

THE VERMONT ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

Don't Let Alzheimer's Be a Passing Thought

For Immediate Release: August 28, 2009

Contact: Jeff Maker, 1-802-316-3839

Vermont Business Execs Lend Voices to Alzheimer's Movement Corporate Leaders to Rally Support for Statewide Memory Walks

Williston, VT—“*Don't let Alzheimer's be a passing thought.*” That's the message that several of Vermont's top business executives will be conveying in a new media campaign in support of the Vermont Alzheimer's Association and the organization's upcoming Memory Walk fundraisers. Michael Seaver, president of Chittenden Bank; Don George, president & chief executive of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont, and National Life Group executive vice president, Vince Vitiello have joined together to urge residents and communities to get proactive and engaged in efforts to end Alzheimer's and to become a Vermont Memory Walker.

Seaver and George, along with Martha Trombley Oakes, president of National Life's Charitable Foundation will be featured in television and radio spots scheduled to begin airing before Labor Day. The campaign encourages Vermonters to sign up for the annual Memory Walk events planned in September and October. Also appearing in the broadcast series will be Diane Wolk of Castleton, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's two years ago.

Alzheimer's, a debilitating disease that slowly robs a person of their memory and eventually leads to death, presently affects an estimated 45,000 Vermont residents, many of whom serve as the primary caregivers of a loved one who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Those numbers are expected to triple by 2050. Jeff Maker, executive director of the Vermont Alzheimer's Association, sees an Alzheimer's crisis on the demographic horizon as aging baby-boomers begin to swell the ranks of the state's older population.

“I call it Vermont's quiet big bang,” Maker said. “Unless local policy directs more attention toward this very important issue, and until we can accelerate the development of effective treatments in halting the progression of this terrible disease and ultimately find a cure, the economic, social and emotional ramifications here in Vermont will be catastrophic.”

The Vermont Alzheimer's Association will be holding six Memory Walks this year: Brattleboro, Rutland & Bennington—Saturday, September 19th; Saint Albans—Saturday, September 26th; Burlington—Saturday, October 3rd, and Montpelier will host its event on Saturday, October 10th. Residents are urged to make a pledge and sign up for the Memory Walk nearest them by going online at www.alz.org/vermont or call Ashley Witzemberger at 1-802-316-3839.

300 Cornerstone Drive, Suite 120, Williston, VT 05495 1-802-316-3839 (Office); 1-802-316-3847 (Fax)