



Volume 8, No. 3 January 20, 2026
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Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR) News

Nice to Know

Reminder: 2026 Regional Learning Exchanges

Locally based health and wellbeing organizations are invited to upcoming Regional Learning Exchanges hosted by the Wisconsin Owns Wellbeing (WOW) Collaborative. Events take place January-April 2026.

During each Regional Learning Exchange, participants will:

- Celebrate and learn from community collaborations already operating in the region
- Discuss priority issues, challenges, and opportunities in the region, connecting them to broader state and national trends
- Begin to develop strategies to grow or enhance collaboration at all stages of development
- Identify ways that statewide partners can better support and learn from local partners to make meaningful collaborative impact, regionally and statewide
- Build and strengthen relationships across organizations

Register today for the event that best matches your service area!

- **Jan. 27, 2026: Market on River, Chippewa Falls**
registration: <https://bit.ly/4qkIN3P>
- **Feb. 17, 2026: Lake of the Torches, Lac du Flambeau**
registration: <https://bit.ly/4sbmRda>
- **Mar. 4, 2026: St. Norbert College, De Pere**
registration: <https://bit.ly/4aMP2cr>
- **Mar. 19, 2026: Baraboo Arts, Baraboo**
registration: <https://bit.ly/4qslpAx>
- **Apr. 15, 2026: Waukesha Area Technical College, Pewaukee**
registration: <https://bit.ly/3MHUyTH>

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008840>

Read the press release: <https://bit.ly/4s9vfk7>



Reminder Call for Social Engagement Innovations

Submissions due Friday, January 30, 2026

ACL's Commit to Connect initiative, in collaboration with engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults, is launching a Call for Innovations to identify model interventions, programs, and services addressing social isolation and loneliness.

-continued-

All submissions will be considered for inclusion in the Social Engagement Innovations Hub — a searchable clearinghouse of best practices and data-driven interventions, programs, and services promoting social connections across populations. Contributing to this hub will encourage adoption, replication, and awareness of programs to address social isolation and loneliness.

The current Call for Innovations is open through January 30. Before submitting your social connection examples, please read through the eligibility criteria and submission questions.

Questions? Contact Commit to Connect at info@committtoconnect.org

Commit to Connect: <https://committtoconnect.org/>

Additional information and Eligibility Criteria: <https://bit.ly/3LgPUvw>

Submission questions: <https://bit.ly/4pAylw>

Submit your innovation: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LTFNDPP>



Advocacy

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

Nice to Know

Action Alert: Contact Your State Legislators Today Regarding Patient Representative (Next-of-Kin) Legislation!

AB 598 re: Patient Representatives is being voted on in the Assembly's Health Committee tomorrow (1/21) morning. This legislation has passed in the Senate Health Committee!

AB 598:

<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/related/proposals/ab598>

It is critical that you reach out to your Senator and Assembly Representatives and let them know that even with the amendments, the concerns of patient advocates have not been addressed.

Use the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network's (WAAN's) Action Alert to share your concerns:

<https://bit.ly/4qXAtaA>



Reminder: 2026 Alzheimer's Association Wisconsin Advocacy Day

Tuesday, Feb. 3 | 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | Registration deadline Friday, Jan. 23

Join Alzheimer's advocates from across Wisconsin to raise awareness and make sure that Alzheimer's and all related dementias remain a legislative priority in 2026 and beyond!

- Advocate for enhanced care and support services for individuals living with dementia and their caregivers.
- Use Your Voice to share your story, family experiences, and the issues facing your community with policymakers.
- Empower the 110,900 Wisconsinites living with Alzheimer's and the 205,000 individuals serving as their caregivers.

More information and event registration: <https://alz-wi.quorum.us/event/25900/>



Survival Coalition – “Community Organizing to Maximize Power the Impact” – online training series

January 28, February 11, February 25 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

This 3-part, 9-hour training is free to members of the disability community in Wisconsin who want to explore the principles of collective action to impact issues important to the disability community. Whether it's cuts to Medicaid and SNAP, the lack of caregivers, quality education, or other issues important to the disability community, this training will give participants the connections and skills to have greater impact on public policy.

