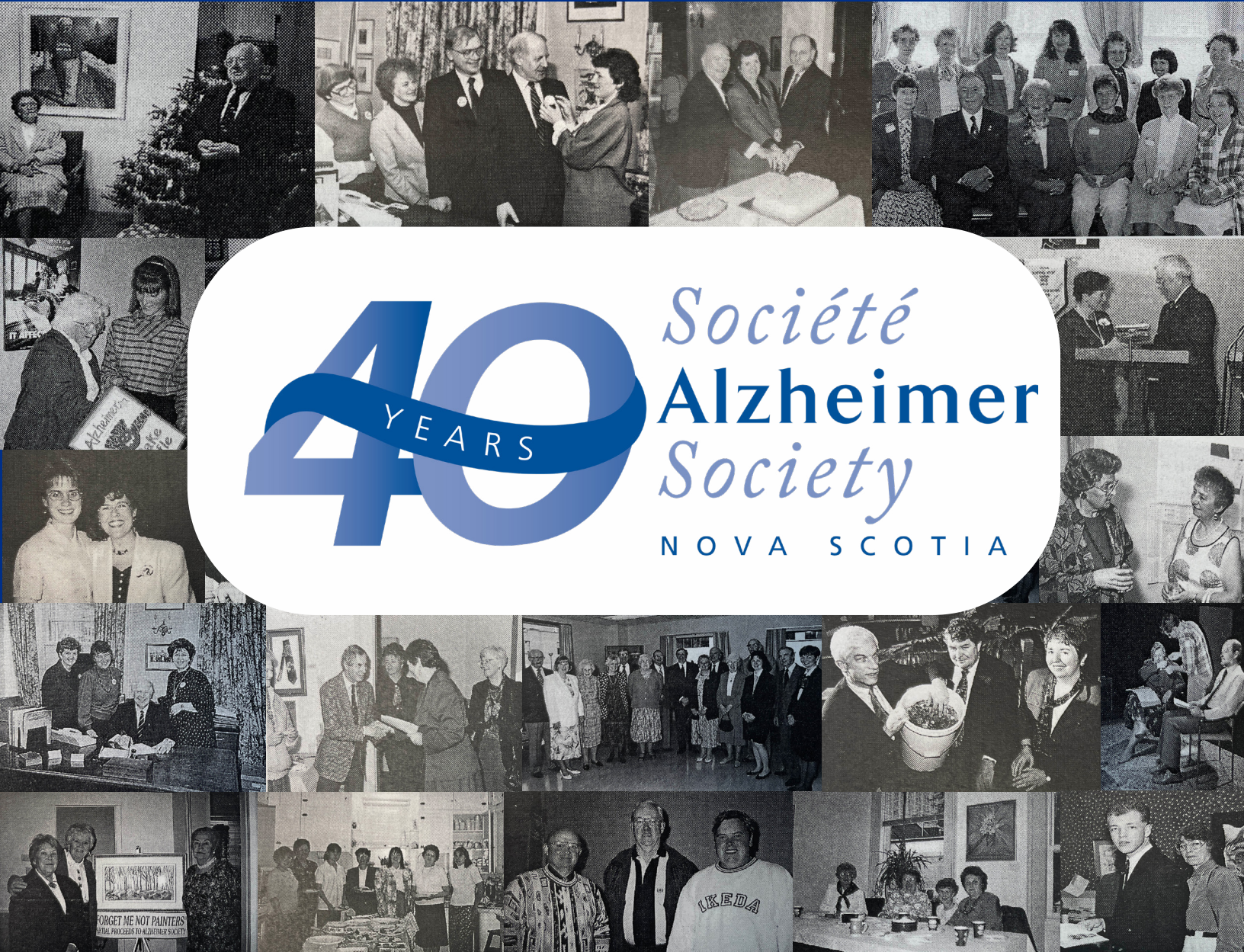


In the **LOOP**
WINTER 2023

Soci t 
Alzheimer
Society

NOVA SCOTIA



40
YEARS

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In this issue:

- 40 Years of ASNS
- January Awareness Month
- Dementia-Friendly Communities

...and more!

WINTER 2023

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Alzheimer Society

SAVE THE DATE

The IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's is back in-person and happening in regions across the province on Sunday, May 28th, 2023! Stay tuned for the launch of our website and registration.

Join us as we walk together to shape the future!

Questions about dementia?

We are here to help.

Our province-wide InfoLine is a confidential service provided by our team of knowledgeable and caring staff.

