



Volume 6, No. 51 December 17, 2024  
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## Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

### Need to Know

#### GWAAR closed Dec. 24-25 for the holidays

GWAAR offices are closed Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25 for the holidays.

Please note, there will be no newsletter next week. The next newsletter will be published on Tuesday December 30.



#### Save the date: 2025 ACE meetings

The first quarter ACE meeting is coming up soon!

*Wednesday, January 8 | 1:30 p.m.*

#### Mark your calendars for these additional dates in 2025

- Wednesday, April 9
- Tuesday, July 9  
*In-person Stevens Point*
- Wednesday, October 8



#### Reminder: USAging: 2024 Home for the Holidays Campaign

Financial scams and fraud often increase during the holiday season and older adults are a prime target. Find out how older adults can protect themselves with the [2024 Home for the Holidays campaign!](#)

These resources include:

- “Protect Your Wallet”—a downloadable tip sheet in English and Spanish describing common scams and how to avoid them, which can be customized and printed.
- An article template to modify and share in newsletters.
- A press release template.
- Social media posts, including images and campaign hashtags.

**View campaign resources:** [www.usaging.org/h4h2024](http://www.usaging.org/h4h2024)

### PROTECT YOUR WALLET: A Guide to Avoiding Financial Scams

While financial scams and fraud happen throughout the year, the holidays are a predictable time to see an increase. More online shopping and phone or email donation appeals means more opportunities for fraud. It is also an emotional time of year for many people, especially those who may feel lonely or isolated, which scammers can exploit.

The Eldercare Locator can help older adults, caregivers and families to stay safe and worry free by protecting themselves and loved ones from financial fraud and scams during the holiday season.

**Common Scams Targeting Older Adults**  
 Scams targeting people age 50 and older resulted in over \$3.4 billion in losses in 2023 alone, according to the FBI. Here are some of the most common types of scams and fraud, according to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). Read the complete CFPB list here:

- **Charity:** Scammer pretends to represent a real or made-up organization and asks for donations.
- **Non-Delivery:** A person buys something online but never receives the item.
- **Grandparent:** Scammer pretends to be a grandchild or relative in trouble and asks for money or gift cards.
- **Tech Support:** Scammer pretends to be a computer expert offering technical support to trick people into giving access to their computers and personal information.
- **Romance:** Scammer pretends to be romantically interested in someone, develops trust and then asks for money or a loan.
- **Blackmail:** Scammer threatens to release personal information unless the victim sends money using wire transfer or gift cards.
- **Investment:** Scammer pretends to be a financial professional with urgent investment opportunities that are low, including offers to teach you how to invest in cryptocurrency.

**Contact the Eldercare Locator**

Video, telephone or text: 1.800.677.1116

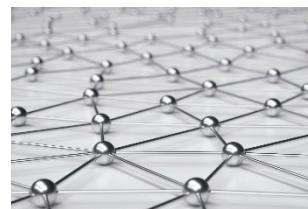
Chat: [eldercare.locator.gov](https://eldercare.locator.gov)

Email: [eldercarelocator@USAgging.org](mailto:eldercarelocator@USAgging.org)

### **Reminder: Medicare Outreach Coordinator employment opportunity**

The Medicare Outreach Coordinator, in conjunction with the GWAAR benefit specialist supervising attorney team, provides training and technical assistance to Elder Benefits Specialists and the broader community of State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors.

**Read the full job description:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008362>



### **Use Your Leadership Skills to Support Older People in Wisconsin**

We are pleased to welcome Cathy Jones-Ferk to the GWAAR Board of Directors and Valerie Freres to the GWAAR Advisory Council.

If you'd like to play a role in shaping the direction of programs and services for older people in the state, we invite you to volunteer for leadership team of the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR), Inc. Our mission is to provide aging offices with training, technical assistance, and support to improve the well-being of older people in Wisconsin.

