AFA VIRTUAL ALZHEIMER’S WALK MAKES NATIONAL FOOTPRINT
President’s message

This has been a challenging time for the 5.8 million individuals living with Alzheimer's and the 14.5 million caregivers and family members who love and care for them. The needs of those with dementia do not go away during a pandemic. We are so very grateful for all of those individuals and companies who continue to step up to support our mission during an extremely critical time.

Because of you, we have been able to increase our services and do many of them virtually. We expanded the hours of our Helpline, staffed by licensed social workers; increased our therapeutic and activity programming; provided memory screenings in real time; and continued our Educating America Tour, all virtually.

This issue of Teal Times is full of inspiration—people, companies, and even landmarks—that is driving our mission with goodness and hope:

• A son who channeled his passion for kayaking into a fundraiser in honor of his dad
• A bride and groom who instead of going on a honeymoon donated to AFA
• Supporters of all ages from 46 different teams and 34 states who came together with friends, families, and loved ones to raise more than $155,000 (at press time) to support AFA’s virtual Alzheimer’s Walk in the Park
• A rockabilly hall of famer who honors and advocates for his ‘60s idol dad
• Organizations that are “Lighting the World in Teal” for Alzheimer’s awareness
• And more....

THANK YOU. We continue to need your support for the many individuals living with Alzheimer's disease today and the families and caregivers who love them. You make it all possible.

With gratitude,

Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr.
President & Chief Executive Officer
Alzheimer’s Foundation of America

WHEN ALZHEIMER’S IS IN YOUR LIFE, HELP IS WITHIN YOUR REACH.

AFA's National Toll-Free Helpline, 866-232-8484, is available seven days a week, 9 am-9 pm ET, weekdays, and 9 am-5 pm ET on weekends. No question is too big or small for our staff of dementia-trained licensed social workers.
Making a Special Impact on a Special Day

Like so many couples engaged to be married in 2020, Brit Weisman and Sean Plott had to adjust their wedding plans because of COVID-19. But in a way, this made their special day have a special impact.

The Los Angeles couple got married on Saturday, October 3, 2020, in a small, socially-distanced ceremony on the sidewalk in front of the building where they first met in 2011. Afterward, they celebrated with a reception on the rooftop of the building where they live, ordering in dinner from the restaurant where they had their first date, and dancing their first dance to Sonny and Cher’s “I Got You Babe.”

“Our entire wedding was perfect, we have each other, and we have everything we need to be cozy and comfortable. Instead of going on a honeymoon, we’ve decided to donate to our chosen charities,” wrote the couple on a GoFundMe page they set up to encourage family and friends to donate. “We feel so lucky, and the only thing we can think to ask for is your help to help others.”

Weisman and Plott selected two charities to support. One was the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America in memory of their friend, Ron Reivich. The happy couple, together with their family and friends, raised more than $7,500 to help fund AFA’s programs and services for families impacted by Alzheimer’s disease.

“We are endlessly grateful to anyone who donated, shared, or supported and we’re so happy to start our marriage in service to good things,” the couple wrote on their GoFundMe page.
Paddling for Dad (and AFA)

One of the hardest parts of the COVID-19 pandemic for families impacted by dementia is that it prevents them from visiting their loved ones.

Bruce Levitus of Richboro, PA, is one of them. His father has vascular dementia and lives in Florida; but because of the pandemic, Levitus cannot travel to see his father and risk getting him sick.

An avid sportsman, Levitus came up with the idea of channeling his passion for kayaking into a way to help people just like his father who are living with dementia-related illnesses.

“One day while out on the lake I thought it might be helpful for the group raising money for research, as well as my own emotional health, if I did a mileage-based fundraiser,” he wrote on his AFA fundraising page.

He created “Paddle4Dad,” a fundraiser where he would row 100 miles between early October and Christmas. His initial goal was to raise $2,500 for AFA.

Levitus set his oar in the water and kicked off the fundraiser on October 9. Mile by mile, he kayaked on large bodies of water in Pennsylvania, including Lake Nockamixon and the Delaware River.

