

Caregiver Chronicles

November 2021



Caring for Caregivers

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



November is National Caregiver Month



RECOGNIZE



ASSIST



INCLUDE



SUPPORT



ENGAGE

National Family Caregivers Month

Administration for Community Living

Click the blue graphic to the left to view the video *Faces of Caregiving*, 26 diverse caregivers from across the nation representing a range of caregiving situations and needs.

National Caregiver Month: Say Thank You to Caregivers by Giving Them a Break

Caregivers need a break.

A little more weary, a little less resilient—that's what I'm hearing as I speak to the caregivers who contact the Caregiver Program. In Dane County we have made strides with our vaccination rates, which helps, but the "new normal" still requires more of caregivers than the pre-COVID days did and that was already plenty. Certainly many family caregivers are happy to provide care to loved ones, which can be rewarding and even joyful at times. It is also inherently a role that supports those we love through loss of mobility, loss of cognitive capabilities, the fragility of advanced old age, and ultimately, life itself. In addition, caregiving involves losses particular to the caregiver: their freedom; sometimes their careers; and, in the case of those caring for a spouse, it may be the loss of a dream for retirement after a lifetime of planning.

When you add in what COVID has wrought—disruptions of the social order, additional safety concerns, difficulty accessing medical services, closing of community program sites, home-schooling young children, loss of childcare options, job loss, the shortage of home care workers, and business closings—it was as though caregivers had leveled up to the next degree of difficulty in a game where the rules changed at a dizzying rate. Fortunately, funding from the CARES Act allowed for more assistance from the Dane County Caregiver Program in 2020, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will provide additional funds to support the Caregiver Program in 2022 and 2023.

Caregivers, in my experience, exhibit an admirable degree of grit, determination, and compassion. Most are quite exceptional individuals but, like everyone else, they cannot function long term without the need to recharge. Recognition of the scope of this need is gaining visibility and exciting new projects are planned at the federal, state, and county levels. In September, the RAISE (Recognize, Assist, Include, Support & Engage) Family Caregiving Advisory Council delivered its initial report to Congress. It includes an inventory of federally-funded efforts to support caregivers along with interviews with 26 caregivers representing a range of caregiving situations and needs. (Click the blue graphic on the cover of this issue to watch the video interviews of caregivers about their experience or [click here](#) for the news release and access to the full report.)

It's an honor to support caregivers for their invaluable service to our families, and communities. During Caregiver Month and as you celebrate Thanksgiving, check in with a caregiver. If you are able, see what you can do to give them a break. If you are a caregiver who needs support and/or a break, contact me at the Dane County Caregiver Program.



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Dane County Area Agency on Aging



Caring for Caregivers

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National Caregiver Month: Celebrate Family Caregivers

November is *National Family Caregiver Month*, a time to recognize and thank the many hard working and devoted people who provide care to a loved one.

We all know a caregiver—the gentleman who patiently walks with his wife whose mobility is failing; the woman who gently nudges her forgetful husband to follow her back to the car after purchasing groceries; the woman who brings her aging mother to her doctor appointments; the man who brings his kids along to do some repairs on his parent’s house. They are everywhere—family, friends, and neighbors who help their loved ones with the daily tasks of life, allowing them to maintain their independence, dignity and quality of life. The role of the unpaid caregiver is invaluable and yet they often don’t recognize their own worth.

Let’s Celebrate Caregivers this month! Here are some simple things you can do to really help a caregiver and let them know that they are important and appreciated.

- **Stop by their house and say hello.** You don’t have to bring anything or do anything. Stopping for a quick visit to let them know you are thinking about them can mean a lot, especially if it is hard for them to get out of the house.
- **Call the caregiver and check in on how *they* are doing.** Too often the conversation is about the person needing care and the caregivers’ needs are forgotten. Listen to them without judging or advising. An opportunity to share their feelings openly and in confidence can be a great help and comfort.
- **Offer to help.** Instead of telling them to call if they need something, be more persistent in offering your help. Try this. “I am going to help you. Do you want me to bring a meal or a mop?” Or ask what they need from the grocery store or when is a good time to send your teenager over to mow/rake/shovel snow. Be specific and gently insist on helping.
- **Invite them to do something – go for a walk, coffee, a movie.** Maybe they have turned you down too many times, so you stopped asking. Try asking again and offer to help find someone to be with their loved one if that is a problem. Even if they say no, being asked will help them see they are still included.
- **Remind them of the importance of self-care, then help them seek out ways to get a break.** Accompany them to their Senior Center to see what they offer that provides support.
- **Attend a support group meeting with them.** Sometimes it is hard to go alone, and your presence will open up this valuable resource to them. Contact the Caregiver Program to get a listing or help them locate a group in their church or community center.
- **Check in regularly.** A weekly phone call to ask how things are going can alleviate feelings of loneliness and help them feel special and important. Sometimes they just need someone to listen to them, and sometimes hearing about someone else’s life gives them a break. If you feel comfortable offer to visit with their loved one so they can get out for a while.