Sessions are 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. on the dates below and will not be recorded. Participation in ALL THREE sessions is strongly recommended by the organizers to improve effectiveness in community organizing. Registrants are encouraged to participate in groups because there will be opportunities for small group discussions.

This series will also serve as training to help attendees prepare for Disability Advocacy Day, which will be March 19 at Monona Terrace and the Capitol in Madison. (more information below)

Training Session Dates & Registration

- Session #1 (January 28): Learning the basics of power, control, and how to motivate others.
- Session #2 (February 11): Identifying challenges and developing strategies for change.
- Session #3 (February 25): Forming cohesive groups and maximizing strengths for bigger impact

Questions about the trainings: Contact Jeremy Gundlach at jeremy.gundlach@wisconsin.gov.

Training registration: <https://bit.ly/CommunityOrganizing2026>

View the training flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008874>

Disability Advocacy Day of Action!

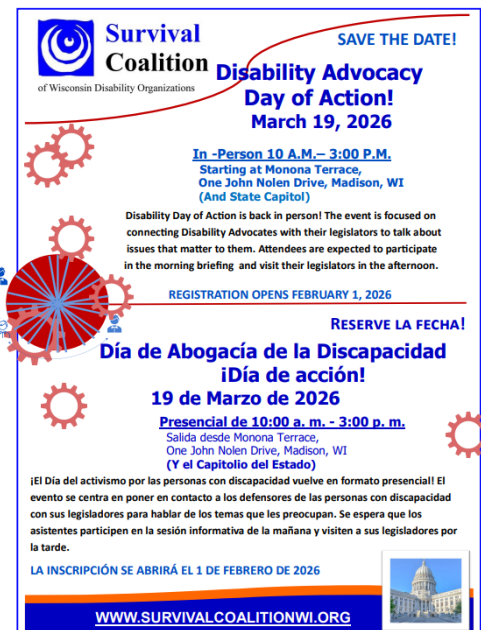
Thursday, March 19 | 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Registration opens Feb. 1

Starting at Monona Terrace, One John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI (and State Capitol)

Disability Day of Action is back in person! The event is focused on connecting Disability Advocates with their legislators to talk about issues that matter to them. Attendees are expected to participate in the morning briefing and visit their legislators in the afternoon.

Save the date Disability Advocacy Day of Action flyer:

<https://bit.ly/3ZjUKLF>



The flyer is for the Survival Coalition's Disability Advocacy Day of Action on March 19, 2026. It features the Survival Coalition logo at the top left. The text is in English and Spanish. The English text includes: "SAVE THE DATE! Disability Advocacy Day of Action! March 19, 2026", "In -Person 10 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.", "Starting at Monona Terrace, One John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI (And State Capitol)", "Disability Day of Action is back in person! The event is focused on connecting Disability Advocates with their legislators to talk about issues that matter to them. Attendees are expected to participate in the morning briefing and visit their legislators in the afternoon.", "REGISTRATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1, 2026", "RESERVE LA FECHA!", "Día de Abogacía de la Discapacidad ¡Día de acción!", "19 de Marzo de 2026", "Presencial de 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.", "Salida desde Monona Terrace, One John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI (Y el Capitolio del Estado)", "¡El Día del activismo por las personas con discapacidad vuelve en formato presencial! El evento se centra en poner en contacto a los defensores de las personas con discapacidad con sus legisladores para hablar de los temas que les preocupan. Se espera que los asistentes participen en la sesión informativa de la mañana y visiten a sus legisladores por la tarde.", "LA INSCRIPCIÓN SE ABRIRÁ EL 1 DE FEBRERO DE 2026", and "WWW.SURVIVALCOALITIONWI.ORG". The Spanish text is a translation of the English text. There are decorative gear icons on the left and right sides of the flyer.

Reminder: Federal Funding Fallout2025: Updates and Q&A

Friday, January 23 | 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

English Registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFunds123>

Spanish Registration: <https://bit.ly/4qx8qiD>

There is a lot going on. Congress is working on the federal budget, but not all bills may pass before the January 30th deadline they set for themselves, and its now or never for the ACA subsidies. Meanwhile changes at federal agencies and H.R. 1 implementation continue to impact states. The state legislature has a short time and a lot of to-dos. Budget shortfalls in key disability programs (Special Ed, DVR) and additional funding needed for SNAP to implement requirements for HR 1.



