



Connections

A Resource for Family Caregivers

Winter 2015 Volume 4, Issue 1

Steering Committee

- Aging and Disability Resource Center of Sheboygan County
www.sheboygancounty.com
- Alzheimer's Association Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter
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

Welcome to the Winter 2015 issue of the Connections Newsletter produced by the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County. The goals of the newsletters are to promote the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County, share information about future events and provide a forum for caregivers and organizational members. Additional names can be added to the e-mail distribution list by contacting the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 920-467-4100.

Our Champions who Care Grant allows us to recognize local leaders who support employed family caregivers. Check out the many resources such as Memory Café, Powerful Tools for Caregivers and the March Caregivers Connect.

The deadline to submit articles for the spring 2015 edition of the newsletter is Monday, March 30, 2015. Please submit articles to Jane Jensen at jane.jensen@ces.uwex.edu. Please contact me at 920-459-5900 with questions.

Sincerely,
Jane Jensen, Co-editor
UW-Extension Sheboygan County/Family Living

Champions *who Care* Grant

The Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County was one of eight coalitions in the United States to receive a grant from the National Alliance for Caregiving to bring awareness to the challenges faced by employed family caregivers. Grant money will be used to host a breakfast event on January 30th at The Bull at Pinehurst Farms. This event will bring together leaders of local companies and lawmakers to honor local “Champions who Care” Louie Gentine, CEO Sargento Foods; Adam Payne, Administrator Sheboygan County; Devin LeMahieu, Senator State of Wisconsin; and Jon Rost, President Hearthstone of Wisconsin. Janet

Zander, Public Policy Advocate from Greater Wisconsin Area Agency on Aging Resources will share national policy initiatives. Thanks to family caregivers, Jeanette, Paula, Lynn and Marjean for sharing their stories which will be presented in a video at the breakfast. We hope this event will make a difference for employed family caregivers.

Kathleen
Manny
Co-chair Family Caregivers Coalition



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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 to better meet the physical, emotional, financial and spiritual challenges of caregiving. Call the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County c/o Aging & Disability Resource Center at 920-467-4100 or 800-596-1919 for more information or to **make a reservation**. (Some events open to care recipient and/or professional caregivers as indicated below.)

Thursday, March 19 - 1:30-3:00 PM: Benevolent Touch - using touch for comfort and healing

Presenter: Roxanne Taylor, RN, BSN Administrator at Oak Creek Assisted Living

Benevolent Touch is a positive, gentle, nurturing touch provided to ensure someone that they are in a safe, secure and caring environment. Caregivers learn how to enhance the quality of life for themselves and the person for whom they provide care by learning to give positive tactile contact. Enhance self-nurturing skills that reduce burn-out, improve stress reduction techniques, and foster greater energy and better performance levels. (For family caregivers and care recipients)

Thursday, June 18: Grief and Loss related to Caregiving

Presenter: Nancy Simenz, Chaplain

Grief is not just the death of a loved one. We experience loss throughout our lives and we need to acknowledge that loss. Learn about the emotional impact of grief and how we heal from it. (open to family caregivers)

Thursday, September 17: Legacy Letters-The Celebration of Your LIFE!

Presenter: Tracy Cinealis, CSA, Senior Living Director at The Waterford at Plymouth

A legacy letter or “ethical will” may be one of the most cherished and meaningful gifts you can leave to your family. This is not a legal document. It is a heartfelt expression of what truly matters most in your life. Explore your legacy and start an outline of your life’s journey. (open to family caregivers)

Evening Event – 6:00-7:30 PM

Thursday May 21: Me, Myself, & I: Managing Stress & Compassion Fatigue through Self-Care

Presenter: Kate Baer, Director Mental Health America in Sheboygan County

While stress is a natural part of life, learning how to manage and cope with our stress in healthy ways is important for our overall well-being. Join this session as a caregiver to learn helpful tips on how to: identify your stressors, manage your stress with healthy responses, incorporate self-care tactics into everyday life to reduce burnout and ultimately live a happier, healthier life. (open to family caregivers and professional caregivers)

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.