Take some time to recognize and thank the family caregivers that you know. They deserve to be celebrated!

—Jane Mahoney, *Older American’s Act Consultant*
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

Let's Get Away Together



This series is comprised of interactive sessions with each week focusing on a new place or cultural activity, while incorporating storytelling, music, poetry writing, and/or a simple craft. Each session will include a follow-up message filled with tips, activities, and recipes for families to continue to enjoy after the virtual trip. The focus of each group is to explore a new world, experience a variety of engaging opportunities, and enjoy a sense of camaraderie and community.

Let's Get Away Together is intended to be an enjoyable activity for family caregivers and the person they care for. Those receiving care who are able to participate in the discussion and activities are encouraged to attend with their family caregiver. Read a Q&A about the series [here](#).

October 26

Hallows Eve-themed welcome back party
Let's explore the spooky, fantastical, and cultural traditions that help us find light in the darkness this time of year! Feel free to come in costume with your favorite Halloween or holiday candy, food, decoration to show and tell!

November 2

Let's go to Germany in the fall!
We welcome back Katrina for a travel recap with photos of her recent adventure, including a taste of German and Bavarian music!

November 9

"Butterflies, Hummingbirds, and beauty in flight around the world"
Come find solace while learning unusual facts about butterflies, hummingbirds, and beauty in flight around the world with Alicia!

November 16

Let's Go to South Africa
Join us as we explore the ecological and historical riches of South Africa, as we begin our first of many visits to the magnificent and diverse African continent.

November 23

no session for Thanksgiving week

November 30

Let's explore wonders in Architecture
Join us as we explore the fascinating architecture in our NEW series; Strange Great Buildings from Around the World!

December 7

Let's travel to British Columbia and the Yukon with Katrina!
We'll take a road trip through BC and through the Yukon, stopping in favorite spots to learn about the beautiful landscape and culture!

December 14

Let's explore Living on the Water
Ever imagined living life on the water? Wait until you see these yachts and houseboats on our water adventure around the world.

December 21

Winter Sing-Along with Katrina!
Bring your favorite songs and join Katrina in song and live violin renditions for a combination of winter, holiday, and folk favorites!

When: Tuesdays, October 26 to December 21 (no session on November 23 due to Thanksgiving), from 1 to 2 p.m. (PT)

Where: Online

Cost: No charge

Registration: [Click here](#)

