

# Caregiver Chronicles

August 2021



Caring for Caregivers

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY  
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704  
608-261-9930



**We, the caregivers, have the power to do things proactively to benefit our present and future generations.**

*—Betsy L. Stone, therapist and author*

You have a new role: family caregiver.  
It's a role nobody applies for.  
You don't expect it.  
You won't be prepared.  
You probably won't even identify yourself as a caregiver.

—Gail Sheehy, author and social observer

**G**ail Sheehy was a best-selling author and journalist, most famous for her examination of crises in adult life and how to use them as opportunities for change. She was caregiver for her husband for over a decade, and wrote *Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos into Confidence*. The above quote echoes much of what I've been hearing from caregivers over the years.

None of us can anticipate every event that might occur—and as Sheehy said of caregiving, “It’s a role nobody applies for.” Yet for each of us there comes a time when those we love or we, ourselves, will require care. This is not something that *might* happen—it is something that *will* happen. We don’t have a crystal ball for the how, when, or why, so at some point it becomes important to just go ahead and take some basic steps to prepare to the best of our ability.

What can caregivers or “caregivers-in-waiting” do? No matter what phase of caregiving you are currently in, you can begin having conversations. If you have an older adult spouse, partner, friend, or family member, or one with a chronic health condition, begin to talk about their wishes as they age and conditions progress. Make sure they have a signed Healthcare Power of Attorney and Financial Power of Attorney.

None of us can plan for every eventuality. People who are active and among the “young old” (ages 60 – 69) have strokes, heart attacks, cancers, accidents, and adverse surgical outcomes. An Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s diagnosis can also upend plans for how an individual’s life will unfold. In the case of the “middle” and “oldest old” (70 – 80+) an individual may be doing well until a fall results in a broken hip or other injury that completely changes the trajectory. If there is no plan of any kind when a crisis occurs, choices may be limited. What does a spouse do when their partner has a stroke and they don’t know about their financial situation? What happens when a parent assumes an adult child will be able to care for them but it requires the caregiver to prematurely quit a job or sacrifice care for their own children?

Getting documents in place, learning where your loved one’s important paperwork is kept, and assessing the current living situation is something that’s never too early to address. Since a significant majority of older adults prefer to age in place, talk about what might need to change in order to make that a more likely option. Is your potential care partner living in a two-story home with no bathroom on the first floor and laundry in the basement? Do they live hundreds of miles away from any family? Start looking at the practicality of your potential care partner’s home—especially if they share it with you. If you begin these discussions early, they can be framed in a positive light. Talk about what makes them happy and how they envision themselves living as they age.

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

Be honest about your own wants and needs as well. Think of ways to compensate for inevitable changes with home modifications, assistive devices, and proximity to family and friends who can offer support.

After a discussion with a care partner who is in early stages of needing help and support, take a look at your own situation. What is your capacity for caregiving and how are you going to care for yourself and others who depend on you? Will you be attempting to work, care for children and aging parents? Are you a spouse or partner who is facing health challenges of your own? Given the average length of time a caregiver spends providing care is 4.5 years—often much longer for a person with dementia, Alzheimer’s or related diseases—it is important to give consideration to how you will navigate your own life. If you expect to care for parents and you have siblings, assess everyone’s capacity and commitment then broaden it to include others in your circle and community. Far too often expectations rest on an individual caregiver.

It’s also helpful to identify yourself as a caregiver. In my experience, it is true that caregivers may not identify or label themselves for a variety of reasons. They may see their role as small (they just run a few errands or accompany a loved one to a medical appointment now and then); they are happy to be able to help so don’t think about getting needed support caring for a loved one; or it may just be that the role is an expectation by family, community, or culture—considered something “we just do for one another.” While any or all of these can be true, those of us who work with family caregivers encourage them to identify as such for the purpose of helping them find needed services and support.

When caregivers reach out to the Dane County Caregiver Program, we talk about immediate needs but we also talk about how to plan for the longterm and maintain self care. I’ve recently had discussions with caregivers who have observed progression in their care partner’s condition. We go through the resources they anticipate needing in order to create a future call list for planning. My discussions with them on sustainable caregiving prompted both this article and the resource list on pages 4 and 5.

In an effort to serve a greater number of caregivers, we encourage everyone to do more advance planning. Reach out to me at the Dane County Caregiver Program to discuss care planning, available resources, caregiver support, and self-care; or to apply for *Caring for Caregivers Grants* and for referrals to other funding sources for respite care. If you are in a phase of progressively more hands-on caregiving, there are also resources to help make your caregiving journey sustainable.

If you feel inspired to do some advance planning and would like to build a list of contacts you may need, you can use the resource list on the next two pages as a jumping off point. As Betsy L. Stone says in this month’s cover quote: “We, the caregivers, have the power to do things proactively to benefit our present and future generations.” I would add that we also have the power to prioritize care for ourselves.



