



CLARK COUNTY OFFICE OF AGING/NUTRITION

APRIL 2016 NEWSLETTER



POTENTIAL WAYS TO SAVE MONEY ON HEALTH CARE

In these times of economic insecurity it is important to find all of the places to save money that we can. For those of you who have been on Medicare for a while, you may not keep up to date on changes in eligibility qualifications for programs that help cover costs. The same may be true for those of you new to the Medicare scene. The first thing to know is that there are programs that may help enrollees pay the premiums for both the prescription drug insurance (Part D) and for Medicare Part B premiums. Some people will also have their deductible and co-pays covered for them.

Let's start with prescription drug coverage and EXTRA HELP from Social Security. If you are single and your income is less than \$1,485 per month with assets under \$12,140 or a couple with a household income less than \$2,002 per month with assets below \$24,250 you may qualify to pay \$0 for your monthly drug premium! In addition, your drug co-payments could be lowered. If you have questions about what may count as an asset, please contact Amy Nigon at 715-743-5146.

If your assets are above these limits, Wisconsin's Senior Care may be worth looking into. With this program, individuals with monthly incomes below \$1,584 (or \$2,136 for a couple) may qualify for \$5 for generics or \$15 for brand name prescriptions with no deductible. For those about those income amounts, deductibles and higher copays would apply. Assets are not counted and there is no monthly premium, just an annual enrollment fee of \$30.

Let's move on to Medicare Part B and the Medicare Savings Program. Your monthly premium can be paid for you if your income falls below \$1,336 per month (single) or \$1,802 per month (couple) with assets below \$7,280 (single) or \$10,930 (couple). Even greater help is available for individuals making less than \$990 per month (assets below \$7,280) or couples with incomes lower than \$1,335 (assets below \$10,930). Not

only will their Part B premiums be paid, but also the hospital and medical deductibles as well as copayments for health services.

So if you think you may qualify for any of these benefits please contact Amy Nigon to find out more!

Dog Breeds Word Search

Find the names of various dog breeds hidden in the puzzle.

Z P A G X L B S H A R P E I J
P H S J L A B R A D O R J S W
C D A L M A T I A N Z E G P S
O N A M R E B O D A H T W A Y
L E A B C R E I R R E T E N W
L U M N S H Z E L A D E R I A
I G Q A G V I Y M U I S O E F
E Q O V L B S H K N P D T L D
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N Z N X L C M P I A U B T P U
A R E U D L O U N H H H P O O
D R G E H O U R T E T U W I H
T Z X U D S E B G E Z Z A N Y
A B L L P B H O N I C O U T E
E M E M T C D C G M W O K E R
R A H S A O B E A G L E U R G
G F F I T S A M C D H I Y A O

AIREDALE
BEAGLE
BOXER
BULLDOG
CHIHUAHUA
COLLIE
CORGI
DACHSHUND
DALMATIAN
DOBERMAN
GREATDANE
GREYHOUND
HUSKY
LABRADOR
MALAMUTE
MASTIFF
POINTER
POODLE
PUG
SETTER
SHARPEI
SHIHTZU
SPANIEL
STBERNARD
TERRIER

Spring Cleaning Can Be For Thoughts, Emotions Too, Says UW Psychologist

By Judith Siers-Poisson www.wpr.org

This time of year, it's natural to think about airing out the house, doing some deep cleaning and taking a bunch of stuff to the local thrift store or the dumpster.

But fewer people think about doing spring cleaning on negative thoughts and emotions.

"Spring is typically a time of renewal and rebirth," said Dr. Shilagh Mirgain, a senior health and sports psychologist at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. Mirgain specializes in using mind-body medicine to treat a variety of issues. Mirgain said while we're cleaning up home and yard, "we can also take some time to look at our lives ... to simplify, organize, and make time for what matters most in this season that so many of us have been waiting for!"

Just like animals coming out of hibernation, people often kick into gear when the days get longer and the weather is more pleasant. After a long winter, that can be great, but it also comes with its own challenges, he said.

"If we just get caught up in the busyness of our lives, we can often miss what matters most," Mirgain said.

Taking time to evaluate how we're spending time and what we get out of it is a great place to start, according to Mirgain. She recommended asking questions like, "Are there things that we're doing that really drain us? Are there changes we need to make to make us happier and make us have a greater quality of life and sense of well-being?"

