Jersey has been a blessing to us!!**

— Carol

**Mission Statement:**

To respond to the needs of people in New Jersey who are affected by Alzheimer's disease and other dementias by providing programs and partnerships that increase awareness and access to services.

**How to Find Us:**

**Headquarters Office:**


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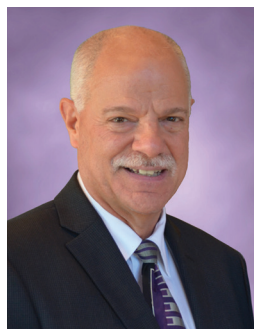
(201) 261-6009  
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**Connect to the Mission**

Visit [alznj.org](http://alznj.org)® for more details

- **Learn how your generosity helps NJ families.**  
Visit our website, sign up for the Monday Update, follow us on social media.
- **Share your story.**  
How has Alzheimer's changed your life and your relationships? We want to hear from you.
- **Learn about the disease.**  
Attend a free online education program or a Support Group.
- **Advocate.**  
Raise awareness by sharing your caregiving experience with the media and social media.
- **Walk With Us.**  
Sign up, form a team and fundraise.



"During the challenge of the past few years, I think we've all developed a renewed and deeper appreciation for community and our connections with family and friends."

## Message from the President & CEO

Friends,

The power of human connection is real. In a world that seems so disconnected, even with today's technology, the need to connect with others has never been stronger. During the challenge of the past few years, I think we've all developed a renewed and deeper appreciation for community and our connections with family and friends. Many scientists now believe that social connections may keep our brains healthy and active and possibly delay the onset of dementia.

For persons with dementia and their caregivers who are impacted by Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, it is the vital connection to our mission that can bring hope and support so they can have the best days possible while coping with the devastating impact of this life-changing disease.

For our donors and volunteers, connecting through generous financial support and the valuable gift of time makes our much-needed programs possible and gives New Jersey families a place to turn when they are overwhelmed by stress, isolation, and despair. That place is Alzheimer's New Jersey®.

*As we begin 2023, I invite you to renew and expand your connection with us!* Learn more about what we do. Call our Helpline for the support you may need, join a support group and attend one of our education programs. Walk with us this spring and fall. Attend our Gala. Donate; your support, large or small, makes a difference. Connect to a compassionate and caring community dedicated to fighting Alzheimer's disease in New Jersey and improving lives. Now is the time to act!

**When Alzheimer's touches your life – we are here.**

Wishing you and your family a happy and healthy 2023.

Warm Regards,

Kenneth C. Zaentz, CFRE  
President and CEO

*Special Note:* Our program updates are provided through our online weekly Monday Update. Are you on the mailing list? If not, please send an email to [info@alznj.org](mailto:info@alznj.org) with a request to add your name and email address to our mailing list.

[alznj.org](http://alznj.org)®

**Helpline: (888) 280-6055**



*“The Support of Others is So Important.”*

## Program Focus: Family Support Groups

One way that Alzheimer’s New Jersey® helps caregivers and family members connect with others for support and guidance is through our Family Support Groups. Currently, 16 groups meet – both virtual and in-person. This includes special groups for caregivers of individuals with dementia living in a residential facility, caregivers of individuals with early onset dementia (*diagnosed age 65 or younger*), male caregivers only, and caregivers of spouses with dementia.

Caregivers can feel alone in their caregiving experience as family members and friends may not understand their day-to-day challenges. Support groups provide a safe and supportive space for caregivers to connect with others who may be experiencing similar situations and challenges. Caregivers can also get practical information and insight from other caregivers.

### ***Here is what support group attendees have shared:***

- *“The support of others is so important. People who have not experienced being a caregiver have no idea what it’s really like. Thank you for giving us a place to go and express ourselves to people who understand.”*
- *“My support group has allowed me to talk and share my feelings. You could have had the worst morning you ever had, but you leave the group feeling hopeful and refreshed.”*
- *“Thank you for a great group. I got a lot of information and encouragement seeing other folks going through the same things.”*

Our Family Support groups highlight the power of connection and the comfort it can bring to hurting families during difficult times.