Our InfoLine provides:

- Help navigating the dementia journey
- Ongoing individualized support
- Registration for Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia programs
- Connection to community-based services
- Culturally diverse materials in multiple languages (print or online)
- Information about:
 - Any type of dementia
 - Maintaining brain health
 - Getting a diagnosis
 - Planning for the future
 - Maintaining independence
 - Tips and strategies for living well



InfoLine
1-800-611-6345

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Forget Me Not

Monthly

50/50 JACKPOT

asnsraffle.ca

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Good luck!

Guaranteed prize of
\$1,000!

40 Years of ASNS

Jenna Farrell

Manager, Communications & Marketing

We're entering our 40th year as a Society – we were officially incorporated on January 31, 1983. We recently sat down with the first president of the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia, Kevin Keefe, to hear about our history and how far we've come.

Kevin had cared for his mother who lived with dementia. It had been a couple years since she passed, and when he saw the notice in the paper for the first meeting looking to form the Nova Scotia Society, he thought he could help.

"When I was involved with caring for my mother, there was no support," says Kevin. "You did it on your own."

He went to the meeting of about 30 people, mostly people who were supporting someone living with dementia in their family. He unexpectedly left as the president of what would become the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia. He was brought on by two organizers of that first meeting – Phyllis Horton and Constance Baird.

40 years later, we're still here and committed to advancing the vision of the incredible individuals that started our Society. A lot has changed, but our mission has remained the same: supporting people on the dementia journey in all corners of our province.



10th Anniversary of the Alzheimer Society with Kevin Keefe



Kevin Keefe sits down for an interview with the Society on December 9, 2022.



Dr. John Gray, Judy MacLean,
Penny Doherty and Margaret Murray



Awareness Month - Margie MacKeen, Claire MacDonald
Keefe, Volunteer, Hon. John Buchanan and
Maria Mancini-Fulmer



Alzheimer Coffee Break in Middleton with
host Sylvia Mitchell.



Forget Me Not Painters - Agnes Kell Napier,
Roberta Way Clark, and Peggy Shaw.



1990 Provincial Office Volunteer Appreciation
Teresa McCarthy, June Levy,
Noreen Lawlor and Marie Clouter



Volunteer Appreciation 1991 including
Phyllis Horton front row, first right.

We've grown from a small group of a dedicated volunteers meeting around each other's kitchen tables to a staff of over 30 people supporting thousands of Nova Scotians on the dementia journey.

While we can feel proud of how far we've come and how much has changed, we have to recognize what still hasn't changed.

Many people are still struggling to access a timely diagnosis. Those in rural areas may face additional barriers to accessing care. Not everyone can access culturally appropriate care.

We're ready for the next 40 years, and to shape the future for Nova Scotians affected by dementia.

Our goal is that ALL Nova Scotians affected by dementia are empowered through timely, accessible and culturally specific care, support, information and services. Regardless of where you live, or how you identify, we want to ensure that folks on the dementia journey have access to the help they need TODAY to bring hope for tomorrow.

January is Alzheimer Awareness Month

This year, we're talking about brain health

According to the Landmark Study released by the Alzheimer Society of Canada in September 2022, addressing certain risk factors can reduce the prevalence of dementia by up to 40%.

Individual circumstances play a major role in one's ability to manage risk factors. Physical, mental and financial wellbeing, access to services, a support system and countless other things can impact our ability to make lifestyle changes to reduce our risk of dementia and other health conditions.

Knowledge Changes Everything

We can't make changes if we don't know where to begin. Getting the word out about concrete steps people can take to help reduce their risk of dementia is hugely important. This can have a positive impact on care partners, the healthcare system and the number of people affected by dementia in the future.

This awareness month, we're promoting twelve actions that you can take to improve your brain health at any age or stage of your life. These vital steps for improving brain health also include those that have already been diagnosed with dementia.

For example, getting a good night's sleep is very protective for our brain health. You might decide to change your bedtime routine to get an additional hour of sleep, or you might join a weekly group where you can play crib and socialize to keep your brain active.

A downloadable version of the *12 actions for a healthier brain at any age* can be found on our website at www.alzheimer.ca/ns/awarenessmonth.

Some of these actions are more difficult than others, but even committing to one or two can help to reduce your risk. That said, these are only modifiable with the right supports in place. Nova Scotians can contact the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia to access our services or be connected to community supports that may help.