GWAAR is looking for thoughtful, civic-minded, energetic individuals to serve on its 11-member board and 9-member Advisory Council. Members play a critical role in guiding and overseeing the agency's actions and initiatives.

**Learn more:** <https://gwaar.org/leadership-opportunities>



## **Advocacy**

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[Janet Zander](#), *Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator*

### ***Need to Know***

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#### **Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization – Final Steps!**

Last week, the Senate passed the OAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 ([S. 4776](#)) via a unanimous consent process. Senate and House OAA negotiators came to agreement on final authorization levels. Therefore, the Senate-passed bill, as modified, can now move forward for passage by the House. The negotiated bill is bipartisan and bicameral. While not all of our priorities made it to the finish line, several did, including some increased flexibility around Title III C and III D implementation and stronger language on equipping the Aging Network with resources to address social isolation.

Authorization levels, which are recommendations by authorizers to appropriations, and not actual spending levels, will reflect authorized levels for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 or their FY 2024 appropriations level, whichever is highest. Title VI Native American Aging Program authorization levels will be slightly increased to fix a too-low recommendation in the last reauthorization. In the final negotiated bill, authorization levels would stay the same for the remaining four years of the authorization period. These are just recommendations and do not necessarily translate into final appropriation levels. The OAA final bill is likely to be added to the end-of-year spending package, a Continuing Resolution, which will extend government funding, including for OAA programs, into March.

Your advocacy is still needed to get the bill across the finish line! Please continue your advocacy efforts with your Representative until the House passes it. Your action is needed immediately as the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress wraps its work this week!

*-continued-*

## Take Action Now

1. Using the template provided in this USAging [Advocacy Alert](#), contact your Representative (go here to find contact information – <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>) and share why it is important for the OAA Reauthorization to be passed (How do OAA programs and services help people in your community), and if you can, request their support of the OAA Reauthorization Act of 2024! <https://www.usaging.org/content.asp?admin=Y&contentid=1690>
2. Please share this urgent request with your association/organization members, board/advisory council members, vendors/providers, volunteers, community partners, and other important stakeholders and ask them to send their own emails to their Representatives.

Please do all you can to amplify the message and engage others who understand the value of OAA in their community! Your advocacy will help to ensure OAA is reauthorized before the new year!



## Reminder: Action Alert:

### Tell Congress to Fund Medicare Outreach and Enrollment Activities That Help Low-Income Beneficiaries

For 16 years, Congress has provided modest funding to find and enroll eligible older adults into programs that help people with limited incomes and assets with out-of-pocket health care costs. Without congressional action, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) funding will expire on Dec. 31, 2024. There is still time to protect these dollars, but we need your help!



Navigating Medicare

MIPPA funding helps community-based organizations across the country—like [State Health Insurance Assistance Programs \(SHIPs\)](#), Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs)—enroll low-income Medicare beneficiaries in programs that can make their health care and prescription drugs more affordable, like the [Medicare Savings Programs \(MSPs\)](#) and Part D Low Income Subsidy ([LIS/Extra Help](#)). Wisconsin's latest [SHIP Fact Sheet \(P-00166\)](#) includes MIPPA statistics and shows how this essential funding is being used to provide education and assistance with Medicare preventive benefits and financial assistance programs.

[State Health Insurance Assistance Programs \(SHIPs\)](https://www.shiphelp.org/) <https://www.shiphelp.org/>

### [Medicare Savings Programs \(MSPs\)](#)

<https://www.medicareinteractive.org/get-answers/cost-saving-programs-for-people-with-medicare/medicare-savings-programs-qmb-slmb-qi/medicare-savings-program-basics>

### [LIS/Extra Help](#)

<https://www.medicareinteractive.org/get-answers/cost-saving-programs-for-people-with-medicare/the-extra-helplow-income-subsidy-lis-program/extra-help-basics>

[SHIP Fact Sheet \(P-00166\)](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00166.pdf) <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00166.pdf>

Although these financial assistance programs can improve health, well-being, and economic security, many who are eligible are not enrolled. Research indicates many who may qualify are unaware of the program's existence.

