



Connections

A Resource for Family Caregivers

Summer 2012 Volume 1, Issue 3

Steering Committee

- Aging and Disability Resource Center of Sheboygan County
www.co.sheboygan.wi.us
- Alzheimer's Association of SE WI
www.alz.org/sewi
- Dementia Care Network
(920) 838-1311
- HearthStone of Wisconsin
www.hearthstonewi.org
- Mental Health America in Sheboygan County
www.mhasheboygan.org
- United Way of Sheboygan County
<http://www.uwofsc.org>
- UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living
<http://sheboygan.uwex.edu/>
- Family Caregiver Representative - Jeanette Gast

Inside this issue:

Powerful Tools for Caregivers	2
Member Message	3
HearthStone of Wisconsin	3
Care for Caregivers	4
Dementia Forum	4
Caregivers Connect	5
Caregiving Counts	5
Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness	6
Making Every Moment Count	6
Traveling Tips for Caregivers	7
Calendar of Events	7

Welcome to the third issue of the Connections newsletter produced by the Family Caregiver Coalition in Sheboygan County. The goal of this newsletter is to promote the coalition, educate caregivers, share information about future events and to provide a forum for caregivers and organizational members. Additional names can be added to the e-mail distribution list by calling the Aging & Disability Resource Center at (920) 467-4100.

The deadline to submit articles for the fall 2012 edition of the newsletter is Monday, October 1, 2012. Please submit articles to Jane Jensen at jane.jensen@ces.uwex.edu. Please contact me at (920) 459-5900 with questions.

The summer issue is full of wonderful tips to keep you and your care recipient safe in the hot weather and to help you plan for a successful traveling experience. There are a wide variety of upcoming educational opportunities that you're encouraged to take advantage of and share with other family caregivers.

Remember how important it is to take care of YOU!

Sincerely,

Jane Jensen, Co-editor

UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living

Communicating with Healthcare Providers: Be Realistic, Be Persistent, Be Prepared

Family caregivers play a significant role in ensuring the best possible health care for their loved one. This requires researching information about a particular condition or illness. It also involves identifying the best medical providers, and coordinating appointments for therapy, procedures, and routine appointments with multiple specialists. It requires good communication skills with all members of the health care team. Excerpts from a publication of the National Alliance for Caregiving, suggest that family caregivers keep these three B's in mind when communicating with health care providers:

Be Realistic - You want to do whatever is best for your loved one, but you also must consider your other obligations and your capabilities. You may be able to offer some care, but not all of the care. You may

have health problems or limitations of your own.

Be Persistent - Don't be afraid to say that you are not able to do certain tasks. Be sure to share this information firmly and consistently with health care providers. Don't settle for a plan that you have doubts about.

Be Prepared - Ask questions. Get information. Review the options. Then make a decision. Remember that quality health care is a team effort and good communication is key.

For more information about communicating with health care providers attend Caregivers Connect.

Kathleen Manny, Co-editor
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Sheboygan County

Can you relate to any or even all of the following?

Tired, Overwhelmed, Feeling Isolated and Alone, Depressed, even Angry....

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

A dynamic six-week educational program for Family Caregivers

Countryside Manor-West

4228 Kadlec Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53081

Thursdays from 5:00-7:30 PM on

September 13, 20, October 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2012

**Hot meal provided at each workshop
Compliments of Countryside Manor**

This training provides powerful, necessary education and support to those attending by caring, trained, professionals. Jane Jensen, UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living and Kathleen Manny, Aging & Disability Resource Center in Sheboygan County will co-facilitate this workshop. Education topics and experiential learning include: Self Care, Personal Stress Reduction, Healthy Communication Skills, Emotional Wellness, Problem Solving, Relaxation Techniques, Managing Difficult Caregiver Decisions, and much more.

Call today to secure your place in the Powerful Tools for Caregivers Training as **registration is limited!**

To register: Call (920) 467-4100 and mail check for \$25.00 payable to: Sheboygan County Aging & Disability Resource Center, 650 Forest Ave, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085. Check covers cost of materials. Call to request Respite for care recipient during the workshop. Include your name and address.



Powerful Tools for Caregivers is sponsored by
Sheboygan County Aging & Disability Resource Center,
UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living and Countryside Manor.



Comments from Family Caregivers

The most important thing you gained from Powerful Tools for Caregivers is...

- ◆ *"To take time for me as well as my husband."*
- ◆ *"To take care of my physical needs."*
- ◆ *"Knowing I'm not alone."*
- ◆ *"I still have to be myself."*
- ◆ *"A different attitude toward my mother and life."*
- ◆ *"Learning to ask for help."*
- ◆ *"How to handle different obstacles."*
- ◆ *"Feeling more confident."*
- ◆ *"Not feel bad about my caregiving."*

Register today...call Aging & Disability Resource Center of Sheboygan County at (920) 467-4100.