Emergency Preparedness

[Angie Sullivan](#), Health Promotion Program Specialist

Nice to Know

Be prepared for emergency preparedness with 2026 calendars

Ready.gov and Ready Wisconsin have many helpful resources to share with older adults all year long. Both sites have content calendars to help you prepare as well.

Ready.gov 2026 calendar: <https://www.ready.gov/calendar>

ReadyWisconsin 2026 calendar: <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/resources/>

January is winter readiness

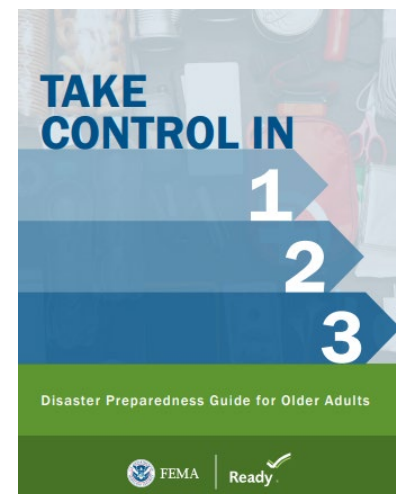
You'll find basic information about preparing for cold weather on the Ready.gov website and in their guide for older adults.

<https://www.ready.gov/winter-ready#adult>

Take Control in 1, 2, 3—Disaster Preparedness Guide for Older Adults:

<https://bit.ly/47hfW8B>

Check out Ready Wisconsin for additional information and resources for bitter cold weather: <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/extreme-cold/>



February is National Canned Food Month #WinterReady

You can find NOURISH Step resources on the GWAAR website to help people prepare home emergency kits in case of bad weather or power outages. These can be found on the NOURISH Step page | <https://gwaar.org/nourishstep> | 2025 NOURISH Step Handouts and/or NOURISH Step Recipes and Simple Meal Ideas.

Emergency Food & Water Preparedness Checklist: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008719>

Emergency Preparedness for Food & Water – Sample Meal & Snack Ideas:

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008718>

Simple No-Cook Meal Ideas: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008883>

Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: Save the date: Next Family Caregiver Support Community call

Tuesday, January 27 | 10:00 a.m.

<https://gwaar.org/wisconsin-caregiver-support-community-monthly-calls>

The agenda is now posted for the January Caregiver Coordinator Statewide meeting: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008873>

Wisconsin's
FamilyCaregiver
Support Programs

Nice to Know

👉 Wisconsin caregivers: You're invited!

The CARE U Workshop offers supportive, practical education to help caregivers navigate challenges like stress, communication, and day-to-day caregiving needs. 📢

💡 A great opportunity to learn, connect, and feel more supported.

Please see the flyer for the QR code or additional information using this link:

<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008879>

More information: <https://bit.ly/3LVvDM7>



Are you a helping professional providing daily care for older adults as a CNA, PCW, or other direct care worker?

Join our CARE U workshop to increase your skills!

Interactive presentations and hands-on activities will cover key topics in older adult care, including:

- Person-Centered Care
- Dementia Care
- Vision
- Maintaining Mobility
- Nutrition
- Pain
- Emergency Preparedness

This one-day training is FREE!

Contact Paula Bizot with Questions:
Email: pbizot@wisc.edu
Call: 608-263-5268

Thursday, February 26, 2026

8:30 am - 5:00 pm

**NWTC: 2740 W Mason Street
Green Bay, WI 54303**

LEARN MORE & REGISTER
<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008879>



Wisconsin Family Caregiver Support Programs
The Center for Aging Research and Education
NORTHEAST WI Technical College
NORTHEASTERN Wisconsin Area Health Education Center

The project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$1,000,000 (plus \$100,000). The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Updated DHS Publication – Caregiver Chapter Now Available

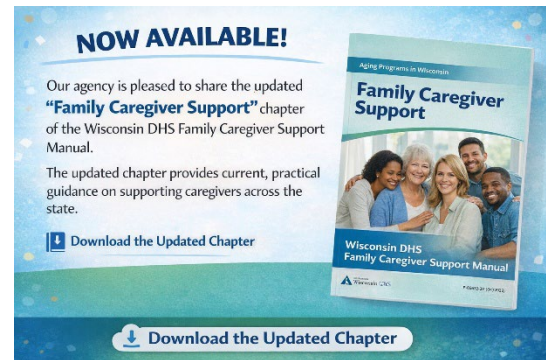
Wisconsin DHS has published an updated Family Caregiver Support chapter within the Wisconsin DHS Family Caregiver Support Manual. This updated guidance is a helpful reference for caregiver program administration, eligibility, service definitions, and best practices across AFCSP/NFCSP.