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.

Member Messages

An Employed Family Caregivers Story

Jane Jensen, Co-chair of the Family Caregivers Coalition in Sheboygan County

It is with eternal gratitude to my parents that I share a bit about my experiences balancing long-distance family caregiving with fulltime employment. My parents raised four children with great love and generosity while running a large dairy farm and milk hauling operation. It was without hesitation that I told both of my parents that it was time for us to take care of them when each of them were diagnosed with aggressive cancers less than two years apart.

My Dad was suddenly in the ER and diagnosed with advanced bladder cancer. His treatment options were limited as a transplant recipient. He wanted to fight! I spent many days staying at hotels in Rochester, MN and driving my Mom into the hospital each day for the long vigils and meetings. My siblings and I were able to piece together supports for my Mom in her caregiving role at home. I often felt guilty that I couldn't stop in on a daily basis. We lost my Dad so quickly! Less than two years later my Mom was suddenly diagnosed with a Level 4 Glioblastoma Multiforme. I had never heard of it! It is a lethal original brain tumor. My Mom was the sharpest person I had ever met. I had to sleep by her side & dispense meds for her safety while we met with neurosurgeons and oncologists to choose treatment. It was

an intense journey of surgery, radiation, chemo and rehab. I was there every day but had to return to work as I was running out of leave time. It was so hard to leave! My siblings and I communicated frequently and I was able to participate in team meetings via conference calls. I drove back and forth on weekends and called my Mom every day. I received the phone call that my Mom lost her battle while I was driving back to Sheboygan after a weekend visit. It felt so sudden!

Living four hours away from my parents and working fulltime required a balancing act, utilizing resources and asking for help. It is fortunate that I have a good relationship with my siblings and we were able to work well as a team. There were also many generous colleagues who helped me while I was on leave and kept in touch via telephone and e-mail. I utilized FMLA and leave time to take the chunks of time required of a long distance caregiver. I wondered about early retirement but realized that it was not feasible financially. I would do it all over again and urge all of you to ask for help and make use of available resources. Remember that you are not alone!

The Challenges of Today's Employed Family Caregivers

Nick Verhagen - Project Independence, TLC Homes, Inc.

Many of us have been fortunate to serve as a family caregiver during our children's formative years. Finding a balance between providing that service while being a productive employee and colleague provides its challenges. We want to do it all; be an excellent parent while trying not to show any signs of fatigue or exhaustion during our vocation. It is natural to feel this way, just as it is natural for us to provide parental care to our own children. It is less natural when the person we are providing care for is our parent or another mature loved one. The dynamics involved change. The pressure felt at the home as well as the profession in which we are facing alternate responsibilities is beyond demanding. Finding a consistent balance can be very difficult.

According to a recent study done by AARP there are as many as 90 million family caregivers in the United States today. Two out of every five adults are family caregivers, and almost half of them are performing complex medical/nursing tasks such as managing multiple medications, providing wound care, food prep, or operating medical equipment. The same study shares that family caregivers

provide \$450 billion worth of unpaid care each year. Those numbers are staggering.

Please find comfort in knowing you aren't alone and that there are options for assistance out there. Approach your HR Department to discuss policies that may be in place to support this balancing act. This would aid your employer as it would assist in promoting positive productivity while retaining solid employees.

There are also local organizations willing and able to care for your family member during typical work hours so family caregivers are able to focus on their employment and/or families. These organizations have qualified staff trained to assist with personal cares and medications combined with providing unique opportunities outside of the home.

Please contact the Aging and Disability Resource Center at (920) 467.4100 for a listing of options available.

Blessings to all employed family caregivers working on finding a consistent balance.

Bill to grant Social Security Credits to caregivers

Submitted by Elder Benefit Specialists - Liza Gibson and Mike Traynor

Most of us will either be caregivers or will need care in our lifetimes. Currently, more than 42 million unpaid caregivers provide care to someone age 18 and older who is ill or has a disability. But caregiving, while providing an invaluable benefit, comes at some cost to the caregiver.