We invite you to join the conversation on our social media channels throughout Awareness Month and beyond by sharing and engaging with our posts! Help your friends and family learn more about brain health and what they can do to maintain theirs.



@AlzheimerNS



@AlzheimerNS



@alzheimerns



youtube.com/alzheimerns



linkedin.com/company/alzheimerns

For more information about Awareness Month, and for direct links to resources and our social media channels, visit www.alzheimer.ca/ns/awarenessmonth.

12 Actions for a Healthier Brain at Any Age



- 1 **Be physically active each day.** Reduce sedentary time and move more. This can include all types of physical activities, including walking, running, weightlifting, gardening, yoga, tai chi, swimming, dancing, biking, team sports and yard work.
- 2 **Protect your heart.** Monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes closely. What's good for the heart is also good for the brain.
- 3 **Stay socially active.** Make sure to be engaged with friends and family. Maintain your social network and stay connected.
- 4 **Manage your medical conditions.** Keep on top of your overall health. This is directly linked to your brain health and your ability to avoid dementia as you get older.
- 5 **Challenge your thinking.** Take on mental leisure activities that you enjoy. Always try to learn new things, no matter what your age.
- 6 **Get a good night's sleep every night.** Try to sleep over 6 to 8 hours each night to help maintain your brain health.
- 7 **Have depression treated.** Remember that depression is more than just feeling down. Seek help to improve the functioning of your brain.
- 8 **Avoid excessive alcohol intake.** Limit your intake of wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages.
- 9 **Maintain your hearing.** Use hearing aids if you need them. Protect your hearing from loud noises.
- 10 **Find meaning in life.** Find a purpose to get out of bed each day. This is associated with better brain health and reduced dementia risk.
- 11 **Avoid all types of head injury.** Steer clear of activities where you might put your brain at risk of harm.
- 12 **Adopt healthy behaviours.** Make healthy food choices, reduce avoidable stress, quit or reduce smoking, and get regular check-ups with your doctor. All these actions will positively affect your brain health.



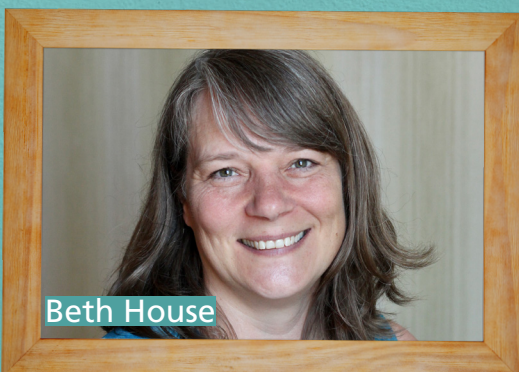
Dr. Alison Dixon



Dr. John Archibald



Chelsea Slawter Wright



Beth House

Awareness Month Panel Event: Knowledge Changes Everything

Join us to learn more about living well with dementia, risk factors and connecting with community.

January 31, 2023 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Paul O'Regan Hall, Halifax Central Library
Virtual livestream option available

Speakers:

- Dr. Alison Dixon, Geriatrician
- Dr. John Archibald, Care Partner
- Chelsea Slawter Wright, ASNS
- Beth House, ASNS

Visit alzheimer.ca/ns/panel2023 to learn more and register for this FREE event.

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NOVA SCOTIA

Expanding Our Research Impacts

Marco Redden

Coordinator, Research & Evaluation

Each winter at ASNS, we launch one of our most exciting research initiatives - our annual Student Research Awards. Since 1995, we've had the opportunity to support dozens of brilliant students in Nova Scotia who are actively involved in research on dementia. These awards recognize the contributions that students make to the dementia research field, whether seeking to better understand the causes of dementia, or studying ways to improve the quality of life for those on the dementia journey.

These awards have been made possible by two major supporters of ASNS, Phyllis Horton and Abraham (Abe) Leventhal. Phyllis Horton was a founding member of ASNS, and her family established a bursary in 1995 to support local research. The Abe Leventhal Student Research Award was established in 2016 in honour of Abe Leventhal, a Halifax philanthropist who had a passion for research and supporting students.

Each May, our Research Advisory Committee, comprised of six local leaders in dementia and caregiving research, meets to select deserving students to receive these awards. To date, we have offered two awards of \$3,000 to graduate-level students in Nova Scotia. For 2023, we are excited to announce changes, now offering more awards that include more students. **The award pool now totals \$8,000 across three awards!**

First, the Phyllis Horton Student Research Award has been increased to a value of \$5,000 for one outstanding graduate-level student.