Publication Link:

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p03062-39.pdf>




DHS SharePoint (for registered users):


<https://bit.ly/4pRaZuF>




New Resource for Working Family Caregivers (Virtual Support Group)

The ADRC of La Crosse County is offering a Virtual Working Family Caregiver Support Group for anyone balancing employment while caring for a loved one. Please share with caregivers you work with — or consider attending yourself.

 1st Wednesday of the month |  6:00–7:00 p.m. |  Virtual


 Register: 608-785-5700

 Contact: Kristine Meyer | 608-386-0922 | kmeyer@lacrossecounty.org

Reminder: Caregiver Insights Across the States: Translating Data into Local Action free webinar

Tuesday, January 27 | 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Family caregivers are a vital part of our communities and our care systems. Understanding their evolving needs is essential for creating innovative, sustainable caregiver programs and policies.

 Newly released state-level caregiver profiles provide powerful insights into caregiving realities across the U.S.

Join this important webinar, presented by National Alliance for Caregiving and USAGing, to explore key findings from these profiles and learn how this data is already shaping the work of Area Agencies on Aging and caregiver support networks nationwide.

✦ During this session, participants will:

- ✓ Gain key takeaways from state caregiver data
- ✓ Hear how one AAA is using this information to guide programs and services
- ✓ Learn from caregivers engaged in innovative social support models
- ✓ Leave with practical ideas to translate data into meaningful local action

If you're committed to building caregiver-inclusive, supportive communities, this is a can't-miss conversation. 🙌 **Register here:** <https://bit.ly/4oIHgmS>



Reminder: Nutrition & Aging: Caregivers Play a Critical Role

By 2050, the global population of adults age 60+ is expected to reach 2.1 billion, and with aging comes increased risk for malnutrition. In fact, up to 50% of older adults may be at risk. Malnutrition can contribute to more frequent falls, hospital readmissions, increased healthcare costs, and reduced quality of life.

Caregivers can help by watching for:

- ◆ Recent weight loss or loose clothing
- ◆ Changes in appetite
- 💧 Reduced fluid intake
- 🏠 Difficulty shopping, cooking, or accessing food
- 🧠 Confusion, weakness, or mental health changes
- 🗨️ Social isolation
- 💵 Financial strain affecting food access

Support older adults by encouraging:

- 🍽️ Regular meals and healthy snacks
- 🍖 Protein-rich foods
- 💧 Hydration
- 👥 Social mealtimes
- 🛒 Help with grocery shopping or meal preparation

Caregivers truly make a difference in helping older adults stay healthy, nourished, and independent.

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008866>

NUTRITION AND AGING:
MAXIMIZING THE CAREGIVER'S ROLE

Caregivers can promote good nutrition by addressing common nutrition concerns. This will help older adults meet their nutrition needs.

NUTRITION CONCERN	WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?	ENCOURAGE OLDER ADULTS TO...
CALORIES	CALORIES come from carbohydrates, protein, and fat and provide our bodies with the energy they need to function. Choosing to eat a wide variety of foods can help older adults meet their calorie needs and get key nutrients, including different vitamins and minerals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eat at least 3 meals a day• Eat snacks throughout the day for extra calories• Add herbs and spices to foods to enhance interest in eating• Increase food variety by preparing meals and snacks with nutrient-rich foods (eg, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fish, and lean meats)
PROTEIN	PROTEIN helps our bodies maintain muscle mass and strength, which is crucial for older adults, especially during periods of stress or illness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase protein in the diet by eating meats, eggs, low-fat dairy foods (milk, yogurt, and cheese), nuts, and nuts• Consider adding a high-protein oral nutrition supplement to meals and snacks
FLUIDS	FLUIDS , such as water or electrolyte solutions, help to regulate body temperature, maintain fluid balance in cells, and absorb nutrients. Older adults are at an increased risk for dehydration due to physical changes. When older adults are dehydrated, it can negatively affect their mental status, cause dizziness, and increase risk of falls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drink fluids in the morning, before each meal, and an hour before bed• Keep a water bottle nearby to drink throughout the day, even if they don't feel thirsty• Discuss with their physician any medications they take since these could affect hydration status, and determine the need for an electrolyte solution to quickly replenish fluids and electrolytes