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In the last three years alone, MIPPA grantees in every state have helped over three million people with Medicare better understand, afford, and use their coverage. If allowed to lapse, these community-based organizations will lose the capacity to conduct vital outreach and enrollment activities, and millions of beneficiaries will remain underserved.

**Take Action:** Join the Medicare Rights Center in urging Congress to prioritize MIPPA funding. Ask your federal legislators to support these proven community-based outreach and enrollment activities so that more people with Medicare can access and afford their coverage.



Use [this form](#) from the National Council on Aging (NCOA) to weigh in today.

**National Council on Aging (NCOA) form:** <https://act.ncoa.org/a/mippa>

## Data Management

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*Carrie Kroetz* Older Americans Act Consultant – Data Management

### **Need to Know**

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#### **December 31, final date to access WellSky (SAMS)**

Don't forget! **WellSky (SAMS) will close down as of December 31.** If there is any information that you would like to download a report for, now is the time to do it.

Some of you have indicated missing information for clients that did not transition over to PeerPlace. One report that I have created is the Review Report XX – Name, Address and Phone under the top report of SAMS Service Delivery Consumer Listing Report (with Care Recipient Data). This report can provide for you, by service, the client name, address, phone number, and some demographic information.

#### **Important updates for PeerPlace Training**

##### **PeerPlace Training Details:**

**November 6, 2024 - PeerPlace “go-live” date.** Users may begin entering data into the PeerPlace system. Note that WellSky information will remain available for viewing and creating reports through the end of calendar year 2024.

After November 6, you log in using this address:

<https://peerplace.dhs.wisconsin.gov>.

**PeerPlace Information Page for Aging:** this page contains detailed information related to PeerPlace training including live webinar schedules, live webinar registration links, job aids, user group information, and key dates.

##### ***Site for registered users:***

[https://share.health.wisconsin.gov/ltc/teams/ADRC/SitePages/PeerPlace\\_Aging.aspx](https://share.health.wisconsin.gov/ltc/teams/ADRC/SitePages/PeerPlace_Aging.aspx)

Recordings of completed webinars can be found on the **PeerPlace Training Vimeo Showcase:**

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/11338036>.



DHS PeerPlace  
Training

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**Upcoming PeerPlace Training and Drop-in calls (registration required for some):**

***Optional PeerPlace Q&A opportunities for benefit specialists***

These are optional opportunities for benefit specialists to meet with Cheri Stoffel and Michelle Grochocinski to ask questions about PeerPlace. Drop-in calls are informal chats, not formal training.

*Thursday, January 16 | 2:35 – 4:00 p.m.*

**[PeerPlace drop in call for benefit specialists](#)** ([Add this meeting to your Outlook calendar](#)—no registration required)

**GWAAR will be coming out shortly with PeerPlace Aging Office Hours for Q&A, as well as program specific trainings. In 2025, we will be conducting regional PeerPlace trainings.**

Please join the GWAAR staff as we host a review and Q&A session with BADR on PeerPlace, focusing on the Nutrition and Caregiver programs. I wanted to get a webinar in before the end of the year, but more will be coming and with more notice. These will be recorded and posted on the GWAAR SharePoint site, if you are unable to make the webinar.

**[GWAAR - PeerPlace Review and Q&A Session - Nutrition](#)**

***New date and time:***

*Friday, December 20 | 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.*

***Registration:***

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/55fca49d-61c1-41e4-b61a-e36815e56886@8e087664-409d-4c4c-a6b4-7aa01020d6ea>

**[GWAAR - PeerPlace Review and Q&A Session - Caregiver](#)**

*Wednesday, December 18 | 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.*

***Registration:***

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/445933fb-e19a-42f6-83ad-e4be41445db4@8e087664-409d-4c4c-a6b4-7aa01020d6ea>

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## **Family Caregiver Support**

[Bryn Ceman](#), *Older Americans Act Consultant - Family Caregiver Support Specialist*

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### ***Need to Know***

**Caregiver FAQ updated**

Please note that our Caregiver FAQ titled, \*FAQs for NFCSP and AFCSP - categorized - UPDATED, on the Family Caregiver Support page of the GWAAR website has been updated to include PeerPlace FAQs. Please refer to it frequently as it will be updated frequently.

