

Upcoming Alzheimer Society of B.C. fundraising event will see Nelson participants walking in honour of Gwen Bywater

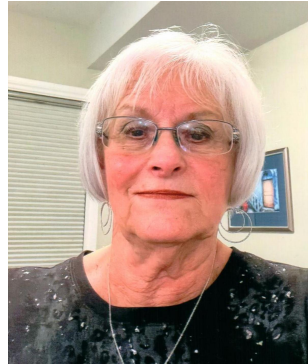


PHOTO: Gwen Bywater

More than two-thirds of British Columbians have personally known someone living with dementia. After a two-year hiatus on in-person events, participants of the annual *IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's* will be walking again in person to raise funds and awareness at the 2022 event which takes place at Nelson Rotary Lakeside Park under the orange bridge at 12 p.m. on Sunday, May 29. The event is the largest fundraiser for the Alzheimer Society of B.C., enabling the charity to continue to provide crucial programs and services to British Columbians affected by dementia, while it also supports valuable dementia research.

There are typically over 20 events held in communities across the province. Each of these events is dedicated to an honouree – an individual or group affected by dementia, or who has valuably contributed to the lives of people living with the disease. This year the Nelson *Walk* honours Gwen Bywater.

When Gwen's husband Frank first began forgetting the answers to Trivial Pursuit, his family thought he was joking. They became concerned when they realized how serious his memory loss had become. It was difficult to get a diagnosis because, to others, he didn't seem different and Frank himself had difficulty discussing the changes he experienced.

Accessing caregiver support became a crucial part of Gwen's journey, even before Frank was diagnosed with vascular dementia. When they lived in Saskatchewan, Gwen found

comfort in hearing others share their experience with dementia at education sessions organized by the local Alzheimer Society.

After they moved to Nelson, Gwen began attending a support group through the Alzheimer Society of B.C. She says, "I always went home feeling somewhat relieved, and there was always someone ready to listen to you."

Gwen is still trying to live more in the moment. "Life is short," she says. "You really have to appreciate the people in your life." She advises others just starting on the dementia journey to not be so hard on themselves. "Looking out for yourself will help you to look out for others."

To support our community members like Gwen Bywater who are affected by dementia, visit alzbc.org/walk to register and fundraise.