Your generosity makes this possible. If you would like to learn more about these groups, call our Helpline at (888) 280-6055.

## Your Donation...

- Funds education and support programs that have a direct impact here in New Jersey, helping your neighbors in need.
- Helps families of all backgrounds navigate the challenges of Alzheimer’s disease and have the best days possible.
- Enables us to offer programs and services virtually or in-person free of charge to all who need them throughout New Jersey.
- Benefits New Jersey residents 100%.

**Alzheimer’s New Jersey receives no government funding and is not affiliated with any national or state organization.**

**Alzheimer’s New Jersey has been providing trusted service to New Jersey families for over 37 years. Here is what caregivers and family members have said:**

*“I want to take this opportunity to thank you and the staff at Alzheimer’s New Jersey for the support you have given me these last three years of my husband’s illness. It helped me immensely in the long and arduous journey.”*

**— Support Group Attendee**

*“I was provided with so much information with so much care. I asked many questions, and the person on the phone patiently answered my questions and explained everything to me without any sign of hurry. Thank you.”*

**— Helpline caller**

*“You are helping our family tremendously as we walk through this journey together!”*

**— Support Group Attendee**

**Your donations and our compassionate programs make a difference.  
Thank You!**







**Walk With Us**

## 2023 SPRING WALKS

**Saturday, May 13, 2023**

**Liberty State Park  
Jersey City**

**Sunday, May 21, 2023**

**South Mountain Reservation  
West Orange**

Help us reach our goal of \$120,000 for our two spring walks. Visit our website at [alnj.org](http://alnj.org)® and learn more about these fun-filled inspiring events for the entire family. Sign up today.

Walk to Fight Alzheimer's® raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for critical services that are vital to New Jersey families fighting Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. **Join the fight!!**

## Why I Support Alzheimer's New Jersey®

"We became involved with Alzheimer's New Jersey in 2013 after my mother-in-law passed away from Alzheimer's. We have seen first-hand the devastating impact this disease has, especially for the caregiver. We have also witnessed the overwhelming impact of early-onset Alzheimer's with another family member. It is devastating for a family to experience the losses associated with the disease. The more people I talk to, the more people I meet who have been affected.

I believe we are on the verge of an epidemic with this disease. The resources are limited for many caregivers, and the financial toll it can take is equally devastating. I love this organization because Alzheimer's New Jersey recognizes the importance of supporting caregivers, and I feel honored to be a part of the team. Alzheimer's New Jersey is a lifeline for caregivers by providing caring and compassionate support and offering resources and support groups."

—Angela Parker

*Angela is the Chair of our 2023 Spring Gala scheduled at il Tulipano, Cedar Grove, on April 27, 2023. Angela and her husband, Paul, are the recipients of Alzheimer's New Jersey's Circle of Honor Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the Alzheimer's community.*

## Leaving a Legacy of Compassionate Support

**Have you considered including Alzheimer's New Jersey in your will?**

A gift through your will is relatively easy to make and can have a lasting impact on our programs and services to help New Jersey families facing the many challenges of Alzheimer's disease.

As many organizations have similar names, it is important that an attorney who drafts your will has correctly identified our legal name, city, and state.

**Here is some language you can share with your attorney.**

I, {your name} {address, city, state, zip} give, devise, and bequeath to Alzheimer's New Jersey, with offices located at 425 Eagle Rock Avenue, Ste. 203, Roseland, NJ 07068, {insert written amount of gift, percentage of estate, residuary of estate, or description of property} for its unrestricted use and purpose.

## Questions?

Call (973) 586-4300, ext. 1101.

Together we can decrease the stigma, increase local resources and support, and advance research for the 600,000 people in New Jersey who are affected by this life-changing disease.

**To learn more, call (888) 280-6055.**