



# FRIENDS CLUB NEWSLETTER

## WINTER 2011



*“Celebrating over 20 years of serving the Alzheimer’s community!”*

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*Happy Holidays!*

*The public often hears from the medical community, researchers, advocates and caregivers dealing with Alzheimer’s disease. But due to the progressive nature of the disease, it is rare to hear from the person diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. Friends Club is a sanctuary for men navigating this terrible disease and we are so proud that one of our members gave voice to the heavy toll that Alzheimer’s disease exacts from a person’s life and dreams. Don Bandler recently stood before hundreds of professionals and non-professionals at the annual **“Caring for the Patient with Dementia through the Health Care Continuum”** conference held at Riderwood in Silver Spring, Maryland and told his personal story. I would like to share his words with all of you.*

### **Living With Alzheimer’s Disease: A Person-Centered Experience By Don Bandler**

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you about my experience of living with Alzheimer’s. I am Don Bandler. I am 64 years old. I was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease in 2008. I first noticed memory problems in 2005.

Let me take a moment to tell you a little about myself, so you will have an idea of what this disease has taken from me. Then, multiply my difficulties by the millions of people living with Alzheimer’s, and you will have an idea of its costs to our society.

I had a 27 year career in the Foreign Service. I served in Cameroon West Africa, Paris, Bonn and as Ambassador to Cyprus. I was President Clinton’s Senior Director of European Affairs in the National Security Council, and later worked as Senior Vice President at Monsanto and then at Kissinger McLarty Associates. I also served as Tony Blair’s Chief of Mission at the Office of the Quartet Representative in Jerusalem. I have navigated many delicate political situations and had the opportunity to work with some of our country’s greatest political minds.

I have a Bachelors degree with honors from Kenyon College; a Masters degree from St. John’s College and a law degree from George Washington University. I exercise regularly and eat a healthy diet. Nonetheless, I have early onset Alzheimer’s.

Getting a diagnosis is the very difficult first step on this long journey of living with the disease. Back in 2005, I complained to my internist that I was having trouble remembering things. But not until 2008 did I really start seeing doctors at both Johns Hopkins and the Georgetown University Memory Disorders Clinic. After blood tests, MRIs, PET scans, and a complete battery of psychological cognitive tests, the results were in. The doctors were shocked, but all in agreement. I had early onset Alzheimer’s disease. That was in November of 2008. It was devastating and overwhelming news for me and my family. I still had many career and personal dreams on my agenda and tangled brain neurons were not part of those dreams.

When first diagnosed, I was determined that Alzheimer’s would not change my life, but it has changed my life and the lives of my wife and children. Alzheimer’s is not just an individual disease, it is a family disease. I am so lucky that I have my wife, Jane, who supports me and encourages me to pursue those things that interest me.

We work hard to keep the lines of communication open, both within our family and amongst our friends. We take each day as it comes. I am determined to continue being involved in as many activities as I can, despite the hopelessness of the diagnosis.

I still enjoy going to think tanks, attending lectures and conferences about international affairs. Nonetheless, these are now more difficult for me to follow than in the past. I've noticed that organizing and keeping my daily schedule has also become difficult. I feel the disease slowly taking things from me. I try to stay focused on the things that I have, and not the things that I have lost. I am continuing to do the things I love to the best of my ability.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, there are 5.4 million Americans who have Alzheimer's disease. Every 69 seconds, someone in America develops Alzheimer's. By 2050 the number of people with Alzheimer's in the U.S. will approach 11 to 16 million. There is no known cure for Alzheimer's disease. There is no effective treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

As a person living with Alzheimer's, it is important to me that I have a support network from my family and friends. I could not navigate this disease without that help. It is important to me to live my life and try to do everything I can and want to do now, as I am aware it is a progressive disease. It is important to me that we find a cure; that we develop medicines that work; that we find the money for the research needed so we can reach these goals. In the meantime, it is also important to me that a national plan be put into place to improve diagnostic testing and to provide a clear road map for the patient and his/her family after receiving a diagnosis of Alzheimer's, explaining where to go for the help and support we need.

Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in this country. But even more significant is the horrifying fact that among the top ten causes of death, Alzheimer's disease is the ONLY ONE that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed. While death rates have declined for most major diseases, deaths from Alzheimer's have risen 66% during this same period.

I do not want my children and grandchildren to know this disease. My mother-in-law died from Alzheimer's disease 13 years ago. She had the same wish – that her children would not know Alzheimer's disease. It is high time we find a cure!

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### **ANOTHER YEAR CLOSER TO FINDING A CURE?**

Here we are at the close of another year. As persons and families touched by Alzheimer's disease, you have learned patience. Life is approached "one day at a time" – sometimes one hour or one minute at a time. As persons advocating for an end to Alzheimer's disease, it is time for impatience. This disease is brutal. It is relentless. It is time for a cure for this cruel disease, or at the *very least* an effective treatment.

