

# ★ Big Mac's in a pickle at 50

The Associated Press

McDonald's is fighting to hold onto customers as the Big Mac turns 50, but it's not messing with the makings of its most famous burger.

The company is celebrating the 1968 national launch of the double-decker sandwich, whose ingredients of "two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions and a sesame seed bun" were seared into American memories by a TV jingle. But the milestone comes as the company reduces its number of U.S. stores. McDonald's said Thursday customers are visiting less often.

The "Golden Arches" still have a massive global reach, and the McDonald's brand of cheeseburgers, chicken nuggets and French fries remains recognizable around the world. But on its critical home turf, the company is toiling to stay relevant. Kale now appears in salads, fresh has replaced frozen beef patties in Quarter Pounders, and some stores now offer ordering kiosks, food delivery and barista-style cafes.

The Big Mac remains unchanged, showing just how much McDonald's and the rest of fast food have evolved.

The idea for the Big Mac came from a franchisee.

In 1967, Michael James Delligatti lobbied the company to let him test the burger at his Pittsburgh restaurants. Later, he acknowledged the Big Mac's similarity to a popular sandwich sold by the Big Boy chain.

McDonald's agreed to let Del-



AP / KEITH SRAKOCIC

**National debut was in 1968.**

ligatti sell the sandwich at a single location, on the condition that he use the company's standard bun. It didn't work. Delligatti tried a bigger sesame seed bun, and the burger soon lifted sales by more than 12 percent.

After similar results at more stores, the Big Mac was added to the national menu in 1968.

Messing with a signature menu item can be taboo, but keeping the Big Mac unchanged comes with its own risks. Newer chains such as Shake Shack and Five Guys offer burgers that can make the Big Mac seem outdated.

A McDonald's franchisee fretted in 2016 that only one out of five millennials has tried the Big Mac. The Big Mac had "gotten less relevant," the franchisee wrote in a memo.

McDonald's then ran promotions designed to introduce the Big Mac to more people. Those kind of campaigns should help keep the Big Mac relevant for years to come, says Mike Delligatti, the son of the Big Mac inventor, who died last year.

"What iconic sandwich do you know that can beat the Big Mac as far as longevity?" said Delligatti, himself a McDonald's franchisee.

## 4 DEAD IN HOME; GUN FOUND

Four people, including a child, were found dead in a Queens apartment building Monday night after officers responded to a call of a man bleeding, NYPD said.

A 5-year-old boy, two women and a man appeared to have been shot at a home on 30th Drive in Astoria, police said.

Officials said a gun was found at the scene, and investigators were trying to deter-

mine if the case is a murder-suicide.

Officers got a call at 8:53 p.m. about a man bleeding and found him in the backyard of the residence, police said. It was not immediately clear if he was among the fatalities.

Investigators were at the home trying to piece together evidence.

— ANTHONY M. DESTEFANO AND ELLEN YAN



HOWARD SCHNAPP

Karen and Brandon Henley with Rep. Kathleen Rice as she discusses her bill. ■ Video: [newsday.com/li](https://www.newsday.com/li)

# Rice bill targets early Alzheimer's

BY DENISE M. BONILLA  
[denise.bonilla@newsday.com](mailto:denise.bonilla@newsday.com)

Rep. Kathleen Rice is introducing a bill that would expand the Older Americans Act to include younger-onset Alzheimer's patients.

Rice (D-Garden City) made the announcement Monday at the Long Island Alzheimer's Foundation in Westbury. The Younger-Onset Alzheimer's Disease Parity Act would amend the Older Americans Act to include individuals who are under age 60 and living with younger or early-onset Alzheimer's or other degenerative diseases. The proposed bill, which Rice said she will submit Tuesday to the House clerk's office, adds coverage to include anyone "with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder with neurological and organic brain dysfunction who has not attained 60 years of age."

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that about 5 percent of the more than five million Americans with Alzheimer's were diagnosed in their 30s, 40s or 50s.