Contact: edprograms@caregiver.org



CAREGIVER TELECONNECTION



www.caregiverteleconnection.org



Date	Time	Topic	A LEADING VOICE FOR CAREGIVERS
Wednesday November 3	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Online-The ABC's of Parkinson's Disease with Jo Rosen <i>In "The ABC's of Parkinson's Disease" Jo Rosen will provide a comprehensive overview of Parkinson's disease, its causes, symptoms, and treatments, as well as a frank discussion of the financial, lifestyle, and long-term care considerations anyone facing a neurodegenerative diagnosis should keep in mind.</i>	
Monday November 8	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	Simplifying the Holidays Can Help Manage the Stress with Mindy Bannister and Mitzie Watson <i>Holidays can often create discomfort for the person with dementia. Crowded homes and lots of noise can be unsettling and, in turn, create stress for the caregiver. So how do you better manage this holiday season for yourself and the person with dementia? Join us to learn tips for de-stressing and making the person with dementia more comfortable through improved communication. *Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection**</i>	
Tuesday November 9	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Online-Coordinación de cuidados con Dr. Nestor H Praderio <i>Dr. Nestor H. Praderio nos guiará a través de las múltiples facetas de cuidado a través de la progresión de la enfermedad de demencia. Compartirá información de recursos vitales para opciones de apoyo en el hogar y en la comunidad para seres queridos con la enfermedad de Alzheimer y demencia relacionada.</i>	
Wednesday November 10	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Caregiving, COVID-19 and the Holidays a with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW <i>What precautions to take? What advice to follow? What is "safe" these days? Join us as we discuss what caregivers should know ahead of the holidays, and we'll share the latest news about COVID-19.</i>	
Tuesday November 16	12:00 pm Eastern 11:00 am Central 10:00 am Mountain 9:00 am Pacific	Online-Care to the End of Life with Tam Cummings, PhD <i>Dementia family caregivers face a special burden in the care of their loved one. In this session, the final year of life and the process of Actively Dying will be covered for family and professional caregivers. Understanding what the body is doing and why your loved one looks and behaves the way he or she does will be discussed. **Sponsored by VITAS Healthcare**</i>	
Wednesday November 17	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	Men and Caregiving with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW <i>November is Men's Health Awareness month. 39% of caregivers are men, whose caregiving experiences and challenges differ from women. This session will discuss these issues and ways to support male caregivers with practical tips.</i>	
Thursday November 18	2:00 pm Eastern 1:00 pm Central 12:00 pm Mountain 11:00 am Pacific	The Impact of Mindful Communication with Cynthia Hazel <i>Mindful communication is one part mindful speaking and one part mindful listening. The process requires a person to be present and to pay complete attention. We will explore how the skills of listening, speaking, and non-verbal communication combined with kindness, attention, compassion, and awareness enhance the process.</i>	
Tuesday November 20	2:00 pm Eastern 1:00 pm Central 12:00 pm Mountain 11:00 am Pacific	Online-A Time of Renewal and Reflection with Dr. James Huysman, PsyD, LCSW <i>We are approaching the holiday season, which can be a time of renewal and some reflection where we can look at ourselves and our perceptions in life. We can do this by identifying strategies how we can recover from any trauma, PTSD or CPTSD, that may still hold us back from being our best selves. Join Dr Jamie Huysman as he explores getting ready to use the upcoming holidays to create a more peaceful time while enriching our own self-awareness in the process.</i>	



A program of the WellMed Charitable Foundation
 Register online at www.caregiverteleconnection.org or call
 866.390.6491 Toll Free



**NOV 4
2021**

2021 Virtual Caregiver Summit: Caregiving through hope, humor and peace

Sponsored By: WellMed Charitable Foundation and
Area Agencies on Aging



Loretta Woodward Veney

*Author of Refreshment for the
Caregiver's Spirit*



Donna Cardillo, RN, CSP, FAAN

*Author of Falling Together: How to Find
Balance, Joy, and Meaningful Change
When Your Life Seems to be Falling Apart*

Family Caregivers and Professionals are
invited to join us at this exciting event at
no cost!

- ▶ Thursday, November 4, 2021
- ▶ 10:00 am - 1:00 pm CT
- ▶ Accessible using smart device
(phone, computer, tablet) or telephone only
- ▶ CEU's available
- ▶ Registration: **(866) 390-6491** or [CLICK HERE](#)

Virtual Caregiver Summit in Spanish November 12, 2021. For Assistance Call: 866-390-6491



Monthly MIPPA Moment: COVID-19 Booster Information

The original COVID-19 vaccination series continues to be highly effective at reducing severe disease, hospitalization, and death caused by COVID-19. However, experts are beginning to see that protection against mild to moderate disease can fade over time. Currently, per the CDC, **if you previously got 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, you can get a booster shot of that same vaccine at least 6 months after you complete your second dose of the Pfizer vaccine and are in certain groups of people.** At the time of this writing, only Pfizer has been approved for certain groups other than the severely immunocompromised.

The CDC currently strongly [recommends](#) a booster for:

- people 65 years and older and residents in long-term care settings
- people aged 50–64 years with [underlying medical conditions](#)
- people aged 18–49 years with underlying medical conditions
- people aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting

People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are recommended to get an additional dose of vaccine (Pfizer *or* Moderna) somewhat sooner, but no sooner than 28 days after their initial two-dose vaccine series. There is not enough data at this time to determine whether immunocompromised people who received the Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 vaccine also have an improved antibody response following an additional dose of the same vaccine.