Less than a month later, on November 5, he achieved his goal and hit the 100-mile mark. But he is keeping the fundraiser open on AFA’s community fundraising page, fundraising.alzfdn.org, through Christmas. At the time of this writing, he has raised more than $5,100 for AFA!
In our last *Teal Times* issue, we wrote about the generous in-kind support that Lamar Advertising, a national outdoor advertising company with more than 390,000 billboards across the United States and Canada, provided to AFA by running free billboard ads in markets such as New York City, Milwaukee, Nashville, Memphis, and Central Florida. Since then, Lamar has done even more!

Lamar chose AFA for a free national public service ad campaign as part of November Alzheimer’s Awareness Month. They created and designed a new billboard ad and displayed it on 313 digital panels along highways in more than 30 markets across the country.

PHILADELPHIA, PA | DALLAS, TX | KANSAS CITY, MO
CHARLOTTE, NC | BATON ROUGE, LA | DES MOINES, IA
LITTLE ROCK, AR | MADISON, WI | ALBANY, NY | LINCOLN, NE

This additional in-kind contribution of more than $232,000 brings Lamar’s current total in-kind donation to over $562,000. Thank you, Lamar!
Rosalind Cox walked 1.5 miles every day the entire month of November in Troy, MI, in honor of her beloved Mama Rose. Ariel Stern of New York City walked to honor her late grandfather Poppy and connect virtually with a community of people impacted by Alzheimer’s. Krysten Walowski, a Bureau Valley H.S. sophomore in Manlius, IL, walked for “everybody in our community and our country” to show them that people care.

From the coasts of California, the windy city of Chicago, and the lakes of Michigan, individuals from all over America took part in AFA’s Virtual Alzheimer’s Walk in the Park this year. Supporters of all ages from 46 different teams came together with friends, families, and loved ones in 34 states to raise more than $155,000 (at press time) to support AFA’s mission.

AFA’s Alzheimer’s Walk in the Park started just three years ago as a local event in the Town of Babylon in New York at the AFA-Town of Babylon Respite Care Relief Park. But this year’s worldwide pandemic necessitated that AFA’s Walk go virtual, enabling small groups and solo walkers to participate in socially distanced events that brought special meaning in their own local areas. Through the process of reaching out, sharing awareness through social media, the AFA Walk created a community of care of which all of us were proud.

“This year has been unthinkable to so many of our families and caregivers, but the success of this year’s walk proves that even though we may be physically apart, we are still able to come together for those impacted by Alzheimer’s,” said AFA President & CEO Charles Fuschillo.

Impressed and touched by the enthusiastic support this year, AFA Founder and Chairman of the Board Bert Brodsky announced a “Keep Walking” $10,000 matching gift for an additional $10,000 raised in December.

AFA understands each of our journeys with this devastating disease is our own. This year’s Walk is something that connected us all and shows us that in our fight with Alzheimer’s, no one walks alone. “Memories are worth fighting for,” said Tina Lee, captain for Team AFA ER Walk for Hope.

All proceeds raised from this event support services for individuals impacted by Alzheimer’s disease nationally as well as research toward finding better treatment and a cure.

AFA is grateful to everyone who walked, supported, sponsored, and spread the word. Your commitment has made a difference.
SANFORD FINKEL, M.D.

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Individuals were offered a quick and easy way to challenge their brains and test their memories when AFA launched its popular online memory screening test, with MemTrax, in 2019.

But national consumer health engagement company Higi was able to help AFA reach many more thousands of people with its memory screening test through a network of over 10,000 FDA-cleared smart health stations in retail stores across the country. Information about brain health and caregiving was also provided, amounting to an in-kind donation of more than $1.7 million in 2019 alone.

Found in pharmacies, groceries, and club stores, such as Rite Aid, Walmart, Target, and Sam’s Club, Higi stations help customers screen for over 20 health risk factors, identify health risks, and inform and help connect them with the appropriate partner programs to meet unmet care needs—all for free.

Higi has generously agreed to continue its partnership with AFA through 2021.

AFA is grateful for its continued support!

You can take AFA’s online memory test at www.afamemorytest.com.
If you are of a certain age, you can’t help but recall “Take Care of My Baby” (his #1 hit), “Rubber Ball,” and “The Night Has a Thousand Eyes” to name just a few. Billboard magazine reported that this 1960s teen idol had 38 Hot 100 chart hits, 10 of which reached the Top 20, and six gold singles. American singer, songwriter, and musician Bobby Vee filled a unique musical gap between the birth of rock and roll and the British Invasion with sweet pop songs that made us swoon. What you may not recall is how he passed away from young-onset Alzheimer’s, in 2016.