Jane De Broux  
Caregiver Specialist  
Dane County Area Agency on Aging



Caring for Caregivers

608-261-5679

[debroux.jane@countyofdane.com](mailto:debroux.jane@countyofdane.com)

## RESOURCE LIST FOR CAREGIVER PLANNING

### **The Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP)**

(see page 5 for details and eligibility)

AFCSP is administered by the Alzheimer's and Dementia Alliance of Wisconsin (ADAW). ADAW's AFCSP program and the Dane County Caregiver Program coordinate closely to help caregivers with funding for caregiver respite and support.

### **Respite Care Association of Wisconsin (RCAW)**

*Caregiver Respite Grant Program (CRGP)*

This grant is for those who cannot be served by other caregiver support programs or LTC support programs. Application requires supporting documentation from the ADRC or Dane County Caregiver Program.

The RCAW also has free online training for both caregivers and respite care workers; and a free registry of respite care providers and a number of other resources including a guide to hiring the right senior caregiver.

### **Dane County Senior Focal Points**

Case management program

Trained case management professionals provide older adults (60+) the support, information, referrals, and advocacy they need to remain safely in their homes.

### **Dane County Dementia Care Specialist**

Audrey Warrington 608-240-7400

[Warrington.Audrey@countyofdane.com](mailto:Warrington.Audrey@countyofdane.com)

The Dane County Dementia Care Specialist can help caregivers whose care partners are persons with dementia with expertise in brain health, behaviors, and caregiver support.

### **ADRC of Dane County**

The ADRC staffs phone lines from 7:45 am—4:30 pm Monday through Friday.

Information and Assistance staff provides unbiased information and can help you apply for benefits and programs including Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security. They can also provide referrals to Disability and Elder Benefit Specialists and information on a wide range of topics including:

- Adaptive equipment
- Alzheimer's and other dementias
- Caregiver supports and respite
- Energy assistance
- In-homecare, personal care, and nursing care
- Health, nutrition, and home-delivered meal programs
- Home modifications
- Housing options
- Legal resources
- Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security
- Support groups
- Transportation

**Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance**  
6314 Odana Road, Ste4  
Madison, WI 53719  
(Website: click the logo at right)

608 232 3400 **phone**  
888-308-6251 **toll free**  
608 232 3407 **facsimile**



## **Alzheimer's Family & Caregiver Support Program Dane County**

The Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance, coordinates the **Alzheimer's Family & Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP)** on behalf of Dane County.

The goal of this program is to help families care for their loved ones who have Alzheimer's disease or other irreversible dementia at home, and thereby avoid or forestall the high costs of institutional care. The program does this by helping families obtain and pay for goods and services that are needed to provide good care for their loved ones at home. Up to \$1500 per year is available for each eligible household, depending upon income and need. A waiting list is maintained for new applicants, when necessary.

### **AFCSP funds can be used to pay for:**

- In-home respite care/ companionship
- Adult daycare
- Personal care services such as bathing
- Adaptive equipment and supplies
- Any other goods or services that are necessary (because of the dementia) to maintain the person with dementia as a member of the household

### **To qualify for AFCSP funding in Dane County, the person with dementia must**

- Reside in Dane County in a home setting: not a facility
- Have a diagnosis of irreversible dementia from a physician (we can fax a form for the physician to sign)

If the person with dementia and his/her spouse have an expected gross annual income of **\$48,000** or less, they will meet the income requirement.

In Dane County, AFCSP participants cannot be simultaneously enrolled in Care Wisconsin Family Care, Care Wisconsin Partnership, i-Care Partnership, IRIS, Dane County Supportive Home Care, or the National Family Caregiver Support Program (**NFCSP**).

### **For more information, or to apply for this program in Dane County, please contact:**

**Mary Severson, BS, CSW**  
**Grant Administrator**  
Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance  
**(608) 441-8420**

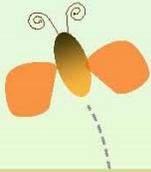
*Note: Each Wisconsin county receives AFCSP funding from the State and has some discretion as to how funds will be distributed. For more information regarding AFCSP in other counties, contact that county, the Wisconsin DHFS Bureau of Aging, or the Alzheimer's & Dementia Alliance*

Call:

1-833-558-0712

Access Code:

199 641 6875 ##



1st & 3rd Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Throughout 2021

1st Wednesdays

1-833-558-0712 Access Code:  
199 641 6875 ##

3rd Wednesdays

1-833-558-0712 Access Code:  
199 195 6932 ##

[Topics available here:](#)

or by calling 608-240-7400

# Let's Connect

Free call in  
program for  
seniors!!