As a nation, we are moving towards coordinating research efforts, securing more funding and providing more support for families grappling with Alzheimer's disease. We are attempting to do this through the National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA) which was signed into law by President Obama in January of 2011. In September, the Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services met to develop a national strategy to combat Alzheimer's disease. The Advisory Council will submit a draft plan to develop this strategy in December 2011. (go to <http://aspe/hhs.gov/daltcp/napa/Mtg1Sum.pdf> to read a summary of their first meeting.) Many individuals and organizations provided input for devising a national plan. One of the best proposed plans that I've read was prepared by Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's Disease (LEAD), Co-Conveners George Vradenburg (Chair & Co-Founder, USAgainstAlzheimer's) and Eric J. Hall (Founding President & Chief Executive Officer of Alzheimer's Foundation of America) and presented as *A Framework for a Transformative National Plan to Defeat Alzheimer's Disease*. (View document at: <http://curealz.org/blog/tricom/2011/11/04/lead-releases-recommendations-national-alzheimer%E2%80%99s-project-act-advisory-counc>) As stated in the document: "As a nation we must take bold steps to tackle the increasing cost of care, rising prevalence, and dearth of treatments and therapies for Alzheimer's disease while at the same time identifying new methods of halting and preventing this disease."

At Friends Club I witness first-hand the great courage of those individuals fighting Alzheimer's disease. I witness the toll Alzheimer's disease takes on families and those caring for their loved ones with the disease. It is time for this nation to come together to end this disease. Here we are at the dawn of a new year. Let's hope and pray that 2012 brings a breakthrough in Alzheimer's disease.

# In Memoriam



**JOAQUIN FERRAN**  
1934 - 2011



Former Friends Club member Joaquin Ferran passed away peacefully at his home on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Joaquin was born in Spain, where he graduated from the University of Madrid with degrees in law and economics. He had a distinguished career as an Economist with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Paris, France and then with the IMF in Washington, D.C.

Joaquin was a proud Catalanian, who came from a large, close-knit family of 9 siblings. Mr. Ferran served in the Spanish Army in the Spanish colony of Morocco. He spoke 6 languages and often conversed with other members in Spanish or French. Joaquin was a true gentleman with a quick wit and sense of humor. He loved travelling, hiking and stamp collecting.

Mr. Ferran is survived by his lovely wife, Maren, and his 3 daughters and their families.  
Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family and friends.

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**IRVING GOLDBERG**  
1917 - 2011



Irving Goldberg passed away on Monday, November 22, 2011. "Irv", as he was known to Friends Club members, was a World War II veteran who worked for the Internal Revenue Service and the Baltimore Life Insurance Company. He loved music, particularly opera and songs of the 1940's. Irv also loved doing crossword puzzles and playing bridge. When we told our corny jokes, it was Irv who laughed the loudest. He always had fun at Friends Club.

We extend our sympathy to Irv's loving wife, Annette, and their daughter and son – Mindy and Martin and their families.

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**CHARLES H. PERCY**  
1919-2011



Former Friends Club member, Charles "Chuck" Percy passed away September 17<sup>th</sup> at the Washington Home and Community Hospice in Washington, D.C. Charles Harting Percy was born September 27, 1919, in Pensacola, Florida. He grew up in Chicago where he worked his way through the University of Chicago, graduating with a degree in economics in 1941. He then served in the Navy during World War II. After returning home to Chicago after the war, he went to work at Bell & Howell. There he worked his way up the corporate ladder, becoming the youngest chief executive of a major American corporation at the age of 29. In 1964 he made a bid for public office running for Illinois governor. He lost his bid, but reentered the political arena in 1966 when he ran for senator. He was elected to the U.S. Senate defeating his college economics professor, Paul Douglas. He served in the U.S. Senate for three terms when he was defeated for reelection in 1984.

Chuck enjoyed the camaraderie of Friends Club. He had many things to add to our current events and history discussions! He especially liked the days when piano players came to perform.

Please join us in extending our sympathy to Senator Percy's wife, Loraine, and four children – Sharon, Roger, Gail and Mark and their families. He is also survived by his nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

# In Memoriam



**WOODROW W. "WOODY" RANKIN**  
1918-2011



Longtime Friends Club volunteer, Woody Rankin passed away on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Woody had just celebrated his 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday with family and friends on October 15, 2011.

