

Governor proclaims Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

RALEIGH—Governor James G. Martin has proclaimed November as Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month in North Carolina. In his proclamation the Governor stated that "Alzheimer's Disease is a serious brain disorder that cause a progressive loss of memory, a deterioration in thought and language, general debilitation, and death. It has been described as life running backwards. There is no known cause or cure for Alzheimer's Disease at this time."

Human Resources Secretary Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., joined with the Governor in urging all citizens to learn more about Alzheimer's Disease and its impact on victims and families.

"Approximately 40,000 North Carolinians are afflicted with Alzheimer's or a related disorder," Martin said. "Caring for an Alzheimer's victim can be extremely difficult because of the patient's mood and personality changes, and supervision is a 24-hour a day job. Fortunately there is help available for victims of Alzheimer's and their families."

Kirk added that the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association, Inc. (ADRDA) is a national network of families, scientists, and health care professionals. Six-thou-

sands North Carolinians now participate in ADRDA, with over 50 support groups in the state. In addition, the North Carolina Department of Human Resources' Division of Aging sponsors a statewide central information facility to support this network.

"Members of the ADRDA family support network have the primary responsibility for the day-to-day care and well being of Alzheimer's victims, Kirk said. "Many nursing homes will not accept Alzheimer's Disease patients because of their behavior problems and often their entire care is left to family members."

Elaine Stoops, Assistant Secretary of Aging, added that research shows that many family care providers may become secondary victims of Alzheimer's because they may develop physical and mental health problems and often their entire care is left to family members.

Mrs. Stoops noted that aging specialists are especially concerned about citizens over the age of 80 are victims, and the over 80 age group is the fastest growing segment of the population.

"Alzheimer's Disease results in untold human suffering in our families as well as staggering financial costs," Stoops said.

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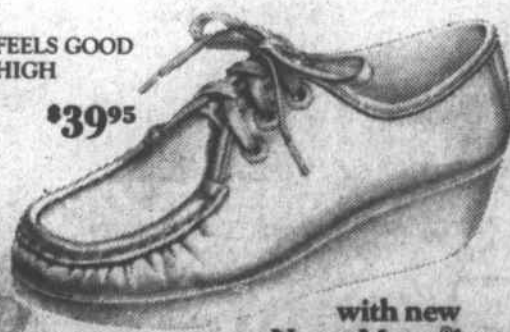
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