**View updated FAQs:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008194>



Another great resource for the Caregiver Program Reporting is the DHS SharePoint Aging and Disability Resource Center PeerPlace Guides, found here:

<https://share.health.wisconsin.gov/ltc/teams/ADRC/PeerPlaceGuides/Forms/Aging.aspx>



**Confirm your contact information** on Wisconsin Caregiver site

Please visit <http://wisconsin caregiver.org/local-resources> , click on your county/tribe, and make sure the contact information and website link(s) are correct.

If any changes need to be made, please send an email to [bryn.ceman@gwaar.org](mailto:bryn.ceman@gwaar.org) with the correct info.



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### **Nice to Know**

#### **CARE U Workshops: free training for direct care workers**

Need more to increase the caregiver workforce in your area? Please share this opportunity provided to us by the University of Wisconsin - Center for Aging Research & Education.

CARE U provides valuable education for certified nursing assistants (CNAs), personal care workers (PCWs), community health workers (CHWs), and other direct care staff who work with older adults. They know that CNAs and direct care staff want continuing education and use the information to improve the care they provide. That's why our Center for Aging Research and Education (CARE) began offering FREE one-day workshops for direct care staff in 2014.



**Center for Aging Research and Education**  
CARE at the UW-Madison School of Nursing

**Learn more:** <https://care.nursing.wisc.edu/care-u-for-direct-care-staff/>

**View the flyer:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008406>

The next CARE U workshop is scheduled for January 28, 2025, from 8:30 to 5:00 at Northwood Technical College in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. This FREE one-day workshop is the first in a series that will be offered throughout Wisconsin over the next five years.

WAIT, there's more! To reach more CNAs and direct care staff across Wisconsin, CARE developed a train-the-trainer program to prepare health educators to offer their own local CARE U workshops.

**Learn more about the CARE U Train-the-Trainer:**

<https://care.nursing.wisc.edu/care-u-for-direct-care-staff/care-u-train-the-trainer-for-health-educators/>

**View the flyer:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008407>

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### **Fiscal**

*[Carrie Kroetz](#) Older Americans Act Consultant – Data Management*

#### **Need to Know**

**ARPA Extension contract:** now that September claims have been processed, we are able to provide the remaining allocations to the state for GWAAR to receive a new ARPA contract (Oct 2024-Sept 2025). Just as a reminder, this is a new contract not an amended contract extending out the date as before and should be used for expenses from Oct 2024-Dec 2024 for this calendar year, and then Jan 2025-Sept 2025 for expenses in 2025. The allocations will be posted on the Final claim form, until the ARPA funds are available on the claim form Aging Units should report the expenses in Cash Match or using other contract funds on their Oct-Dec claim forms and then adjust as necessary on the Final claim.

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**NSIP 24-25 contract:** GWAAR has received the NSIP contract from the state and will be distributing out Aging Unit contracts shortly. As a reminder, this contract is for the expenses associated with raw food cost only and not the full cost of the meal. The allocations will be posted on the Final claim form, until the NSIP funds are available on the claim form Aging Units should report the expenses in Cash Match or using other contract funds on their Oct-Dec claim forms and then adjust as necessary on the Final claim.