Save the Date:

HearthStone's second annual fundraising dinner "Laugh to Live, Live to Laugh" will be held on October 12, 2012. The evening will be a dinner followed by entertainment provided by the group "Comedy Sportz". Return to our website in the coming months for additional details including how you, your family, and/or organization can reserve your seats for this night of fun.

Member Messages

My Life as a Caregiver

In 2006, my husband was beginning to show signs of memory loss and my worst fears were soon confirmed by his doctors. He had early stage Alzheimer's. He immediately began taking medication to slow the progress of the disease. We also began to learn as much as possible about this disease, so we would have the tools to use to manage the changes that we knew were ahead of us. We also talked to our children, so they would understand and would be on board if we needed help. They were very supportive; it is important to let your family know what is happening so they can help wherever possible. Our friends have always been there when we needed them, too.

By 2009, it was obvious that many of the things that Rollie had enjoyed doing around the house were becoming more and more difficult for him and we began to look for a smaller place, preferably a condo (no outside maintenance, except for any plantings we might put in). We were delighted to find one in Sheboygan Falls, where we were living at the time. We moved late in 2009, with much help from family. Around that time, we became aware of a wonderful Alzheimer's adult day care program that was available less than a mile from our condo - at St. Paul Lutheran Church here in Sheboygan Falls - called The Gathering Place. Cindy Musial and Carol Bimmel and many great volunteers explained the program and let us visit a session to see what they do. It is amazing! Sessions are held three days a week (Monday, Tuesday and Thursday) and there is an amazing variety of activities, including chair

exercises, craftwork, trips to parks, museums, the airport, musical programs, with lunch prepared by local restaurants or the resident cook. Rollie has a great time with the other participants and volunteers and gets to spend time with different folks, while I get to participate in activities with my friends - or just take care of things at home. I think that he has benefited immensely by going to The Gathering Place. And so have I!

I am also going to special caregiver programs offered by the Alzheimer's Association and other agencies and learn something new each time I go. Rollie and I have been married for fifty-four wonderful years and I think that his participation in The Gathering Place has made our time together richer; I can see how stimulated he is by the activities/trips he experiences with other folks who are in the same boat. I think that he is doing things that he would perhaps not always do with me and that is good.

There are so many wonderful resources offered by members of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County, not only for Alzheimer's patients and their families, but for so many unsung caregivers who can benefit from assistance from the many agencies that exist here. I am learning even more about these agencies by becoming a member of the Family Caregivers Coalition. It is a great way to find out just how much Sheboygan County has to offer.

Mimi Schultz, Family Caregiver Member

HearthStone of Wisconsin

HearthStone and the Family Caregiver Coalition share common goals and as such have been on the Family Caregiver Coalition steering committee since the start of the coalition. Ron Preder is the HearthStone Representative of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County.

Who or what is "HearthStone Of Wisconsin?"

HearthStone is a self-help and advocacy organization dedicated to serving individuals and families of individuals with developmental disabilities that started in October of 1995 with a small group of family members and friends in the Sheboygan County area with a concern about how society was caring for disabled individuals in our community. Our mission is to make our communities a welcoming place for people of disabilities and to support and encourage positive life experiences. Our members are people with developmental disabilities, their families and friends and people within our communities who care about them. We offer assistance, guidance, advocacy and support in transition to and in perpetuation of community-based living. We believe in working together to help dreams come true; Dreams of Independence, Dreams of Respect, Dreams of Achievement, Dreams of Laughter.

In the past, HearthStone has helped provide and obtain funding which enabled individuals and families with disabled members to have their own home. We have helped families obtain funding for specialized equipment and/or respite care. We continue to hold quarterly educational meetings and seminars for the disabled, elderly and family members in the community. In addition we regularly provide social opportunities for our young people including an annual summer outing, bowling party, Christmas Party, and spring dance. We continue to be a strong advocacy voice for the disabled and elderly both in our community and throughout the state attempting to influence changes in our healthcare system that improve services and promote greater independence for those individuals with disabilities.

To learn more about HearthStone, including upcoming events and how to join our free organization visit us at our website at <http://www.hearthstonewi.org>.