In fact, in some cases, caregivers may be receiving less Social Security benefits. This is because, generally, uncompensated caregiving does not pay into Social Security. As a result of paying less into Social Security, a person who provided caregiving may receive a lower amount of Title II (including disability and retirement) benefits from Social Security or may be unable to qualify at all for Title II Social Security benefits including monthly payment and lump-sum death payments. The amount a person pays into Social Security over their lifetime could also impact whether or not they are eligible for premium free Medicare Part A.

HR 5024 - the Social Security Caregiver Act of 2015 - would amend Title II of the Social Security Act to provide eligible caregivers with work credits for up to five years of caring for dependent relatives. The

Social Security Caregiving Credit Act was introduced to the House on July 8, 2014 by Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY). As of the date of this article, the bill has 16 co-sponsors including representatives Gwen Moore and Mark Pocan from Wisconsin.

Under the proposed bill, for each month a caregiver worked over 80 hours caring for a dependent relative without monetary compensation Social Security would deem certain wages to have been paid. There is a formula Social Security would use to determine the value of the deemed wages. This means the amount of Social Security benefits the caregiver would be eligible for when they retire would be increased.

“Caregivers are often torn by the impossible choice of taking care of a family member or earning less for themselves and their family,” said Representative Nita Lowey. “My bill would provide them the peace of mind that, when they retire, they won’t be financially punished for providing needed care for loved ones.”

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Memory Café Coming to Sheboygan County



The Alzheimer’s Association, in partnership with Generations, will host a monthly Memory Café for individuals who are living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), early-stage Alzheimer’s or other dementia and their care partners. This free social event will be held the 4th Wednesday, 2:30-4:00 PM every month beginning March 26th at 2:30 PM in the library at Generations, 1500 Douglas Dr, Plymouth.

The Memory Café offers participants a safe and fun way to share their stories and socialize with others who have concerns about their memory. Come meet and mingle and create new friendships with others who have similar experiences. Learn how staying physically, socially and mentally active is good for the brain.

To register please contact Ginny Nyhuis at: (920) 838-1311 or gnyhuis@alz.org

Care to Share? (Share your interesting tidbits. Please send to jane.jensen@ces.uwex.edu)

- ◆ Once a caregiver, always a caregiver. Karen K.
- ◆ Take each day as it comes and keep smiling. Sharon S.
- ◆ Find one or two things you are thankful for each day. Julie D.



Caring for someone with a chronic illness such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's disease or stroke can be physically, emotionally and financially exhausting.

Connect with Resources



Balance your Life
Take Care of Yourself

Powerful Tools FOR Caregivers

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an educational program designed to help family caregivers take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend. You will benefit from this class whether you are helping a parent, spouse, or friend.

Participants will learn to:

- Reduce stress
- Improve self-confidence
- Better communicate feelings
- Increase their ability to make tough decisions
- Locate helpful resources.

Dates: Tuesdays, February 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2015 (6 weeks)

Times: 9:30 AM-Noon*

Location: 832 North 6th Street, Sheboygan

Cost: \$30

* Hot lunch at noon compliments of:



Brought to you by:



Aurora Health Care



To register, call: (920) 467-4100

Space is limited; register early!

To register, call (920) 467-4100 and mail check for \$30.00 payable to: Sheboygan County Aging & Disability Resource Center, 650 Forest Ave, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085. Payment covers cost of materials. Call to request respite for care recipient during the workshop.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City, Zip: _____

Recent Films About Caregivers, Their Loved Ones and Family Battles with Disease & Disability

I'll Be Me - *Glen Campbell, His Music is Legendary, His Story is Human* - Having received his diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, Glen was told to hang up his guitar and prepare for the inevitable. Instead, he and his wife went public with his diagnosis and announced a "Goodbye Tour." This film documents the journey.



The Genius of Marian - An intimate family portrait that explores the heartbreak of Alzheimer's disease, the power of art and the meaning of family. The Genius of Marian follows Pam White in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease as her son, the filmmaker, documents her struggle to hang on to a sense of self.