**August 4th at 10 a.m.**

Kristen Acker, is a Registered Nurse with the Caregiver Support Program at the Madison VA for past 16 months. Kristen completes home visits and wellness checks for Veteran's and Caregivers participating in the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

Kristen will be presenting on the Campaign for Inclusive Care, a joint initiative with the Elizabeth Doyle Foundation which is patient centered care that promotes inclusion of Caregivers that patients rely on to maintain their physical and mental health needs.

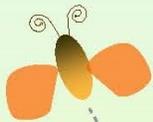


Call:

1-833-558-0712

Access Code:

199 195 6932 ##



Let's

Connect

Free call in  
program for  
seniors!!



**August 18th at 10 a.m.**

Have you ever wondered how you vaccinate a lion, or why giraffe might take a ferry? Henry Vilas Zoo Conservation and Education Curator Jess Thompson has spent her career finding the answers to these questions and more. From tracking whooping cranes across the US, and polar bears across the Arctic, as well as providing hoof care for the largest giraffe herd in North America, she can't wait to share her love for wildlife and wild places.





**The Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy will be offering program events and new materials for older adults designed to enhance their experiences in the Conservancy.**

### **Make a Memory Days**

Program focus on Sounds of Nature (music) and activities led by trained Naturalists.

Meet at [Orchid Heights Park](#) 10:00 AM—noon

#### **Dementia Friendly Day**

Register: <https://pheasantbranch.org/news/make-a-memory-days-in-the-conservancy/>

**Thursday, August 19, 2021** (rain date is August 20th)

#### **Limited Mobility Day**

Register: <https://pheasantbranch.org/news/make-a-memory-days-in-the-conservancy/>

**Tuesday, August 24, 2021** (rain date is August 25th)

### **Wonder Walks**

The Wonder Walk project was the original idea of the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Senior Advisory Council. Wonder Walk mini-[lessons can be downloaded](#) from the Friends website starting in early August and the lessons will be in backpacks for check-out at various community locations.

There are six mini-lessons including: Forest Bathing, Landforms, Lookouts, Prairie, Springs, Water

#### **Grandparents and Grandchildren Day** (a Saturday morning in September 2021)

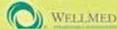
Program focus on intergenerational activities with a variety of experiences and topics to include Forests and Trees. This fun program is in partnership with the Madison Reading Project

More details and registration information to be announced soon at [www.pheasantbranch.org](http://www.pheasantbranch.org).

#### **Care Givers/Care Partners Day** (date to be determined)

By popular demand, the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy Are making plans for a special day for Care Givers and Care Partners. This half-day program tentatively scheduled for early September will be designed to support Care Givers and Care Partners in providing sensory enhanced experiences in easy to access areas of the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

**Questions?** Contact John Daly [jhdaly@charter.net](mailto:jhdaly@charter.net)



## PRESENTATION

### AGING IN AMERICA WILL NEVER BE THE SAME: A SERIES

#### Special guest speaker

**Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar**

**Lucy Barylack, MSW**



In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, aging in America may never be the same. The death toll in nursing homes and long-term care facilities has revealed how unprepared our health systems are to protect our most vulnerable citizens.

Many seniors and their families consider the option of long-term care at some point. COVID-19 has made many people re-think those options. In addition to long-term care, some are considering aging-in-place, or living with relatives if they can. Our sessions will explore the pros and cons of all of the options. We will discuss problems and solutions and identify resources that support all of these options for healthy aging.

<b>Wednesday August 4</b>	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>How has COVID-19 changed our view on long-term care facilities?</b> <i>What are the lessons learned to better protect our loved ones?</i>
<b>Wednesday August 11</b>	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>What do seniors and caregivers need to consider to age-in-place?</b> <i>What resources are required? Is your home for feasible to aging-in-place? What modifications might be required?</i>
<b>Wednesday August 18</b>	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>What do caregivers and seniors need to look for in a long-term care facility?</b> <i>What questions should you be asking? What do you need to consider?</i>
<b>Wednesday August 25</b>	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>Family dynamics: When is it absolutely necessary for a caregiver to place their loved one?</b> <i>What should seniors consider and explore before deciding to live with relatives? What should relatives know?</i>



A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation Register online at [www.caregiverteleconnection.org](http://www.caregiverteleconnection.org) or call 866.390.6491 Toll Free



# FREE Virtual (Online) Welcome to Medicare Seminars

*Sponsored by Area Agency on Aging of Dane County's  
Elder Benefits Specialist Program*

## What you need to know about enrolling in Medicare

If you are turning age 64 this year, we can help you make informed choices about your Medicare options! You'll receive accurate and detailed information from unbiased experts in benefit programs.