One of Vee’s four children carried on his famous dad’s legacy in his own right not only as a Rockabilly Hall of Famer musician (2015), nicknamed the “Prince of Twang,” but as an advocate for Alzheimer’s awareness. Robby Vee hosted a Facebook fundraiser during the coronavirus pandemic, called “Dedications,” where he played songs from his dad’s career and his own while inviting listeners to donate to AFA. He also had been donating proceeds from his classic blues single “Blue Moon Blue,” which was written in honor of his father, featuring such lyrics as “missing the one who no longer misses me.”

“We tried to give my dad the gift of normalcy,” Robby Vee shared in an article written in Minnesota Monthly. “We didn’t want the disease to dictate how he would spend his time. We wanted to have as much family time as possible. My sister Jenny and I would have family Sundays on her farm in Buffalo, MN., where my dad could spend time with his grandkids. We’d cook dinner, spend time with the horses, and give my dad rides in his ‘65 Mustang. Those Sundays became like a ritual for us. My dad and I would also listen to old vinyl records together and sing together. I’d often play my records in the car and he recognized them, and his eyes would light up. He couldn’t speak, but he pointed at me with a knowing smile. He knew they were mine.”

“The best way to describe my dad’s life is by pulling from some of his own song lyrics,” Vee said. “If when your life is over, and you can smile at where you’ve been, you’ve accomplished all that matters in the end.’ Even when my dad couldn’t speak, he could always communicate with us with his smile. He had his smile up until the very end.”

Photos courtesy of Robby Vee

Rockabilly Hall of Famer Honors and Advocates for ‘60s Idol Dad Bobby Vee
Iconic structures across the country and around the world joined the fight against Alzheimer’s by “lighting up” as part of AFA’s Light the World in Teal annual public awareness campaign.

This initiative which takes place every November as part of Alzheimer’s Awareness Month inspires buildings here in the United States, and internationally as far away as Australia and New Zealand, to light up in teal on a single day to raise Alzheimer’s awareness and show support for the millions of people affected by Alzheimer’s disease. Skyscrapers, offices, tourist attractions, bridges, care settings, government buildings, and other sites all take part in this awe-inspiring campaign.

More than 300 structures in 49 American states and ten other countries, including New York City’s Empire State Building, Alamo Quarry Market, San Antonio, TX, Bridgestone Arena, Nashville, TN, Prudential Center, Boston, MA, and Echo Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, Burlington, VT, participated in the campaign.
Building, Chicago’s Willis Tower, Boston’s Prudential Center, and Nashville’s Bridgestone arena, participated by “lighting up” on November 5, 2020. Alzheimer’s & Dementia Services of Memphis even generously contributed $500 to pay the fee to illuminate “Mighty Lights,” which features a nightly light show on the Mississippi River between Memphis, TN, and West Memphis, AR.

Others joining the celebration of teal included organizations and their staff, government officials, even broadcasters, and few pups.

A full list of participating sites can be found at www.lighttheworldinteal.com.

Thank you to all who gave the gift of light to support AFA and families affected by Alzheimer’s disease!
Companies Doing Good by Giving Back

“The most meaningful way to succeed is to help others succeed,” says organizational psychologist and bestselling author Adam Grant. And many companies take that message to heart by sharing a portion or percentage of their sales with AFA. Here’s a roundup of how companies are making a difference for AFA:

Idaho-based **Spilled T Handmade**, creator of handmade polymer clay jewelry is currently giving $1 to AFA for every pair of earrings sold. Full-time working mother of three artist/owner Tanya Motisi is donating in honor of her Italian-born father, Giuseppe. Behind the business scenes is her husband Nino, who helped create the casually priced, elegant line of earrings.

In honor of AFA’s Light the World in Teal event in November, national retailer **Kendra Scott** offered a “Kendra Gives Back” event on November 5-6. Consumers who shopped on these days with the jewelry and lifestyle brand had the opportunity to enter a special code at checkout and 20% of the purchase would be donated back to AFA to support programs and services. Says Scott, “My stepfather once told me the greatest thing I could do with my life was to use my talents to improve the lives of others around me. I carry those words with me every day.”

