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## Seashore Gardens families make their mark on Alzheimer's disease

NICOLE LEONARD Staff Writer Apr 25, 2018



Nan Fallon, third person from the right in the second row, and her family participate in a previous Seashore Gardens 5 & Walk for Alzheimer's in Atlantic City on the Boardwalk.

Seashore Gardens / Provided





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One-third of the nation's senior population dies with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia.

While medicine has not evolved yet to slow or stop the disease, finding the right long-term home to handle dementia in loved ones can make a big difference, patient advocates say.

For Nan Fallon's family, bringing their mother to Seashore Gardens Living Center's specialized dementia care unit in Galloway Township was one of the best decisions they made, they said.

"She loved it and thrived there. They really have something to do every day," said Coleen Abel, Nan's daughter.

Abel, her sister Mary McManimon, both of Barnegat, and their family are a team coming out Sunday for Seashore's eighth annual 5K Run and Health Walk on the Atlantic City Boardwalk. The event raises money for Alzheimer's outreach services at the center.

This year, the Fallon family will walk in memory of their matriarch, who died April 16. The family will bury her Friday and walk in her honor the same weekend.



"It's important because even though it's a sad time, it gives you strength and makes you realize just how important it is to one day find a cure and have hope,"

McManimon said. "We're certainly not the only family affected, especially when you see so many people up there on the Boardwalk."



Nan Fallon, center, and her family participate in a previous Seashore Gardens 5k Run & Walk for Alzheimer's in Atlantic City on the Boardwalk.

Seashore Gardens / Provided

210,000 by 2025.

Seashore Gardens staff said they have professionals specifically trained and certified in dementia care. The unit also engages residents in activities so they don't become isolated or withdrawn, which can be common for seniors with the disease.

Jeannine Bonanni's mother, Mary Malloy, wouldn't go anywhere or do much of anything as her dementia progressed, but moving to Seashore Gardens and being around others with dementia brought her a better quality of life, her daughter said.

"To see her interacting in activities with other people was wonderful," said Bonanni, of Brigantine. "I'd go in and see her with other residents and they'd be holding hands. I could see the comfort they were able to give to each other."

After living at Seashore for five years, Malloy died at 97 a little more than a year ago. The Malloy family still does the run/walk and fundraising for a place that became their mother's home.

Missy Rundio, a certified dementia practitioner at Seashore Gardens, said staff quickly become close with both dementia residents and their families. She is bringing a team of about 12 people made up of family, including her mom, who is battling cancer, friends and co-workers to the event.

The Alzheimer's Association projects the number of people in New Jersey with Alzheimer's or another dementia to grow from about 180,000 people this year to



Mary Malloy's family, pictured at last year's event, always participates in Seashore Gardens Living Center annual 5k Run & Health Walk to raise money for the center's Alzheimer's and dementia care unit, where Malloy lived until she died on Dec. 22, 2016.

Jeannine Bonanni / Provided

"Just because someone has Alzheimer's, it doesn't mean they're no longer a person," she said.

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As a caregiver during the holidays, 'It's OK to let go of some traditions'





Alzheimer's chapter to hold Sept. seminar in Galloway

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## SEASHORE 5k RUN & WALK

When: 7:15 a.m. begins registration, race and walk begin 9 a.m., Sunday

Where: Atlantic City Boardwalk at Tropicana Casino & Resort, 2831 Boardwalk, Atlantic City

How much: \$30 pre-registration online by 5 p.m. Friday; \$40 on race day

More info: [seashoregardens.org/5k](http://seashoregardens.org/5k) or 609-404-4848

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