HELPFUL IDEAS FOR CAREGIVERS

ASSIST WITH MEAL PLANNING & PREPARATION	MAKE MEALS A SOCIAL EVENT	CONSIDER FOOD COSTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare meals together and store for later• Shop for groceries together	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enjoy a meal at a favorite restaurant• Encourage participating in social programs with members of the community• Visit during mealtimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find money-saving shopping approaches, such as visiting grocery store websites ahead of time to look for coupons• Find resources within the community to help reduce food costs

Visit anhi.org or scan this QR code for a digital copy of this resource



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Fiscal Resources and Data Management

[Carrie Kroetz](#), Data Management and Technology Coordinator

Need to Know

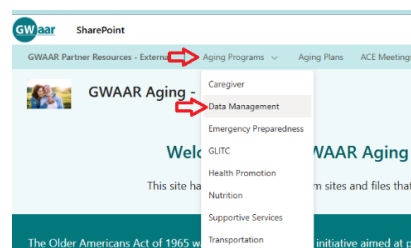
Reminders

All webinars are recorded and posted on the GWAAR Partners Resources site and accessed by registered users.

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | Aging Programs | [Data Management](#)

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | [Fiscal Resources](#)

ACE Meeting → Fiscal Resources Advocacy



-continued-

****End of Federal Year Reporting****

We have completed and submitted our NAPIS Federal Report portion to the state. If there are further questions GWAAR may reach out to Aging Units for clarification.

GWAAR Fiscal and Data will be hosting a webinar, date/time TBD, to provide information regarding the GWAAR NAPIS process and to ask Aging Units for feedback regarding what more we could do during the year to help facilitate this annual project.

****Remaining Transfers****

GWAAR Fiscal has received the remaining transfer contract, and an amendment will be sent out to Aging Units shortly. The updated allocations will be included in the Final Claim form.

****2026 Draft Budget****

Due to upcoming changes taking effect in 2026 we have yet to post the 2026 Draft Budget. Once we have solidified the changes, we will update the form and inform Aging Directors and Fiscal staff of the posting. GWAAR Fiscal will also hold a webinar to inform Aging Unit staff of these changes and a review of instructions to complete the budget, waiver, and transfer requests. In the meantime, we have received the estimated allocations and have posted them in the Fiscal Resources library under Budget.

****2026 Claim Form****

GWAAR Fiscal will be updating the 2026 Claim Form with the 2026 allocations and changes to reporting requirements. We plan to have the form posted by early to mid-February. We will be hosting a webinar, date/time TBD, to review the updates and respond to questions.

****Upcoming Training****

Regional Trainings – GWAAR staff is working on scheduling Fiscal and Data Spring trainings again this year – once arrangements are finalized we will send out the registration information.

PeerPlace New Year's Training Series: These trainings will be held by individual programs and review how to enter participants and service data, how to run error reports to review basic (NAPIS) information and determined data entry inconsistencies, discuss errors found during the current NAPIS report, and address 1st FFY quarter (Oct-Dec) corrections.

Health Promotion - Evidence-Based and Non-Evidence-Based (IIID & IIIB) Peer Place Training

Thursday, January 22 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/45TciSv>

Supportive and In-Home Services (IIIB) PeerPlace Training

Thursday, January 29 | 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/456otv8>

Nutrition Services (IIIC) PeerPlace Training:

Tuesday, February 3 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4iD5aPT>

Caregiver Services (IIIE & AFCSP) PeerPlace Training

Thursday, February 5 | 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4qgVDAI>

Health Promotion

[Angie Sullivan](#), Health Promotion Program Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar

Tuesday, February 10 | 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

(Optional 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Networking and Sharing)

Virtual – TEAMS: <https://bit.ly/4siQkSw>

Plan to attend the first Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar of 2026. The agenda includes a 2025 Program Summary of Health Promotion Programs across the State, important updates from GWAAR and the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging as well as highlighting evidence-based Diabetes education programs.