Care for Caregivers

- an initiative of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County
Spiritual Renewal for the Family Caregiver

The first annual Spiritual Renewal for the Family Caregiver retreat held at Sharon S. Richardson Community Hospice in Sheboygan Falls on Friday June 22 was an enormous success! 19 family caregivers attended this event sponsored by the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County. Participants were led in an old fashioned sing-a-long in the lovely library with music on the baby grand piano played by Steve Hamer, President - Shorewest United Realtors. Tracy Cinealis from Libby's House; and Marie Larson, local harpist guided the group through meditation to harp music. Complex relationships and emotions related to caregiving was the topic of discussion presented by Barbara Stohl, LCSW, LMFT of Phoenix Behavioral Health. The staff of Sharon S. Richardson provided a delicious light breakfast and lunch which was enjoyed indoors or out on a beautiful day. Most participants delighted in a garden walk out the back entrance, across the terrace and down to the pond during the lunch break. Nancy Simenz, MTS, Chaplain, - Sharon S. Richardson Community Hospice shared simple

journaling techniques and Shelley Stoffel, Licensed Massage Therapist, Wholistic Health Center demonstrated the benefits of massage. A touching closing honoring ourselves and our loved ones was directed by Nancy Simenz. Feedback from the participants was phenomenal. Plans are already underway for the 2013 retreat-which will hopefully be even bigger and better. Join us next year for this annual retreat for family caregivers!



Dementia Forum

Wednesday, September 19, 2012
 Mead Public Library - Rocca Room
 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Get your questions answered about local services for persons with dementia, and about caring for someone with dementia. This forum hosted by the Alzheimer's Association and the Dementia Care Network of Sheboygan County, will feature a panel discussion followed by a time for questions and answers. Panel members include:

- ◆ Local Family Caregiver
- ◆ Dr. Cameron Goetz, Manitowoc Memory Assessment Clinic
- ◆ Margaret Groff, SPARK! Program, John Michael Kohler Art Center
- ◆ Ginny Nyhuis, Sheboygan County Community Outreach Coordinator, Alzheimer's Association

Registration information: contact Ginny Nyhuis at gnyhuis@alz.org or call (920) 838-1311.

Family Caregivers Coalition Vision

The vision of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County is to be the well-known and utilized resource to empower the family caregiver.

Caregivers Connect

- an initiative of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County

Meet with other family caregivers in an informal, social environment to learn practical tips on a variety of topics that will assist you, the caregiver, to better meet the physical, emotional, financial and spiritual challenges of caregiving. For more information or to make a reservation, call the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County, c/o Aging & Disability Resource Center at 920 467-4100 or 800-596-1919.

(family caregivers only- no professional caregivers please) Events are held at the Aging & Disability Resource Center, Sheboygan Falls.



Afternoon Events – 1:30-3:00 PM

Thursday, August 16: Communicating with Health Care Providers

Presenter: Marsha Vollbrecht, MS CSW NHA, Senior Services Director, Aurora Health Care

Ask a professional how to advocate for a loved one and make the most of health care appointments.

Thursday, November 8: Are you Killing Yourself to Care for Someone Else?

Presenter: Lynda Markut, Education Coordinator, Alzheimer's Association of SE Wisconsin

What can you do to put "LIFE" back into YOUR life!

Evening Events – 6:00-7:30 PM

Thursday, October 25: Communicating with Health Care Providers

Presenter: Marsha Vollbrecht, MS CSW NHA, Senior Services Director, Aurora Health Care

Ask a professional how to advocate for a loved one and make the most of health care appointments.

Caregiving Counts

- an initiative of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County

Caregiving Counts! Family caregivers provide a valuable service to a spouse, parent, child, sibling, friend or other loved one. The Family Caregivers Coalition promotes appreciation for family caregivers. Organization members of the Coalition have the opportunity to donate a small gift to a family caregiver member to show gratitude for what they do. Family caregiver names are drawn at Caregivers Connect events and delivered personally to the winning family caregiver.



Gifts are needed for the August and October Family Caregivers Connect events. If your organization is interested in this opportunity to support a family caregiver, please contact: Ginny Nyhuis at 838-1311 or Kathleen Manny at 467-4079

Thank you for your commitment to aid in the mission and vision of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County.

Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness

The best defense is prevention. Here are some prevention tips:

- Drink more fluids (nonalcoholic), regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask him how much you should drink while the weather is hot.
- Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar - these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library - even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat. Call your local health department to see if there are any heat-relief shelters in your area.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath, or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- NEVER leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle.
- Although anyone at any time can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others. Check regularly on:
 - People aged 65 or older
 - People who have a mental illness
 - Those who are physically ill, especially with heart disease or high blood pressure
- Visit adults at risk at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.

If you must be out in the heat:

- Limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Cut down on exercise. If you must exercise, drink two of four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat. Warning: If you are on a low-salt diet, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage. Remember the warning in the first "tip," too.
- Try to rest often in shady areas.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels).