A Sacred Journey is a film by Ernesto Quinteros telling the story of Juan, a young man struggling with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and the steps he and his family take in combating this fatal illness.

States of Grace - A feature-length documentary by Helen S. Cohen and Mark Lipman about Dr. Grace Dammann and her remarkable recovery following a near-fatal, head-on collision on the Golden Gate Bridge. The film traces her recovery and a family's journey in the wake of a devastating crisis, showing the resilience of both caregiver and care-receiver, their triumphs and setbacks along the way.

Alive Inside - This documentary follows social worker Dan Cohen, founder of the nonprofit organization Music & Memory, as he fights against a broken healthcare system. The film demonstrates music's ability to combat memory loss, restore a deep sense of self to those suffering from it, and how the healing power of music can triumph where prescription medication falls short.

Cake - a film about a chronic pain sufferer and her caregiver .

The Sandwich Generation - (2006) Filmmaker - photographer couple Julie Winokur and Ed Kashi were busy pursuing their careers and raising two children when Winokur's 83-year-old father, Herbie, became too infirm to care for himself.

Swan Song - When Marilyn is diagnosed with dementia at age 58, her daughters refocused their lives to care for her during her most precious years. As the disease progresses, the daughters struggle to care for a woman who is less and less like their mother, and navigate the unknown until they are forced to make a heartbreaking decision.

The Theory of Everything - examines the relationship between Stephen Hawking and his first wife Jane. It portrays a balanced look at the strain his ALS caused in their marriage.

Still Alice - a linguist who is diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's disease and her husband who is loving toward her but is unwilling to make caring for her his primary focus.

Seasonal Affective Disorder...more than the winter blues

You may have heard of the term “winter blues”, especially living in the Midwest. Due to our often harsh weather, becoming more sedentary in the winter is not uncommon, however if you find that you are feeling more than just a little blue, you may be experiencing, Season Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a legitimate disorder and a real concern for many individuals in the winter months. The hours of shrinking daylight can cause some individuals to cycle into a downward spiral of negative thoughts, unwanted weight gain, less interest in social activities

and an overwhelming desire to sleep. If you experience some of these symptoms, you may be experiencing SAD. There are several things that you can try to feel better: exercise, healthy food choices, reaching out to friends.

If you aren't able to shake the blues visit your health care professional for treatment options.

Take care and remember, spring and warmer days will be right around the corner.

Resource: Health.USNews.Com

Vegetable Soup

4 cups water
 14.5 oz. diced tomatoes
 3 beef boullion cubes
 2 carrots - diced
 2 stalks celery with leaves - diced
 2 medium potatoes - diced
 2 medium onions - diced
 1 tsp. salt
 4 peppercorns
 beef shank



Cook - simmer until meat is done approximately four hours. If using crock pot remove bone. You may use any vegetables you like.

Submitted by Dianne H

Calendar of Events

**February 17
 - March 24**

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

9:30 a.m.—Noon, Sheboygan Senior Community, 832 N 6th St, Sheboygan
 Call 920-467-4100 and mail check for \$30.00 payable to: Sheboygan County Aging & Disability Resource Center, 650 Forest Avenue, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

March 19

Caregivers Connect - Benevolent Touch - using touch for comfort and healing

1:30-3:00 p.m., 650 Forest Avenue, Sheboygan Falls - Call 920-467-4100 to register.
 Presenter: Roxanne Taylor, RN, BSN Administrator at Oak Creek Assisted Living

4th Wednesday

Memory Café

2:30 - 4:00 p.m. beginning March 26, Generations Library, 1500 Douglas Dr, Plymouth
 The monthly Memory Café is for individuals who are living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI), early-stage Alzheimer's or other dementia and their care partners. There is no charge to attend, but registration is required. To register please contact Ginny Nyhuis at: (920) 838-1311 or gnyhuis@alz.org



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Sheboygan County
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Phone: 920-467-4100
or 800-596-1919
Website: www.sheboygancounty.com

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.