There will be an optional time at the end of the webinar for counties to informally discuss successes, challenges, etc. This portion of the webinar will not be recorded.



Nice to Know

Just Added! Stepping On **New Facilitator Refresher Training**

Thursday, March 12 | 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Cost: \$100

Please note: An earlier version of the 1-13-26 newsletter showed an incorrect cost. This error has been corrected.



The Stepping On Facilitator Refresher Training is now available through the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) to support your continued success and ability to serve older adults in your communities.

Stepping On facilitators must co-facilitate a workshop every 12 months to remain certified. This training allows Stepping On facilitators whose certification has lapsed to become re-certified without going through the full 3-day training. To qualify to attend a refresher training, the facilitator must have co-facilitated a workshop in the last 24 months.

The training will be held on Thursday, March 12, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Cost: \$100

Refresher Training Application: <https://wiha.wufoo.com/forms/witnckx02mijj5/>

Nutrition

[Kristi Cooley](#), Nutrition Program Specialist

[Jean Lynch](#), Program Specialist Manager

[Pam VanKampen](#), Nutrition Program & Senior Center Specialist

Need to Know

Reminder: 2026 meeting dates posted on GWAAR SharePoint

We'll include these updates in future newsletters, but if you want to get your calendar updated right away, you can find them on SharePoint.

News link for registered SharePoint users: <https://bit.ly/4qJDRWy>



Nice to Know

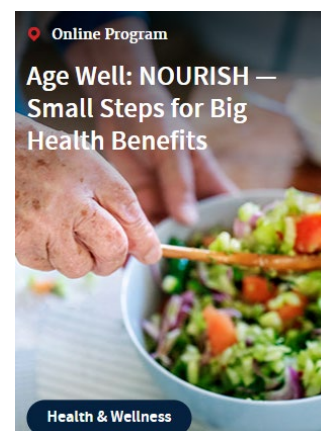
Age Well: NOURISH — Small Steps for Big Health Benefits

Thursday, January 29 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Pam VanKampen leads this free webinar to help participants discover NOURISH Step — a fun, practical mindset to boost energy, health and well-being.

Shift your focus from restrictions to nourishing foods and simple habits that work in real life. Learn the power of protein, hydration and colorful meals to strengthen your body, improve mood and support independence. Take control of your health one small, doable step at a time and start the new year feeling energized and empowered.

Learn more or register: <https://www.road scholar.org/nourish>



NAC Recipe Taste Test Opportunity

Nutrition Directors are encouraged to add a taste-testing item to their next Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC) meeting to help expand the Recipe Bank with low-carbohydrate recipes aligned with diabetes management goals and the latest Dietary Guidelines.

Plan a taste test at your upcoming NAC meeting (many meet in February). Choose one or two recipes from the external SharePoint [Low Sugar Dessert and Sauce Recipe TESTING Needed](#), gather feedback, and indicate yes or no the recipe tested. <https://bit.ly/3ZkbZMT>

Email your results, including the recipe name and vote, to Kristi.Cookey@gwaar.org by February 28. Recipes receiving a majority of “yes” votes will be added to the Trustwell Database.

Thank you for helping ensure the Recipe Bank includes recipes participants enjoy and will use. If you have questions, please reach out to your program consultant.



Transportation

[Nick Musson](#), Transportation & Aging Plan Specialist

Nice to Know

Transit Equity Day 2026: Wednesday, February 4

Transit Equity Day is a National Day of Action observed on February 4th to commemorate the life and legacy of Rosa Parks on her birthday and highlights the importance of public transportation and transit equity. Transit Equity Day aims to highlight the need for equitable and accessible public transportation for all.

The observance is an opportunity to advocate for fair transportation policies including such topics as affordable fares, reliable service, improved transit infrastructure and increased transit funding. Transit agencies, organizations, community groups, and activists often use Transit Equity Day to organize events, discussions, and advocacy initiatives aimed at promoting equitable and accessible public transportation. The goal is to engage the public, policymakers, and stakeholders in efforts to address transit-related disparities and work toward a more just and inclusive transportation system.

Check with your local transit agency to see what they have planned to celebrate Transit Equity Day.