Second, we will now be offering two Abe Leventhal Student Research Awards valued at \$1,500 each to exceptional undergraduate-level students focusing a major project or thesis on dementia. We hope that offering these awards will encourage promising new researchers to further their dementia studies and pursue careers in this field.



These changes reflect our goal at ASNS to provide help for today and hope for tomorrow. As we learned in the Alzheimer Society of Canada report, *Landmark Study: Navigating the Path Forward for Dementia in Canada*, rates of dementia are set to increase nationwide. There has never been a more crucial time to invest in dementia research and support early-career researchers to shape the future of dementia right here in Nova Scotia.

Dementia-Friendly Communities Launches in Nova Scotia

Beth House

Lead, Dementia-Friendly Communities

The Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia is excited to announce the launch of our Dementia-Friendly Communities initiative in Nova Scotia! We are committed to connecting with key groups across Nova Scotia to help make our province more dementia-friendly.

What is a Dementia-Friendly Community?

Dementia-Friendly Communities support, respect and include people living with dementia and their partners in care in the places they live, work and play. It's a community that enables contribution, opportunity and choice.

Why is Becoming Dementia-Friendly Important?

When organizations, businesses, municipalities and the general public become dementia-friendly, it ensures people can age in place and remain active, engaged members of their communities. Dementia-friendly principles – both social and physical – are not just dementia friendly, but will make spaces more inclusive, supportive and accessible for everybody. Businesses, organizations and members of the community that are respectful and responsive to the needs of people affected by dementia are valued and integral to building a dementia-friendly society. It is our social responsibility to support ALL members of the community.

Social and physical characteristics of a dementia-friendly community can support people living with dementia by reducing anxiety, stigma and frustration. Many people living with dementia remain at home for a long time and with support from their community, can maintain a high quality of life. This is possible when community members are educated about dementia and know that a person living with dementia may sometimes experience the world differently.

What Does a Dementia-Friendly Environment Look Like?

Challenges with memory may make retracing a path and way-finding difficult. Thinking about the design and placement of signage can help to ensure spaces are welcoming and easily navigated. A few examples include:

- Use clear signage with a high contrast between text (bold-plain text) with images that represent what is in the space (i.e. a toilet on a washroom door). It should be placed at eye level at key decision points and on the relevant doors (not beside them), or can be visible from all directions (on both sides of a corner).
- Background noise should be kept to a minimum and a quiet space for customers is ideal.
- Flooring should be plain. A shiny floor may look wet. Avoid dark mats, patterned flooring/carpets and undistinguished changes in floor level. Remove mats that could be a tripping hazard. Black mats could be perceived as holes or blue ones as water, and patterned floors are difficult to navigate.
- Use recognizable (not abstract) seating that supports the upper back and has armrests to allow momentum to exit the chair. Armrests and a colour that contrasts with the floor will also support someone with impaired depth perception.

The changes don't need to be costly or hard to implement. You can find helpful tip sheets with more suggestions at alzheimer.ca/DementiaFriendlyCanada or give us a call at **1-800-611-6345**.

The Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia is committed to advancing Dementia-Friendly Communities in Nova Scotia - communities that are more supportive, respectful and inclusive of people living with dementia and their care partners.

It is important to address the stigma associated with a dementia diagnosis. It's also essential to understand how physical and social environments play a key role in people being able to stay connected to their social and community life and engage in regular daily activities of living.

Want to learn more? Are there already signs of dementia friendliness in your community? Invite us to present to your team or workplace about this initiative! Give us a call at 1-800-611-6345.

Philanthropist Spotlight: Andrew Feenstra

Lesley MacLean
Coordinator, Communications & Marketing

The owner of Cyclesmith bicycle shop on Agricola Street in the North End of Halifax, Andrew Feenstra is a true philanthropist.

Andrew's philanthropy has always been a part of his life, as far back as 1989. It came hand in hand with his love for athletics and cycling. Since then, he's had a successful career in coaching, including coaching the National Cycling Team.

Andrew began supporting the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia in Spring of 2021 when he sponsored his long-time friend and fellow bicycle enthusiast, Dr. John Archibald, on his Ride for Dementia.

"John is a phenomenal guy and a good person," says Andrew. "It's really easy to help good people."

On July 1, 2021, Dr. John Archibald set out to ride his bicycle around Nova Scotia in support of dementia care and brain donation. He cycled the ~2,400 KM perimeter of the province in nine days, persevering through rain, cold, and a post-tropical storm. He raised funds for the Alzheimer Society and the Maritime Brain Tissue Bank via the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation.

