

Caregiver Chronicles

July 2016



AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY
2865 N SHERMAN AVE, MADISON, WI 53704
608-261-9930
[HTTPS://AAA.DCDHS.COM/](https://aaa.dcdhs.com/)



Photo by Gail Brooks

Those who won our independence believed liberty to be the secret of happiness and courage to be the secret of liberty.

—Louis D. Brandeis

Caregiver Chronicles

Happy Fourth of July!

On July 4th we celebrate our nation's independence. As individuals, we also value our independence. We want to be independent so we can live our lives as we choose, and, for the majority of older Americans, the choice to be independent means staying in their homes and aging in place.

What happens when that choice is no longer working? What if there are safety concerns? What happens if living independently becomes living in isolation? There is likely a period of time when staying at home is still the best option for an older adult, but they can no longer do it alone. It's often at that point—when someone we care for first needs help—that we take on the role of caregiver. Older Americans Act Consultant, Jane Mahoney, provides a series of first steps for caregivers in, "A Friend or Loved One Needs Care, Now What?" on page 4. She reminds us that part of learning about caregiving is making sure we take care of ourselves as we go.

It's critical that in working to help an older adult maintain their independence, we don't lose our own.

Self-care isn't automatic for most of us. It's something we learn. Whether your caregiver role is large or small, you will fare much better if you commit to a practice of self care. It can take on different forms for different people, but the point is always to provide yourself with the support you need to manage your own health and wellbeing. Here are some ways to begin:

- ***Add something small to your daily routine.*** Listen to your favorite music, stretch, or try eating your breakfast sitting at a table (not standing at the kitchen counter, on the run, in your car, or at your desk if you're working).
- ***Scan your body during the course of the day and notice what's happening.*** How are you feeling physically? Mentally? Emotionally? It's hard to take care of ourselves when we are unaware of our own needs.
- ***Find sources for support.*** Don't go it alone. If you need a support group, training, or help connecting to caregiver resources, contact the caregiver program at 608-261-5679 or debroux.jane@countyofdane.com for more information.

Have a safe and happy holiday.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane De Broux".

Jane De Broux
Caregiver Program Coordinator
Dane County Area Agency on Aging



Listen In

Your Caregiving Journey

Denise Brown of Caregiving.com, tackles a topic related to the challenges of caring for a family member or friend each week in this informative podcast series. www.blogtalkradio.com/caregiving

Add Spark

SPARK! Cultural Programming for People with Memory Loss is a new program being held at museums and arts organizations throughout the state. The Madison Children's Museum hosts 90-minute workshops that help adults living with Alzheimer's and dementia tap into their past and connect with their families through art.

Next session:

July 23 @ 10:00 – 11:00 am

[Click to register](#)

<http://madisonchildrensmuseum.org/programs-and-events/for-adults/spark/>



Participants will look at and discuss floral works of art by Vincent Van Gogh and Claude Monet, and will collect botanicals from the rooftop and create inspiring floral arrangements and vases.

The Aging and Disability Resource

Center of Dane County (ADRC)

The ADRC offers free, unbiased information and assistance on resources and services for older people and adults with disabilities. Staff provides information to all callers regardless of their income, assets, age, or disability, and they help callers identify options, solve problems, and plan for the future.

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



Call (608) 240-7400

Visit the ADRC office, 2865 N. Sherman Ave, Madison

Appointments are not necessary

Website: www.daneadrc.org

A Loved One or Friend Needs Care, Now What?

When you first learn that a family member or friend needs help, it's hard to know where to begin. Sometimes there is a sudden change in health that prompts you to get involved. Other times, it is a gradual realization that they are no longer capable of meeting all of their own needs. In either situation, knowing what steps to take can be difficult. The following are some basics to get you started.

Learn about your care recipient's illness, disease or condition. Understanding the nature of the disease, its symptoms, and what to expect, is helpful in caring for the person in need. Talk to a healthcare provider, do some research online, and read books or pamphlets to help you understand what they are dealing with and specific ways you can help.

Determine areas of need. List the specific areas where help is needed, such as housecleaning, grocery shopping, meals, bathing, and transportation to medical appointments. Then discuss possible ways to meet these needs with friends, family members, and their healthcare provider.

Research community resources. Explore options like home-delivered meals, in-home supportive care services, personal emergency response systems, transportation services, and adult day care. Contact organizations specific to the disease involved such as the Alzheimer's Association or the National Stroke Association. Keep the information you gather in a file for use later on. (In Dane County, the [Dane County Caregiver Program](#) at the [Dane County Area Agency on Aging](#) and the [Aging and Disability Resource Center](#) are excellent places to start.)