**iTraq** is committed to serving Alzheimer’s families by helping them manage wandering behavior in their loved one. During this time of the COVID pandemic, iTraq is selling reusable, machine-washable 100% cotton face masks for $10 each and donating $5 for every mask sold. “We’re pleased to be able to do our small part to support the amazing work that the Alzheimer’s Foundation is doing for the Alzheimer’s community,” said Roman Isakov, Co-founder & CEO of iTraq.

In honor of World Alzheimer’s Month in September and to increase awareness of cognitive disease, Walnut, CA-based **Farlong Pharmaceutical**, a plant-based ingredient and supplement company, donated 10% of September sales from its Lifeflower® Breviscapine to AFA. “We are happy to support AFA and the work they do nationwide,” said Jing Struve, CEO & Executive Director of Farlong Pharmaceutical.
Since 2014, Maryland-based national mortgage lender Homeside Financial, together with sister company Lower.com, has been hosting “Homeside & Lower No Shave November” where employees go the entire month without shaving for charity. Each year, the organizations choose a cause close to their hearts. In 2020, they chose to support AFA and raise funds for dementia research.

Homeside and Lower.com staff members shared their stories of life with Alzheimer’s and dementia on the event website, honoring loved ones currently affected and remembering those who passed away.

“My father was diagnosed with a rare form of dementia called primary progressive aphasia (PPA) in 2015,” said Dan Stich, Homeside’s Vice President of Retail Operations. “It’s a great cause and it’s personal to me.”

Chase Connor from Lower.com, whose grandmother passed away in November after almost two decades battling Alzheimer’s disease, wrote “Despite all that the disease took from her and others like her, she did leave me with a powerful statement...that even if she is not with us physically and mentally anymore, she will continue to live on in our hearts and memories. That brought me comfort and hopefully to others as well. I pray that my donation as well as others will help us move one step closer to the cure.”

All told, the Homeside and Lower.com teams raised more than $5,500 for AFA toward research for better treatment and a cure for dementia-related illnesses!
Awareness is a critical tool in connecting people with help and support. So when a leading digital media company provides free ads on over 11,600 elevator and lobby screens in cities across the country, it’s enormously impactful!

Captivate provided AFA with an in-kind contribution of three weeks’ worth of free advertising across its digital video network, which delivers valuable news and entertainment on elevator and lobby screens in 1,600 office buildings nationwide. During Alzheimer’s Awareness Month, a public service ad for AFA aired more than 38 million times on screens in 29 different markets including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Nashville, Boston, Atlanta, and Seattle—a value of more than $292,000!

The 2020 public service campaign builds upon Captivate’s extraordinary generosity to AFA. Over the last three years alone, Captivate has donated more than $765,000 in advertising to raise awareness about the AFA Helpline and other programs and services.
Ravitz Family Markets Committed to Caring

“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give,” said Winston Churchill.

Ravitz Family Markets, a family business of grocers in southern New Jersey, is committed to that motto every day. Their more than 1,000 employees organize food drives, mentor troubled youth, and work to improve impoverished areas throughout the community. They also support a Ravitz Cares committee that selects monthly charities their employees vote to support. Then they collect money at the registers of their five ShopRite and one PriceRite stores, located in Burlington and Camden counties in New Jersey. This summer, their stores collected over $5,000 for AFA.

“Our employees must feel very connected to the Alzheimer’s Foundation because they were a top vote-getter on the first time they were nominated, beating out about 12 other charities,” said Ken Bahl, Director, Ravitz Family Markets.

By promoting community service as a company-wide value, Ravitz Family Markets and its employees have made a real difference to the millions of families affected by Alzheimer’s disease. We are grateful for their support.
It was love at first sight, more than 50 years ago.

Now, she says “I love you” to him “more than 20 times a day.”

Jack Bedevian, 84, and his wife of 44 years, Barbara, 90, have been living with Alzheimer’s for the last four years. “There was no escaping from it,” Jack said. He understands that he is her “familiar face” and can’t bear the idea of “releasing her” yet or ever to a care home. A primary, loving care partner, Jack has “received a lot of good coaching” and spent a lot of time learning about Alzheimer’s from AFA and other sources. But he says, “I have reached a point where I need to attempt to do something to help other people. An AFA Helpline social worker helped me at one very difficult time in this journey, which I have never forgotten. AFA is now a charity of choice for me.”