For Medicare beneficiaries, Medicare covers FDA-authorized and FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines **and** vaccine booster shots, *after an appropriate amount of time subsequent to completing your second dose of the original vaccine series if you’re 65 and older or included in a high risk group.* Beneficiaries pay nothing for COVID-19 vaccines or their administration, and there is no copayment, coinsurance or deductible. In addition, thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), nearly all Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries must receive coverage of COVID-19 vaccines and their administration without cost-sharing.

Although CDC does not recommend additional doses or booster shots for any other population at this time, the federal government announced a plan to begin offering COVID-19 vaccine booster shots more broadly this Fall. To find a COVID-19 Vaccine: visit vaccines.gov, text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233 to find locations near you. You should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them.

Adapted from <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-dose.htm> and <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>. For more MIPPA Program information, call MIPPA Program Specialist, Leilani Amundson, at 608-240-7458. This project was supported by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services with financial assistance, in whole or in part, by grant number 2101WIMIAA, from the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201.

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

Be Aware of Fraudulent Surveys Targeting FoodShare Members

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) has become aware of a fraudulent survey offering cash and additional benefits for FoodShare members. DHS does not give any member additional FoodShare benefits or cash rewards for doing something like completing a survey.

Sometimes, legitimate organizations or agencies outside of DHS conduct surveys that may include a cash reward. However, always look more into any survey before completing it, so that you can make sure it is safe to complete. Additionally, if you are getting health care benefits, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services will not call or text you seeking personal or financial information. If you are getting FoodShare benefits, your agency will call you to complete a FoodShare interview and may ask you to verify certain information to ensure they are talking with the correct person. If you are unsure of who you are talking to, hang up, and call your agency or ForwardHealth Member Services at 800-362-3002.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, advises consumers not to give out personal or financial information to people you do not know through phone calls, text messages, emails, or knocks on your door. Scam artists want your information to commit identity theft, charge your existing credit cards, debit your checking account, open a new credit card, checking, or savings account, write fraudulent checks, or take out loans in your name.

To file a complaint with the FTC, go to its website, <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov>, or call 877-FTC-HELP. If you think your identity has been stolen, report it on the FTC's website here <https://www.identitytheft.gov>, or call 877-ID-THEFT.

In addition, you should only use the ACCESS website, <https://access.wisconsin.gov/access/>, to apply for and manage your benefits and the MyACCESS mobile app <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forwardhealth/myaccess.htm> to manage benefits. If you are getting FoodShare benefits, you can view information about your FoodShare account using the ebtEDGE mobile app here: <https://www.fisglobal.com/ebtedgemobile>.



**Connecting People with the
Assistance They Need**

Monday through Friday

Call 7:45 am—4:30 pm

(608) 240-7400

Website: www.daneadrc.org

Email: ADRC@countyofdane.com

Click on the button to follow the ADRC on
facebook.



Happy Healthy Caregiver's
CAREGIVER AFFIRMATIONS

You show up often when no one else does

You drop everything when you get a critical call to be with your care recipient. You are committed to your role.

You are wise

You research and work diligently to understand all the options your care recipient has to live their best life.

You are relentless

You face the tough questions and bring up the courageous conversations.

You are human

Your life is valuable AND so many people are counting on you keeping your energy up and immunity optimal.

You are a hard worker

You roll up your sleeves and dive into wound care, personal care, and many stinky and messy situations.

You are part of the support system

You share your personal struggles and stories so others are inspired and encouraged. They no longer feel isolated and overwhelmed.

You are enough

You look in the mirror at the end of each day and give yourself some grace, self-love, compassion, and forgiveness.

You are courageous

You perform procedures with little to no training. You explore new alternatives. You face your worst fears head on.