Plan for any needed immediate care. Learn about your care recipient's wishes for immediate and long-term care. Do a home safety check so you can help adapt their environment to their needs. Arrange for the purchase of items for any special needs such as a walker, commode, wheelchair, ramp, or other adaptive equipment, or borrow them from Loan Closets. Find a method for tracking important indicators of health such as eating patterns, symptoms, and medications.

Organize important information. Write down pertinent medical information for your care recipient, including doctors' names and phone numbers, health insurance information, and medication/pharmacy information. Locate and list financial and other important information such as household bills; loans and bank accounts; home, auto, and life insurance policies; and passwords to online accounts. Include copies of social security, driver's license and insurance cards.

Enlist the help of others. Determine what you can do realistically, and make a list of other people who can help. Don't try to do it all on your own. Write down tasks that others can help with such as running errands or providing a meal. Include an alternate emergency plan in case you are unable to carry out your duties.

Plan for the future. Get information about your care recipient's long-term prognosis in order to make appropriate plans. Assess the financial situation and, if necessary, contact a financial advisor who is familiar with caregiving issues. Consult a lawyer about a durable power of attorney for health care and finances. Remember—include your care recipient in the planning as much as they are able to participate. If they are competent, they still call the shots.

Take care of yourself. Find support through a friend, counselor, or support group. Take regular breaks from caregiving and keep doing the things that bring you pleasure. Make an effort to let go of less important commitments. No one can do it all! Make sure you eat well, get enough sleep, exercise, and spend time with family or friends in order to keep yourself healthy.

—Jane Mahoney, *Older Americans Act Consultant*
Greater Wisconsin Area Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.



Photo by Cheryl Batterman

Community Activities

SOUNDS OF SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Bring the whole family to an evening of music, dining and fun!

JULY 12
UNIVERSAL SOUND

JULY 19
THE TIME TRAVELERS

JULY 26
THE DANG-ITS

AUGUST 2
NO CONCERT:
NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

AUGUST 9
BEN FERRIS QUINTET

AUGUST 16
RED HOT HORN DAWGS

AUGUST 23
MARCY AND THE
HIGHLIGHTS

Tuesdays in July & August
7:00-8:00 PM

Waterman Triangle Park

Rain location:
Rome Corners Intermediate School

Food & Beverages offered from
6:00 PM-8:00 PM

- July 12:** Lil' Buddies
- July 19:** Charlie's Main Event
- July 26:** Ziggy's BBQ Smoke House
- August 9:** Lil' Buddy's
- August 16:** Pizza Pit
- August 23:** JL Richards

Hosted by Oregon Area Senior Center, Oregon Public Library, Oregon Rotary Club and Oregon Chamber of Commerce. Our sponsors include:



Oregon Rotary Club

People's United Methodist Church

Oregon Chamber of Commerce



Mark Your Calendar



Improve your odds.
Reduce your risk.

Fall Brain Health Series



Thursdays at 1 PM

Location: MSCR East
4620 Cottage Grove Road, Madison



SCHEDULE Thursdays at 1 PM
September 22nd thru
October 27th

September 22nd
Brain Healthy Lifestyle
Joy Schmidt, Dementia Care Specialist
Aging & Disability Resource Center of Dane County

September 29th
Exercise & Protect Your Brain
Darcie Olson, PhD/OTR, Instructor
Madison College

October 6th
Effects of Sleep on the Brain & tips to improve sleep
Dr. Barbara Bendlin, PhD
WI Alzheimer's Disease Research Center

October 13th
Healthy Eating for Your Brain
Anne Breckenridge Swanson, Master Chef
Agrace Hospice

October 20th
Music & Memory
Julie Hyland, Director
Wisconsin Music & Memory Program

October 27th
Mindfulness & Wellbeing
Chris Smith, MDiv, LMFT
Mindful Meditation Instructor
UW Health Mindfulness Program



**Dementia
Friendly**



For more information: Contact Joy Schmidt at 608-240-7400 | Schmidt.Joy@countyofdane.com
Registration will be available online at mscr.com

Caring for the Caregiver Program

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF DANE COUNTY

2865 N. Sherman Ave.
Madison, Wisconsin 53704



Phone: 608-261-5679

Fax: 608-240-7402

Email: debroux.jane@countyofdane.com

Save paper and reduce postage costs

Please let us know if:

- You are willing to receive the newsletter via email
- You are no longer interested in receiving the newsletter

Contact:

Jane De Broux

608-261-5679

debroux.jane@countyofdane.com