

## Omega Network Bulletin

September 2011 [www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net)



### Help us to reach more hidden carers

One of the biggest challenges facing any organisation working with unpaid family care-givers is to identify them in the first place. Carers lead busy lives and do not always give themselves a neat label.

A group that is particularly difficult to reach are carers in employment. We need your help to reach more care-givers who are working and find it difficult to attend meetings.

Whilst many carers have the right to request flexible working arrangements (see [Directgov.uk](http://Directgov.uk)) we know that some employees with caring responsibilities are sometimes reluctant to approach their employer.

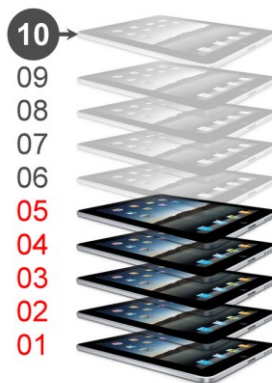
We have been able to intervene successfully in the past and would be willing to support carers who feel isolated. We are also looking into different ways of communicating with carers, to improve the flow of information to those in need.

**Thomas Memery LL B**  
Development Director

### Omega MND iPad Appeal: update

Thanks to all of you who have already donated money to the appeal, or agreed to help in other ways. With your support, we have been able to buy 5 Apple iPad computers, to be used by people living with Motor Neurone Disease.

We supply each iPad with Proloquo2Go: software designed to synthesise speech for people with difficulty talking.



We're now beyond half way to our goal of supplying 10 iPads to MND sufferers; you can help us reach our target by visiting [www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net), and clicking 'Donate'; you can also monitor our progress on the site.

**Special thanks to Pam Trewin for organising a garden party fundraiser for the appeal.**

### Farewell James Shaw

Omega supporter and MND sufferer James Shaw died on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2011. We remain grateful to James and Alison, William, Rosie and Fiona for their contribution towards our important work.

Together, they helped members of the Omega Team gain a better understanding of the devastating impact of Motor Neurone Disease; but more importantly they demonstrated how members of a strong, loving and very capable family can support each other at such a difficult time and yet still manage to reach out to help others.



### Special events

Contact us for bookings and information. Unless stated otherwise, events are free to unpaid carers, former carers and the bereaved. **Places are often limited so booking is essential.**

#### September 2nd 2011

##### **Stourbridge - Special Bereavement Support Session**

- 2pm - 5pm
- St James' Church Hall, Belfry Drive, Wollaston, DY8 3SE
- Featuring talk by West Midlands Fire Service

#### September 9th 2011

##### **Wolverhampton - Caring Day to Day Support Session**

*UPDATE: This session has been cancelled due to low numbers. We hope to reschedule soon. Contact us for further information.*

#### 19th September 2011

##### **Solihull – Support Session for Carers of People Living with Dementia**

- 10am – 1pm
- Church Rooms, Olton United Reformed Church (Olton, on the corner of Kineton Green Road and Brookvale Road, B92 7EB)
- Facilitated group session based on the Caring with Confidence programme

#### September 29th 2011 1.45pm - 2.15pm

##### **Wolverhampton - AGM of the combined Learning Disability Carer Forum and the Physical & Sensory Disability Carer Forum (Open to all care givers)**

- Action 4 Independence Centre (A4I), Albert Road, WV6 0AF
- Contact us if you would like more information about serving the forums

## Welcome Nicky Peck

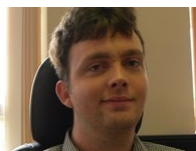
Omega volunteer Nicky Peck has joined the staff in the new role of Volunteer Coordinator.

Nicky has experience as a senior manager and has spent several years working with young people.

She will be overseeing a growing team of volunteers, including some new faces; they have given up their time to produce some terrific work for us:



Susana Rezolaa  
Bajineta



Adam Piggott



Pearl Allis-Smith



Jason Woodward

Heather Waters

Arwyn Thandrayen

Jon Evans

We thank you all and hope you will continue to work with Omega.

## Tips for Carers

Wolverhampton carer-giver Shirley Crook delivered a lively presentation of helpful tips for carers, at an Omega Outreach & Information Surgery held at the city's Action 4 Independence Centre on July 27<sup>th</sup>.

You can download the presentation from our website, [www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net); click 'Carers' → 'Top Tips for Carers'.

We will feature regular tips we receive from carers and supporters; please continue to send your tips to [carers@omega.uk.net](mailto:carers@omega.uk.net). These will be posted on our website and we will, from time to time, produce fact sheets for those who do not have regular access to a computer.

## Geoff Forgie 1940 - 2011

Omega mourns the loss of an inspirational activist we have worked with for over 2 years. Geoff lived with Multiple Sclerosis for more than 20 years; he is pictured here with wife Sue, prior to contracting the disease.



In 2008, Geoff founded Shropshire Disability Network ([www.shropshire-disability.net](http://www.shropshire-disability.net)), which he also chaired, working with Omega Development Director Tom Memery, who serves SDN as Treasurer.

Omega Development Coordinator Gavin Martin shares his experience of working with Geoff, below.

## Gavin Martin remembers Geoff Forgie

I worked with Geoff on the Shropshire Disability Network website for 6 months, and helped out with technical stuff at general meetings. I found Geoff to be extraordinary. He'd lived with MS for more than 20 years. He was optimistic, forward-thinking, ambitious and highly motivated. His ambitions were totally unselfish - working towards fair and equal treatment for people with disabilities in Shropshire, and encouraging collaboration, with a deep sense of community.

The more I worked with Geoff, the less extraordinary he seemed – only because I began to take his many strengths for granted. When he died, it came as a shock. I *knew* that Geoff had an incurable illness and consequentially suffered multiple health problems, but he had made me overlook all that. I somehow assumed Geoff would be with us for a long, long time – that he was a virtually indestructible, hardened survivor.

His death made me realise just how fragile he was, and how his achievements seemed even more remarkable. When working with him on the SDN website, Geoff had the highest standards and a clear vision. He cared about every detail, and was always willing to consider my ideas, patiently listening to the baffling explanations I'm sometimes prone to. He was always grateful.

Geoff was intelligent, charming, focussed and always looking to the future. He will leave a lasting impression on me.

So long, Geoff; I will miss you.

## Editor

Omega Network Bulletin is edited by Gavin Martin. Please send us your Top Tips for Carers for a new regular feature.



Let us know if you would like to be added to our database, to receive regular updates from Omega. It would help us if you state whether you represent an organisation, and provide as much information as you feel comfortable with.

## Get in touch

Post: Freepost RSGB-CYBY-HSCX,  
Omega, London House, Town Walls,  
Shrewsbury, SY1 1TX  
Phone: 0845 259 3163 (local rate)  
Email: [carers@omega.uk.net](mailto:carers@omega.uk.net)  
Web: [www.omega.uk.net](http://www.omega.uk.net)

## Omega

The National Association for End of Life Care © 2011

Registered Charity No. 1120322  
Registered Company No. 6196052