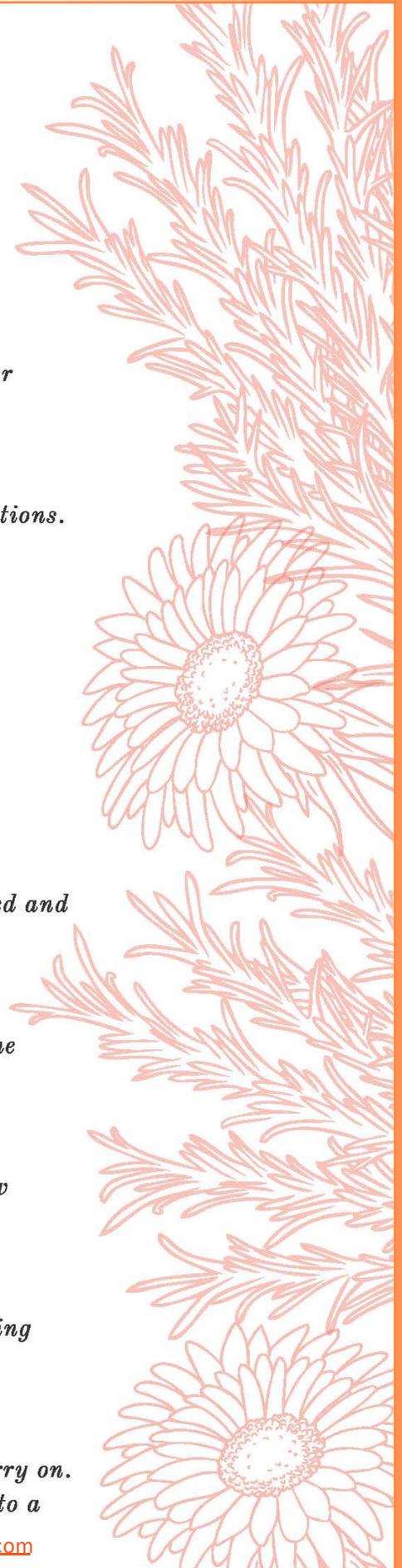
You are a problem solver

You don't sit back, wait and watch. Rather, you dive into the healing and helping.

You are resilient

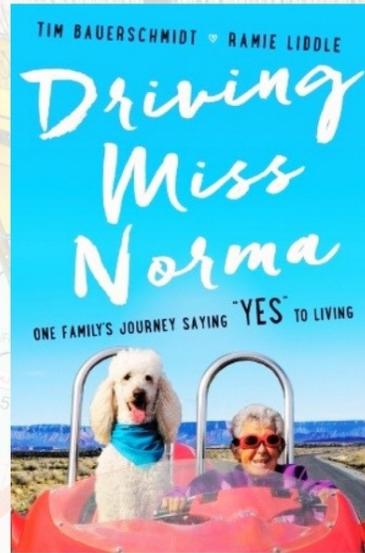
Your life gets twisted around and turned upside down and you carry on. Your caregiving journey requires you to cope with a crisis, adapt to a situation, and be ready for anything.

From happyhealthycaregiver.com



Creative Caregiving

From Coast to Coast



with *Driving Miss Norma* co-author Ramie Liddle

Wed., November 10th
6:00–7:30 p.m. via Zoom

In celebration of National Caregivers Month, Ramie Liddle will share the incredible cross country caregiving journey she and her husband took with her 90-year-old mother-in-law, Norma. Infused with Norma's irrepressible wisdom, courage, and generous spirit, Ramie will share the charming and infectiously joyous chronicle of their experiences on the road. Join us for the tale of this transformative journey of caregiving and living life on your own terms that shows us it is never too late to begin an adventure, inspire hope, or become a trailblazer. To register, call: 608-789-7145; email:

programteam@lacrosselibrary.org or visit lacrosselibrary.org



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**RELATIVE
CAREGIVER
PROGRAM**



RELATIVE CAREGIVERS OF WISCONSIN



Who

Are you a Relative Caregiver of a minor 0-17?
Who is considered a Relative Caregiver?
Is a family friend-like kin?
Am I able to receive benefits for taking care of
my minor relatives?



Where

Visit the Kinship Navigator website, listed
below to see what resources or options are
available to you, as you care for the child in
your home.

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/kinship/navigator>



What

Possible Benefits may include:

- Relative Caregiver Support Group(s)
- Kinship Care Financial Assistance (Voluntary & Court Ordered)
- Legal Resource/Options
- Respite Care
- Childcare Subsidy
- Medical Insurance for the child
- Services for the child in your home

Anyone that cares for a
minor (0-17) relative on a
full-time basis is a
Relative Caregiver!

Questions

Coalition of Children & Families
+1-800-762-8063
info@coalitionforcyf.org



Wisconsin Adoption & Permanency Support
1-833-947-2777
info@coalitionforcyf.org