**Other updates:**

- The Variance report was delayed in posting and has been posted on SharePoint site Monday, Dec. 9. The deadline for submission is Dec. 20. We are sorry for the inconvenience in the delay. Information to assist in completing the form has been included within the instructions tab (vs a training recording) – please make sure you read this before attempting to complete the form.
- Report 99 in PeerPlace – currently this custom report has not been created in PeerPlace. This will not prevent you from submitting your October claim. We continue to work with BADR and PeerPlace to have this available and will let you know when it is – along with providing training on how to run the report.
- The 2024 Re-Ob/De-Ob Request form link is available on the Fiscal Resources site. This form is used to request to de-obligate and re-obligate funds from Title III B-C1-C2-D-E, SSCS, Alzheimer's\*, EBS\*, or Elder Abuse contract funds. (\*Only if your contract is with GWAAR.) Please complete by Dec. 15, 2024.
- If completing a Re-Obligation request, by completing this form you are requesting additional contract funding, if available, which must be spent by Dec. 31, 2024, for expenses from Jan.-Dec. 2024. By completing this form, you understand any requests are not guaranteed and must be claimed by the Final Claim form, due March 5, 2025.

**Upcoming:**

- The Budget to Actual document will also be forthcoming. This document compares your submitted Final Budget for 2024 against the actual expenses reported. We will host a webinar to assist Aging Unit Fiscal staff in reviewing the information and how to address inconsistencies.

**Nice to Know**

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**Dollars & Sense**

Check this section for answers to your Fiscal questions.

**Q: Can Title III funds be used for capital purchases?**

A: Yes up to \$5,000 of Title III funding can be used for a single project or purchase. Please note if making a capital purchase for the nutrition program that does not mean that \$5,000 from C-1 and \$5,000 from C-2 can be used for the purchase. \$5,000 is the max amount of Federal funds that can be used for capital purchases.



## Health Promotion

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[Angie Sullivan](#), Older Americans Act Consultant - Health Promotions Specialist

### **Nice to Know**

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#### **Reminder: StrongBodies now available in Hmong**

We are excited to inform you that the final StrongBodies recording created in collaboration with PBS Wisconsin is now available! You are able to access and share recordings of StrongBodies classes in English, Spanish and Hmong.

**Please share widely the latest recording in Hmong.**

**Printable PDF flyer to promote the most recent recording:**

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008394>

**Image suitable for social media posting:**

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008396>

**Flyer with QR codes for all three recordings:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008395>

**You can also access the recordings through the links below:**

- English recording: <https://pbswisconsin.org/watch/university-place/strongbodies-strength-training-for-life-xhmva8/>
- Spanish recording: <https://pbswisconsin.org/watch/university-place/gentefuerte-entrenamiento-de-fuerza-de-por-vida-jktmiw/>
- Hmoob recording: <https://pbswisconsin.org/watch/university-place/lub-cev-muaj-zog-ua-kom-muaj-zog-mus-ib-sim-neej-wdzetw/>



## Nutrition

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[Pam VanKampen](#), Older Americans Act Consultant - Nutrition Specialist/Senior Center Representative

### **Need to Know**

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#### **Postponed: Network Call on Cost Efficiency Ideas for the Nutrition Program**

Please note that the Cost Efficiency call originally scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 1:30 p.m. has been postponed until January. Stay tuned for the date and time of the rescheduled call.

### **Nice to Know**

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#### **Focus on rural Meals on Wheels**

The Mid-West Farm Report Radio Network contacted ADRC-of Central Wisconsin in late October to request an interview about Meals on Wheels serving rural Wisconsin residents.

Ronda James RDN, CD, ADRC of Central Wisconsin Nutrition Program Director and Tony Omernik, ADRC-Central Wisconsin Board Member and Meals on Wheels Volunteer driver were interviewed by Stephanie Hoff.

The [interview was first aired 11/25/2024](#) on the Mid-West Farm Report Madison affiliate.