Both Andrew and John experienced dementia in their families. Andrew's mom and John's dad both lived with Alzheimer's disease.

Andrew hosted a reception following John's ride where people came together in the Cyclesmith parking lot to celebrate. It was there that Andrew presented his cheque to be split between the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia and the Maritime Brain Tissue Bank.

"Money is one thing, but there's also awareness," says Andrew. "John riding isn't just a one and done. He rode for multiple days with different coverage from the media which helps spread the message and educate people."

Education is a crucial part of breaking the stigma of dementia. The more we learn, the more we can begin to understand the disease, the signs and symptoms, and how to reduce our risk. It also makes it easier for those living with dementia to stay a part of their community for as long as possible.

Andrew's mother was a big inspiration to him. A lifelong hospital nurse, she seldom took a day off in her 40 year career. She passed away of cancer in 2020.



"I got my work ethic from her," says Andrew. "My mom was always very involved in all kinds of activities while bringing up four kids and married to a travelling salesman husband. She was always giving."

Andrew and his team at Cyclesmith actively contribute to many organizations across the Halifax Regional Municipality.

"When we choose which organizations to support, we look at what they're doing for their community and how we can contribute," says Andrew. "If we're able to leverage what they're already doing, they could turn my one dollar into 20 dollars."

Andrew sits on the Advisory Committee for the Ride for Cancer and has 18 staff who work to support the participants on the day. Andrew also does work with Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS). He volunteers his time as a mentor and touchpoint for immigrants who are either starting a business or bringing their talents to Atlantic Canada.

CycleSmith also donates to the Halifax Public Library summer reading program to help kids continue to read when they're out of school.

"Education is so important for everyone in the community," says Andrew. "A lot of people can't read, so the program encourages kids to develop those important skills."

Andrew is one of our many philanthropists – the people who help us do what we do. They give us their time and energy as volunteers and money as donors. We truly appreciate every minute and every dollar.

Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow

Dear Friend,

My husband Alan and I have celebrated many years together surrounded by our children, friends and family. Neither of us would have guessed that at age 57 Alan would get a dementia diagnosis that made things so different.

We were grateful that our doctor referred us to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia through their First Link® program right away. Not long after, we received our first call from an InfoLine staff who introduced us to the many programs and services offered by the Society.



Knowledge changes everything. Contact with the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia made a difference in our everyday life from the very beginning.

No matter the time of year, hosting get-togethers was always our favourite thing to do. The reality of Alan's diagnosis feels a little harder when we think about those times. The large gatherings we always loved have become difficult for Alan, and for me as his care partner.

Thankfully, the support groups that the society facilitates helped with ideas and strategies on how to adapt to make get-togethers better for Alan and our entire family. We chose to move away from the large group gatherings we always enjoyed to smaller and more frequent events. Name tags have become our norm. Thanks to the Alzheimer Society's programs, we are learning that life still has much to offer - we simply need to approach it differently and make the changes that work for us.

Programs like the support groups and InfoLine that help myself and others continue to live well doing what we love would not be possible without the generous support of donors.

Change can be difficult for care partners – I've experienced it myself, but there's help for today and hope for tomorrow at the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia. **Please donate today.**

Wishing you all the best,

Brenda Main

Brenda Main

Wife and Care Partner to Alan Main



Make a Donation

Name: _____

Full mailing address: _____

Yes! You can count on me to help ensure that caregivers, family members, and those living with dementia get the support they need.

I would like to support the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia with a **one time** gift of:

\$20 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

OR

I would like to support the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia with a **monthly** gift of:

\$10 \$20 \$50 \$ _____

You can stop your monthly gift at anytime by contacting us by phone or email.

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

I have enclosed a cheque payable to the Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia

OR

Please charge my donation to my: Visa MasterCard AMEX

Cardholder name: _____

Card number: _____

Expiry: ____/____ CVC: _____

Cardholder signature: _____

I prefer to receive my official tax receipt by email to help reduce administrative costs.
My email address is: _____

Thank you! Please return to: **Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia**
122-2719 Gladstone St.
Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 4W6

You can also make your secure donation at www.alzheimer.ca/ns/donate.

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@alheimerns

Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
112-2719 Gladstone St, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3K 4W6
902-422-7961 or 1-800-611-6345 (toll free within NS)

No one should face dementia alone.

*Read how you make that possible in
our latest newsletter.*