This information provided by NCEH's Health Studies Branch (<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/hsb/>).

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People.™



Save the Date for the Sheboygan County Caregiver Conference

MAKING EVERY MOMENT COUNT!

A Day of Education and Support for Family & Professional Caregivers

Keynote address:

Reverend Tom Fleischmann, Chaplaincy Ministry for Health Care Centers

Thursday, November 15, 2012

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Acuity, 2800 S Taylor Drive, Sheboygan

Lunch included

Grant funds for assistance with respite care may be available

More details to come soon! Hope to see you there!

Contact Ginny with questions (920) 838-1311

Traveling Tips for Caregivers

Summer is a great time to get out and do things. Traveling out of town gives you something to look forward to and can be a very rewarding and fun experience. If you are a caregiver for a loved one you may wonder if you should just stay home, but with careful planning you can still get away. You just need to be a little more prepared for the unexpected. Nancy Abrahamson, Caregiver Support Coordinator from the St. Croix County ADRC gives these tips to consider when planning a trip.

- **Gather important documents:** insurance cards, passports, physician's phone numbers, medication list, a recent photo and a summary of medical records. Carry them with you. Do not check them with your luggage in the event it doesn't arrive with you because the information is private.
- **Gather medications** noting if refills will be needed on any of them during the trip. Ask for refills in advance. Never travel with just enough as you may be delayed if flights or other transportation schedules change.
- **Carry a list of emergency contacts.** You may want to purchase a wallet on a string to hold information so your loved one can wear it.
- **Purchase an Alzheimer's Association MedicAlert + Safe Return® bracelet.** This program provides excellent tracking should someone wander away. This will help even with international travel.
- **Ask your Physician to write a letter** for use with hotel or airlines should an emergency cause a sudden change in plans. Consider travel insurance should you need to change tickets or accommodations.
- **Make up several cards with the name, address and phone number of where you are staying each night.** Place one of these in the pocket of your loved one daily.
- **Never leave your loved one alone** in a car, restaurant booth, etc. as wandering may become a problem in a strange location.
- **Carry an "OCCUPIED" sign for the bathroom door** as the process sometimes takes extra time. You may need to bring your care receiver into the bathroom with you even if he or she is of the opposite sex.
- **Stop every two hours when driving** to take a loved one to the bathroom. Carry a change of clothes in your bag or car.
- **When possible, bring someone along to help** manage things when you need to be away from your loved one.
- **When flying, notify the attendants of your loved ones's dementia diagnosis** and plan plenty of time between connecting flights.
- **Plan frequent stops** when driving to stretch legs and reduce anxiety.
- **Try to maintain a schedule** close to what you did at home to minimize disruption for your loved one.
- **Leave an itinerary with family members** and keep a copy with you at all times. Happy trails!

Calendar of Events

Aug 1	Still Alice: Book Discussion (registration required - call Ginny at 920-838-1311 or email gnyhuis@alz.org) 6:30-7:30 p.m. - Mead Public Library, Sheboygan
Aug 16	Communicating with Health Care Providers 1:30-3:00 p.m. - ADRC, Sheboygan Falls
Sept 13 - Oct 25	Powerful Tools for Caregivers (six-week educational program) (Sept. 13, 20, Oct 4, 11, 18, 25) 5:00-7:30 p.m. - Countryside Manor-West, Sheboygan
Sept 19	Dementia Forum (registration information - call Ginny at 920-838-1311 or email gnyhuis@alz.org) 6:00-7:30 p.m. - Mead Public Library - Rocca Room, Sheboygan
Oct 12	Second Annual Laugh to Live! Live to Laugh! (For information & tickets: www.hearthstonewi.org) 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. Comedy Sportz!, Pine Hills Country Club, Sheboygan
Oct 25	Communicating with Health Care Providers 6:00-7:30 p.m. - ADRC, Sheboygan Falls
Nov 8	Are you Killing Yourself to Care for Someone Else? 1:30-3:00 p.m. - ADRC, Sheboygan Falls
Nov 15	Sheboygan County Caregiver Conference - Making Every Moment Count! 9:00-3:30 p.m. - Acuity, Sheboygan



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c/o Aging & Disability Resource Center of
Sheboygan County
650 Forest Avenue
Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

Phone: 920-467-4100
or 800-596-1919
Website: www.co.sheboygan.wi.us

Family Caregiver Coalition Mission

The mission of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County is to identify, recognize, support and enhance the role of those affected by caregiving through community outreach, education, peer support and shared resources in order to help family caregivers thrive.

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