



**Alberta
Caregivers
Association**
Caring for Caregivers

Monthly eNews No 40 August 2007

*Do you provide care or support to a family member
or to a friend with an illness or disability?*

If you do, you are a caregiver.



Letter from the Editor

I thought I would never write again. I have lost my inspiration since Les, my husband, passed away. When my friends tell me, that I am talented and creative, I refuse to accept the compliment, knowing very much that I have lost all creativity on December 29th, 2006, the day my soul mate left this world. Beside my personal journal, I have not been able to write anything since my last eNews letter, which was March 2007.

A few months ago, I attended a meeting at the office of the Alberta Caregivers Association. The focus of the meeting was the needs of caregivers. What are the basic needs? What do we need to know to go through our journey? Are there any tools that could make our lives a bit easier?

Everyone around the table, had plenty to say, each of us had a story, it was all different however everyone experienced the same pain, the same anguish, the same fear, anger etc. Men or women, it did not matter how old, or how educated, we were all talking about the same journey. How can we carry on?

Listening to the participants' stories I realized how much I had already forgotten. Temporary amnesia provoked by our survival instinct I guess. I was very happy to have participated in this meeting, knowing that it will eventually make a difference and help the Association in their pursuit of their goal: which is, helping the caregivers in our community.

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Coming Events

COMPASS Program

The Compass Program helps caregivers deal with the emotional journey of caregiving, giving them valuable tools and resources. It is currently being offered through the caregiver network held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at our offices 14220- 109 Avenue.

**Inquiries please call
447-9301**

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Letter from the Editor (continue)

However I became very troubled and as I was driving home I experienced like an anxiety attack. I did not have one of those for a long time and I was wondering what could have motivated such a reaction. It was only later talking with a very good friend on the phone, that I realized how much the reunion had affected me. I had not finished healing and I have now realized that I was changing. I was not at the same place that I was at a few months ago. I was not an active caregiver anymore, what could I possibly offer the Association at this point of time. Weeks went by and I went to visit my family to Quebec. I had a great time and did not think about writing or about my past role as a caregiver.

When I returned home two weeks later, when I came back to my routine, I attempted many times to sit at my computer and try to write again. Blank, nothing came into mind; I had lost all my inspiration. As the editor of the eNews, I was committed to the organization and had to fulfill my role but instead I started to dread the process of writing. Days went by, weeks went by and now I had to produce; again, nothing. I tried to analyze myself, why was I reacting like that? What was happening to me? Then the answer came, I was not at that place anymore. I could not write as a caregiver because I was not a caregiver anymore. I had changed, my needs have changed and my life was taking a new turn. Pretty scary, if you ask me! The only right thing to do was to resign from the role. Someone else with better skills should take over as editor for the benefit of our readers. So it took all my courage and I made the contact with the ACGA Executive Director, Brenda, to inform her that I would not be writing anymore for the eNews, that I had lost my inspiration, that I had nothing to say, etc, etc, etc. I really was feeling like a loser....

What followed has been one of the greatest learning experiences of my life. Brenda made me realize that "I did not have to pretend to be what I was not anymore, I just had to be me". I never thought I could talk about my life NOW. How am I surviving? Learning to know myself better. What is it that I like? How do I see my future? What am I doing for myself now? That was fantastic; of course I can write about this, actually there would be plenty to talk about. I never thought it would interest our readers, but Brenda made me understand that for many of you, caregivers that step will come, sooner or later that phase of your life will become your reality. So I might as well share with you what is my own reality now, how my life is becoming exciting, what are the steps I took for my personal recovery and how the healing is progressing.

So, guess what? Thanks to Brenda, it looks like you are stuck with me for a bit longer. My contribution in the future editions of the eNews and magazine will be about "Moving On". I hope very much to hear from you. I desperately need your feedback, suggestions and ideas. Please stay tuned. Merci Brenda,

Christiane Greasley
Enews Editor

Education

HELPFUL RESOURCES



The Alberta Caregiver Association has a library of resources for caregivers and our new Alberta Caregiver Magazine as well as others. Please call and we will mail you materials specific to your needs.

(780) 447-9301



It's a Good Tip

To identify keys, put a piece of brightly colored tape, which can be easily seen or felt, around the key. Similarly, put a colored plastic hood (available from hardware and department stores) over the key top. Most places, which copy keys, have them available in a wide variety of colors.

Recent Research

FROM THE EXPERT

Catherine Johnson, B.Ed., M.A.



Words of Wisdom

Live your life while you have it.
Life is a splendid gift - there is
nothing small about it.

Florence Nightingale

Laughing!



Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother,

'Why is the bride dressed in white?' 'Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life.' The child thought about this for a moment, then said, 'So why is the groom wearing black?'





Alberta Caregivers Association

Caring for Caregivers

Membership Application Form

Personal Information	Membership for 2006:
Name: _____	Individual \$20.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Address: _____	Organization \$45.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
City: _____ Prov: _____ PC: _____	Corporate \$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
Phone: (____) _____	I wish to make a donation in the amount of \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
E-mail: _____	Total\$ _____
Are you a caregiver? <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Please make your cheque payable to:</i>
Is a family member a caregiver? <input type="checkbox"/>	The Alberta Caregivers Association
Other- specify.....	14220 – 109 Avenue
Volunteer opportunities are:	Edmonton, AB T5N 4B3
Fundraising <input type="checkbox"/>	www.AlbertaCaregiversAssociation.org
Special Events <input type="checkbox"/>	Phone :780-447-9301
Friendly Visiting <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Tax deductible receipt will be issued.</i>
General service <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Charitable Tax Reg. No: 86590 2217 RR0001</i>
Information displays <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Canada Revenue Agency www.cra.gc.ca/charities</i>
Board & committee <input type="checkbox"/>	
Administrative Assistance <input type="checkbox"/>	

October 25, 2006

Thanks to everyone who participated in this edition and thanks to all of you for reading us. Remember; send us your feedback, articles, news and suggestions or questions etc.

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