**September 18, 2021, 9-11:30 am**

Email [aaa@countyofdane.com](mailto:aaa@countyofdane.com) to register by 9/9/21

**November 13, 2021, 9-11:30 am**

Email [aaa@countyofdane.com](mailto:aaa@countyofdane.com) to register by 11/4/21

Seminars will be offered via Zoom.

Email for more information.



Monday through Friday  
Call 7:45 am—4:30 pm

**(608) 240-7400**

Website: [www.daneadrc.org](http://www.daneadrc.org)

Email: [ADRC@countyofdane.com](mailto:ADRC@countyofdane.com)

Click on the button to follow the ADRC on facebook.



**Connecting People with the  
Assistance They Need**

**Monthly MIPPA Moment: August is National Immunization Month:  
COVID-19 Vaccines Continue to Provide Relief**

**MIPPA (Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act) has a goal of educating older adults on Medicare's cost-saving benefits & preventive services.**

There is a COVID-19 vaccination update for 2021: an updated tally with Public Health Madison Dane County on COVID-19 vaccinations show that current estimates of herd immunity are between 60% and 90%. There are over 69% of people in Dane County who are partially vaccinated and over 65% who are fully vaccinated. For people over age 65, over 96% of people in Dane County are partially vaccinated! (See <https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/dashboard>.)

It is important to know that Medicare continues to cover the COVID-19 vaccination for beneficiaries. You pay nothing for the COVID-19 vaccine. You won't pay a deductible or copayment, and your provider can't charge you an administration fee to give you the shot, if that is the only reason you are being seen. *If you get other medical services at the same time you get the COVID-19 vaccine, you may owe a copayment or deductible for those services.*

You may even be able to get the vaccine in your home, depending on where you live. If you have Medicare and have a disability or face other challenges in getting to a location away from home for a vaccination, Medicare may pay a doctor or other care provider to give you the COVID-19 vaccine in your home if the service is available. Contact your regular doctor or health care provider and ask if they're able to give you the COVID-19 vaccine in your home. If they can't, they might be able to refer you to someone who can do this. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE for vaccine contacts in your state.

You may find useful information on how to find a COVID-19 vaccination at: <https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine> or <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/>.

***For more information on MIPPA Programs, call MIPPA Program Specialist, Leilani Amundson, at 608-240-7458.***

**NEW Caregiver Support Group for LatinX Older Adult Caregivers**

**[\(see flyer with details on page 12\)](#)**

(Starts August 5th (Thursdays), 5:30-7pm

Fitchburg Senior Center, 5510 Lacy Rd, Fitchburg, WI 53711)

NewBridge Madison and the City of Fitchburg are partnering to offer a 3-month support program directed towards LatinX Older Adults who have taken on the role of caregiver within their families.

Call Garrett to sign up! 608-512-0000 ext 3009.

Programa de Educación y Apoyo para Cuidadores

Fecha de inicio: el 5 de agosto, 5:30pm

localización - Fitchburg Senior Center, 5510 Lacy Rd, Fitchburg, WI 53711)

NewBridge Madison y la ciudad de Fitchburg ofrecen un programa de apoyo de 3 meses dirigido a adultos mayores latinos que han asumido el papel de cuidadores dentro de sus familias. ¡

Llame a Garrett para registrarse! 608-512-0000 ext 3009

**Garrett Tusler, MA**, Diversity and Inclusion Program Coordinator

*Hablo español*

*Falo português*

# PROGRAMA DE EDUCACIÓN Y APOYO PARA CUIDADORES



¿Es usted un adulto mayor que cuida a sus nietos? ¿O cuida usted de su abuelo/abuela?

Le invitamos al Fitchburg Senior Center donde exploraremos formas de cuidarnos mejor para poder cuidar a nuestros seres queridos.

## Temas de Talleres

- Cómo aumentar el bienestar
- Técnicas del autocuidado para cuidadores
- Estrategias para desarrollar el cuidado receptivo y cariñoso
- ... y mucho más

## Más información

- Cena gratis
- Actividades divertidas para los jóvenes y adolescentes
- Oportunidades de conocer a otras familias
- Quiere participar? Llámenos!
  - 6085120000 ext. 3009



**¿De que se trata?**  
Aprende como cuidarse bien a su familia y a si mismo



**¿Para quién es?**  
Los adultos mayores que cuidan a sus familiares y/o los que cuidan a su abuelo/a



**¿Cuánto cuesta?**  
Todos los cursos son Gratis



**¿Cómo Llegamos?**  
Proporcionamos el transporte (ida y vuelta) al Fitchburg Senior Center



**¿Cuándo?**  
Los talleres comienzan en Agosto

**¡Escaneame!**



## Cómo me inscribo?

Mándanos un mensaje por whatsapp, correo electronico, o llámenos directamente para inscribirse



6088001316



[GarrettT@newbridgemadison.org](mailto:GarrettT@newbridgemadison.org)



6085120000 ext. 3009