

# National Initiative Urges 10 Million At-Risk Boomers to 'Face Alzheimer's'

Sunday, December 05, 2010 - 08:30pm

Virtual Community Allows Those Affected to Share Stories and Raise Awareness

"As the first wave of baby boomers begins to turn 65 next year, the Alzheimer public health epidemic is no longer emerging, it is here. The nation is facing a crisis with an estimated one in eight boomers at risk for Alzheimer's. The time to act is now."

CHICAGO and NEW YORK--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--With as many as 10 million U.S. baby boomers at risk for developing Alzheimer's,(1) the Alzheimer's Association and Pfizer (NYSE: PFE) are collaborating to help raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease by emphasizing to all Americans, "It's Time to Face Alzheimer's." The effort encourages people to share photos and stories related to their personal experience with the disease in an effort to show the real and varied "faces" of Alzheimer's. The initiative will culminate with a featured float, called "The Boomer Express," in the 122nd Tournament of Roses® Parade on New Year's Day, providing a national platform to encourage Americans to get on board in the fight against this disease.

"Alzheimer's represents a national crisis," said Harry Johns, Alzheimer's Association President and CEO. "As the first wave of baby boomers begins to turn 65 next year, the Alzheimer public health epidemic is no longer emerging, it is here. The nation is facing a crisis with an estimated one in eight boomers at risk for Alzheimer's. The time to act is now."

Alzheimer's disease not only touches individuals, it encompasses entire families. Through this initiative, all Americans are invited to share photos and experiences via the website, [www.TimetoFaceAlz.org](http://www.TimetoFaceAlz.org) and to voice their support for the need to address this devastating disease. This website will showcase the submitted photos and stories through an interactive Faces of Alzheimer's mosaic. To learn more about Alzheimer's disease and how you can take action, visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

Today, an estimated 5.3 million Americans are living with the disease.(1) By 2030, the number of people (aged 65 and older) with Alzheimer's is estimated to reach 7.7 million,(2) creating a massive economic burden for families and the healthcare system. It is already the sixth leading cause of death in the U.S.(3)

"We are pleased to partner with the Alzheimer's Association to increase awareness of the national health crisis posed by Alzheimer's disease," said Steve Romano, MD., vice president, Medical Affairs Head, Primary Care Business Unit, Pfizer. "Much scientific progress has been made in recent years to help us better understand Alzheimer's disease. Through collaborations like this one, and those with physicians and researchers, we hope to harness that progress and hope that innovative treatments can be delivered to patients and their families as soon as possible. The path forward is challenging but we are firmly committed."

The initiative will culminate with a float that will follow the 5.5 mile route at the Rose Parade, themed *Building Dreams, Friendships & Memories*, on New Year's Day in Pasadena, Calif. The float is a 55-foot long train that will ring its bell every 70 seconds to represent how frequently someone in America develops Alzheimer's disease.(1) Locomotive No. 1946 - the year in which the first baby boomers were born - will carry members of the Alzheimer's community to raise awareness of the disease's growing impact.

The "It's Time to Face Alzheimer's" effort has already been introduced at several local events throughout the country, including the Women's Conference in Long Beach, Calif., and Alzheimer's Association Memory Walks in Los Angeles and Philadelphia. During these local events, hundreds of people shared their story and had their photos taken for inclusion in the Faces of Alzheimer's mosaic on the initiative's website.

For more information about *It's Time to Face Alzheimer's*, please visit [www.TimeToFaceAlz.org](http://www.TimeToFaceAlz.org).

### **About Alzheimer's Disease**

Alzheimer's disease is an age-related, non-reversible brain disorder that develops over a period of years. Initially, people experience memory loss and confusion, which may be mistaken for the kinds of memory changes that are sometimes associated with normal aging. However, the symptoms of Alzheimer's gradually lead to behavior and personality changes, a decline in cognitive abilities such as decision-making and language skills, and problems recognizing family and friends. Alzheimer's ultimately leads to a severe loss of mental function. These losses are related to the worsening breakdown of the connections between certain neurons in the brain and their eventual death. The disease is one of a group of disorders called dementias that are characterized by cognitive and behavioral problems. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia among people age 65 and older.(4)

### **About the Alzheimer's Association**

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's. For more information, visit [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org).

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### **References**

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