**Listen to the segment:**

[Rural Meals On Wheels Feels The Pinch As Demand Rises - MID-WEST FARM REPORT - MADISON - Omny.fm](#)



## Transportation

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[Nick Musson](#), *Older Americans Act Consultant – Transportation*

### **Nice to Know**

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#### **Transportation Equity Toolkit**

The National Aging and Disability Transportation Center (NADTC) developed a Community Conversation on Transportation Equity Toolkit with useful tools to initiate discussions and move the needle towards more equitable solutions. The toolkit stems from 2023 when NADTC's facilitated a National Symposium by selecting six communities to convene locally facilitated meetings to talk about equity in transportation. The meetings were attended by local stakeholders representing transportation providers, community partners, advocates and community members who gathered to discuss, exchange ideas and identify promising practices on issues impacting diverse populations and historically marginalized and underserved communities.



With the success of the six community meetings, NADTC is now making the Community Conversation materials available to any community who wishes to take steps towards transportation equity.

This toolkit offers recorded presentations from industry leaders, checklists, templates and guidance to plan and facilitate community meetings that address transportation equity and create a plan to address community driven solutions. A January webinar will review the toolkit and discuss how it works.

Visit [NADTC's Community Conversation on Transportation Equity](#) Toolkit website **for more information and to register for the webinar:**

<https://www.nadtc.org/community-conversation-on-transportation-equity-toolkit/>

#### **Reminder: ATRC Survey on Accessible Transportation**

The Accessible Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) Steering Committee is looking for your input on accessible transportation to help guide their future activities.



Accessible Transportation  
Resource Center

If you are a Rider, a Driver, Transportation Program Manager, Planner, Advocate or anyone who is involved in any way in transportation services in your community, you are invited to respond to a short survey about accessibility. The survey begins with a definition of accessible transportation and should take no more than 10 minutes.

**Take the survey:** <https://bit.ly/3OT6nUx>

**About the ATRC:** The Accessible Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) Steering Committee is a group of 20 accessible transportation advocates from across the country who guide ATRC's development and dissemination activities. The Steering Committee plays a pivotal role in building awareness and encouraging the adoption of accessible transportation strategies, inclusive planning, and Mobility on Demand. The meaningful inclusion of diverse older adults and people with disabilities and the insights, knowledge, opinions, and recommendations that riders and would-be transportation users bring to the table are critical to the success of the ATRC.

**Learn more:** <https://acl.gov/TransportationCenter>

## Volunteerism

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[Nick Musson](#), *Older Americans Act Consultant – Transportation*

### **Nice to Know**

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#### **Reminder: Webinar and resources to plan ahead for Global Volunteer Month in April**

Wednesday, January 29 | 11:00 a.m.

Points of Light offers a free toolkit with resources and ideas to help plan for Global Volunteer Month and prepare for the April 1 social media surge. They provide ideas to honor and engage volunteers in your community.



#### **View the toolkit:**

<https://socialpresskit.com/points-of-light#global-volunteer-month>

Want to learn more? Register for the NGO Global Volunteer Webinar on Jan. 29 at 11:00 a.m.

#### **Register for the webinar:**

[https://pointsoflight.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_26S\\_K2xZRa-zpdhAAIG1oq#/registration](https://pointsoflight.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_26S_K2xZRa-zpdhAAIG1oq#/registration)

Global Volunteer Month is a time to celebrate volunteers and inspire volunteerism around the globe. Join Points of Light for a webinar to learn how your organization can be a part of Global Volunteer Month and in doing so, thank your volunteers, uplift their stories and inspire others to join the movement. You'll learn more about easy steps to participate, available resources, and practical examples from organizations who have participated in the past.

**Learn more:** <https://www.pointsoflight.org/global-volunteer-month/>

## Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol

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[Ingrid A. Kunding](#), *Senior Medicare Patrol Program Director*

### **Nice to Know**

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#### **Happy Holidays from the Senior Medicare Patrol team!**

Thank you for all that you do to help older adults in your communities!

And thank you for inviting the Senior Medicare Patrol to share information with the clients that you serve, through presentations, outreach events, referrals to our toll-free Helpline, and sharing our resources!

We look forward to working with all of you in 2025!

Happy Holidays, Ingrid, Heidi, and Susan