The Older Americans Act was passed in 1965 and provides financial support to a range of home- and community-based

programs for people age 60 and older, including meals on wheels, transportation services and adult day care. Funding for the act for the 2018 fiscal year was just under \$2.04 billion. Expanding the act would increase that amount, Rice said, but in the end, it costs government less to provide services to keep Alzheimer's patients in their homes than in nursing homes.

Tori Cohen, executive director of the Long Island Alzheimer's Foundation, said her organization receives about \$125,000 a year via the act, providing day care for those with the disease and respite for caregivers, among other services. If Rice's bill passes, it would allow the foundation to target specific programming for younger patients, she said.

"This could open more doors to get more help to those who need it," Cohen said.

Rice, whose mother died in 2006 at 78 after a long battle with Alzheimer's, said she was moved to create the bill after hearing the story of Westbury's Karen Henley, whose husband, Mike, was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at 36. The Henley family was featured in News-

day's 2009 series, "Alzheimer's: The Love and the Heartbreak." Henley, who was working full time and raising two young children, struggled to find programs and care for her husband because of his age. "I thought if this disease doesn't discriminate, then why do government agencies?" she said. Mike Henley died in 2012 at age 47.

Brandon Henley, who was 7 when his father was diagnosed, said there needs to be more done for young Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers, and Rice's bill is a "massive leap in the right direction."

Karen Henley, who has been an active voice in raising awareness of early-onset Alzheimer's, including speaking with members of Congress, said that when Rice called to tell her of the bill, she burst into tears.

"This is huge for so many people," she said. "For me, it's like Mike's gift to all the other families out there, that they won't have to struggle like we did."

**MORE INSIDE**

**Alzheimer's drug study**  
A21

# OPTIMISM WITH CAVEATS ON DRUG TO SLOW EFFECTS OF ALZHEIMER'S

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Hopes are rising again for a drug to alter the course of Alzheimer's disease after decades of failures. An experimental therapy slowed mental decline by 30 percent in patients who got the highest dose in a mid-stage study, and it removed much of the sticky plaque gumming up their brains, the drug's makers said Wednesday.

The results have been highly anticipated and have sent the stock of the two companies involved soaring in recent weeks.

The drug from Eisai and Biogen did not meet its main goal in a study of 856 participants, so overall, it was considered a flop. But company officials said that 161 people who got the highest dose every two weeks for 18 months did significantly better

than 245 people who were given a dummy treatment.

There are lots of caveats about the work, which was led by company scientists rather than academic researchers and not reviewed by outside experts. The study also was too small to be definitive and the results need to be confirmed with more work, dementia experts said.

"We're cautiously optimistic," said Maria Carrillo, chief science officer of the Alzheimer's Association, whose international conference in Chicago featured the results. "A 30 percent slowing of decline is something I would want my family member to have," and the drug's ability to clear the brain plaques "looks pretty amazing."

About 50 million people worldwide have dementia, and Alzheimer's is the most common type. There is no cure — current

medicines just ease symptoms. Some previous efforts to develop a drug to slow the disease may have been tried too late, after much damage had already occurred. The new drug aimed sooner, in people with early Alzheimer's, and the drug works at an earlier step in formation of the sticky brain plaques.

Study participants were given one of five doses of BAN2401 or a dummy treatment via IV. After one year, the companies said the drug didn't meet statistical goals. But after 18 months, they saw a benefit in the highest dose group. What makes it tricky, though, is that they used a new way to measure mental decline, a scale that combines parts of three other widely used tests. This is the first study to use that measure, and it's unclear how much of a difference a 30 percent slowing of decline makes.



OLIVER BERG / DPA VIA AP

## Beauty buried deep

Archaeologists say a third century sarcophagus, found in what is now western Germany, contained the remains of a young Roman woman who was buried along with perfume bottles, an unusual wealth of beauty products and jewelry.

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\*Based on an analysis of Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System (SPARCS) data on thoracic surgery discharges in 2016 and first half of 2017



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