Woody was born in Rochester, New York, the second of four sons of Irish-born parents. He graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.S. degree in transportation engineering in 1941. He then went to work for the Army Corps of Engineers, building airfields in Michigan. He served with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force as a photo intelligence officer attached to an RAF squadron near London, England, analyzing post-bombing conditions of roads, bridges and railroads from before D-Day until the end of the war. After the war he completed a course of graduate study in Traffic Engineering at the Yale Bureau of Highway Traffic. He worked as a city traffic engineer for the next dozen years, and then in 1963 he came to Washington, D.C. to work with the Automotive Safety Foundation. Woody was an active member of the Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church for many years and an accomplished Scottish Country dancer.

Woody was a treasured volunteer with Friends Club for over 15 years. He had a wry sense of humor and a treasure trove of great stories that he shared with our group! He was a gentleman, a dapper dresser, and a man of great wit. Woody was giving and warm and always ready to lend a helping hand.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Woody's wife, Judy, their family and friends.  
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**KARL J. SEIF**  
1937 - 2011



Friends Club member, Karl J. Seif, passed away on October 1, 2011. Karl received his B.S. and law degree from the University of Maryland. During his career he worked for the Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, Capital Records, Mattel Toys and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Karl later lived in Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, California, and Bethesda, Maryland.

Karl was a walking encyclopedia of baseball statistics. He often impressed the group with his recall of famous games, players stats, etc. Karl also loved history and enjoyed our lecturers, who all remember him fondly for his broad knowledge. We also enjoyed Karl's "movie reviews"--- he loved movies! Despite the pain of his Parkinson's Disease, Karl always greeted us with a smile. He was a warm and intelligent man, who will be greatly missed.

Our sympathy goes out to Karl's devoted wife, Ruth, and their daughters—  
Caroline and Jackie, and their families.

# CAREGIVER'S CORNER

## Caregiver's Support Group

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Meets in Room 305  
9:30-11:00 am

### DECEMBER 2011

Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>

### JANUARY 2012

Monday, January 9, 2012  
Wednesday, January 18, 2012

**ALL CAREGIVERS ARE WELCOME,  
SO PLEASE JOIN US!**

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We at Friends Club would like to express our sincere gratitude to the **Bethesda Jewish Congregation** for providing tasty morning snacks for the gentlemen and for keeping our office supplied with copy paper. Thank you so much for helping our mission!

Our special thanks also go out to the **BHPC Food Mission** for preparing special lunches for the men. Your delicious meals are always greeted with enthusiastic appetites!

*Congratulations to Lisa & Greg!*

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS: FRIENDS CLUB WILL BE CLOSED DECEMBER 26-30, AND MON., JAN. 2, 2012; CLUB RESUMES WITH TUESDAY GROUP JAN. 3RD!**

## BIRTHDAYS

### DECEMBER:

10 R. Wadeson  
22 L. Velasco  
31 G. Bechtel  
31 J. Levv



GABRIEL REMINGTON MALVEAUX

10/29/11 | 4:10 AM | 6 LBS 6 OZ | 19.5 IN

LISA AND GREGORY



REMEMBER  
FRIENDS CLUB!



As you get ready to plan your HOLIDAY GIVING, please remember Friends Club. We depend on the generosity of donors to remain operational. We appreciate your support. Please send donations to: Friends Club, 6601 Bradley Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20817..... or you may go to our website at [www.friendsclubbethesda.org](http://www.friendsclubbethesda.org) and donate through PayPal. Thank you!



# A special “thank you” to all of the Friends Club 2011 Entertainers!

## Music

Friends Club thanks you for the beautiful music!

Mark Hanak—Piano, Song & Dance

Karen Devitt—Piano & Song

Pablo Grabiell—Guitar & Song

Jerry Roman—Piano & 'Name That Tune'

Steve Gellman—Guitar & Sing-a-long

Linda Levasseur—Piano & Song

Anthony Hyatt—Violin, Arts for the Aging (AFTA)

Peter Burroughs—Opera, Education & Theater (AFTA)

Ellen Tenenbaum—Classical Piano

Charles Mokotoff—Classical Guitar

Mark Suresh Schlanger—Drumming Circle

Joan Hampton Fraser—Broadway Theater (AFTA)



## Exercise & Strengthening

Thank you for keeping us in shape and making us stronger!

Taj—Tai Ji

Gail Biedscheid—Yoga & Exercise

Sandra Roachford—Creative Movement (AFTA)

Annetta Dexter Sawyer—Healing Movement (AFTA)

Quicksilver—Moving Art



## Story Telling

We thank you for sparking our imagination and creative thought!

Liz Nichols (AFTA)

Candace Wolf (AFTA)

Moira Dougherty

## Art/History/Education

Thank you for enriching our lives!

Joan Hart (Museum One)—Art Appreciation

Cal Chizevewr—Local Civil War History

Pat Fergusson—Historian

Tania Calhoun—Educator

Rosa Weinstein—Anthropologist

Bill Offutt—Historian

