



Article published in the September 2009 Issue Canby Connection Newspaper

Contact: Mary Reitan
Cell: 503-502-4509
Office: 503-266-3031

Your donation will make such a difference at Thelma's Place

There are four things that need to happen to ease the human suffering due to Alzheimer's disease:

1. Find a cure and find drugs that can slow the progression of the disease once it's been diagnosed.
2. Help some of the 80,000 Oregonians who have had their lives turned upside down by a disease that has slowly robbed them of their memories and the ability to complete even the simplest tasks.
3. Support the people who were given no prior training for the job yet were thrust into the role of becoming a caregiver to someone with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.
4. Help people in the community understand the value of staying well, both in mind and body, so that we keep our mental capabilities as sharp as possible for the rest of our lives.

There are researchers all over the world working to find a cure and there are some very hopeful drugs in the pipeline that may improve the quality of life for those with Alzheimer's very soon. They are even working on medications that will stop the disease before it even has a chance to take hold in a person's life. There isn't much Thelma's Place can do to help with this part of the Alzheimer's problem. However, we can do so much to help support people with the disease as well as the caregivers who are struggling to provide emotional, physical and financial care for them.

Continued –

Following are some statistics from the Alzheimer's Association that show the huge impact that Alzheimer's disease has on our society:

- In 2009 there are now more than 5 million people in the United States living with Alzheimer's.
- Alzheimer's is an equal opportunity disease. No profession, education level or race is immune.
- Alzheimer's afflicts one in eight people 65 years and older and nearly one in two people over 85.
- In America every 72 seconds someone develops Alzheimer's. By mid century someone will receive their diagnosis every 33 seconds.
- Without a cure or a treatment to slow the onset or progression of Alzheimer's, the disease could affect the lives of 7.7 million by 2030. That number is expected to jump to as many as 16 million by 2050, not counting other forms of dementia.

We **HAVE** to learn how to take care of people with the disease so they can stay in their homes longer. Caring for a loved one who has dementia is a journey that no family should have to take alone. It is essential to have the assistance of people who understand the process of the different types of dementia and the effects it has on both the person with the disease as well as the people who love them. They have no choice but to continue the journey they've started on but they don't have to travel alone. At Thelma's Place we may not be able to help every Oregonian with the disease but with our help and encouragement we can make a difference—one person at a time—one mind at a time!

There's a story about a little boy and hundreds of beached starfish. An old man was walking on the beach and saw a little boy surrounded by starfish that had washed up on the beach. He was working quietly picking up one small starfish at a time and throwing it back in the water. He did it again and again and finally the old man couldn't help himself any longer and he approached the little boy to ask him why he was spending so much time on a task that appeared to be an obvious waste of his time. The boy picked up one more small starfish, and as he threw it safely into the sea, he said: "Well, I made a difference to that one".

Won't you please help us make a difference in the lives of many people? Thelma's Place is a non-profit corporation and we rely on donations and fundraising to stay open. You can help by donating money, buying a brick for \$100.00 in honor of a loved one, donating your car, truck or boat, or leaving Thelma's Place in your will. Visit our website at www.thelmasplace.org or call Mary at 503-502-4509 for more information.

###