In a recent UW Health article, "Spring Clean Your Life," Mirgain offered these concrete steps to take:

- **De-clutter your days:** Take inventory of all the activities that occupy your time and decide which ones are worth keeping and which ones are better left behind. Ask yourself: what do I want this time in my life to be about? Then, pursue the things that serve those goals. Being mindful of how you spend your time creates opportunities for new, rewarding experiences.
- **Discard negative thoughts:** Negative thoughts not only generate stress that can impact our lives in destructive ways, but they can sometimes even create or exacerbate chronic health conditions. Ask yourself: Will the problem I'm so worried about today matter in a year? Then, practice letting go of those negative thoughts and replacing them with thoughts that bring you joy and a sense of peace.
- **Throw out your bad habits:** It's easy to become sedentary during the long winter months, but now is the time to get your health back on track. Use the warmer weather as a motivation to get outside, be more active, eat healthier, meditate, or maybe even

jump-start those New Year's resolutions that you abandoned or never quite got off the ground.

- **Create room for positive relationships:** Reevaluate and redefine the role that certain people play in your life.

In addition to those steps, Mirgain says that people should not only take in the good, but to keep that good with them. Mirgain encouraged people to create a mental treasure chest, where all the good things that happen in a day can be filed away to consider later. At the end of a long day, it can be really easy to focus the negative interactions of the day. Getting cut off in traffic, or a curt response from a co-worker can really stick with you. But flipping that around and making special note of all the good things that happen can really change someone's perspective on life.

"We can use simple strategies to help us regain our center when we're stressed, upset, or feeling overwhelmed," said Mirgain. "We need to practice the conditions of happiness. And we know because of research that the more we practice happiness, it can literally change our physiology. We become happier."



You are invited to a

**FREE FOOD
DISTRIBUTION**

FREE · FREE · FREE · FREE

CARING AND SHARING THROUGH FOOD

Tuesday, May 24

5:00 – 6:30 P.M.

(Unless food is gone before 6:30 P.M.)

CLARK COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

**You receive an abundance of grocery items.*

**Everyone who gets hungry qualifies!*

**Bring your own boxes or laundry baskets to carry food!*

**Doors will open for Registration at 4:00 PM*

NO EARLY REGISTRATIONS

More Info? Call 715-743-2471

Feed My People Food Bank

Sponsored by

Living Hope Church of Neillsville

*in cooperation with other area churches,
civic organizations and businesses*



The sun was warm but the wind was chill.

You know how it is with an April day.

When the sun is out and the wind is still,

You're one month on in the middle of May.

But if you so much as dare to speak,

a cloud come over the sunlit arch,

And wind comes off a frozen peak,

And you're two months back in the middle of March.

— Robert Frost, "Two Tramps in Mud Time"

Blood Pressure Screening

Black River Apartments

312 N Reese St

Greenwood, WI

1st Monday of the Month (except July)

9-9:30am in the community room



House of the Dove – When Home is Not an Option

Hospice care is unique – it’s a service, not a place. Hospice is a comprehensive model of care that is brought to people wherever they live – whether in their own private residence, a nursing home, assisted living facility or group home. For some people, staying at home while they’re living their last months of life isn’t an option – they don’t have caregivers who can help them, or they choose not to die at home. That’s when House of the Dove might be of value.

House of the Dove is a beautiful facility in Marshfield for people receiving hospice care. At this facility, there are actually 3 levels of care available for hospice patients:

- **Residential Care** - an alternative place to live, where there are professional caregivers on staff round-the-clock;
- **Acute Care** – a short term place for hospice patients to come while their complex symptoms are brought under control. When they are ready, they can return home;
- **Respite Care** – a place to stay for a few days at a time while their families take a short break from the challenges of caregiving.

House of the Dove has 12 spacious residential suites, each with its own fully-accessible restroom, space to accommodate visitors, and a door to an outside patio. In addition, there’s a chapel, a library, a great room with a lovely stone fireplace, kitchen and dining room, spa room and sun rooms, as well as large outdoor spaces in which to relax. In addition, there’s a delightful play area so kids can be kids.

As part of their mission, Ministry provides hospice services to anyone who is medically eligible, regardless of their ability to pay. If you or someone you care about is in need of these services, please call **800.397.4216** for more information.

Everyone deserves the comprehensive care of hospice during their last months of life; their loved ones deserve the support the hospice team provides before and after the death occurs.

Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Clark County

By Judy Morrow

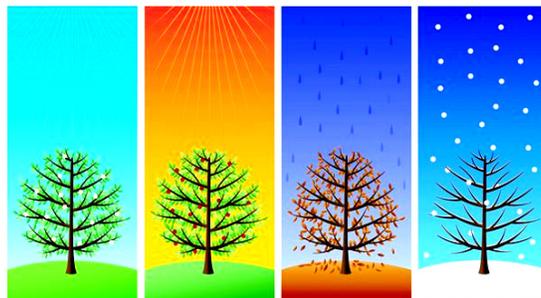
Spring is here!! Easter has come and gone. Hopefully it was a blessed day for all of you and your families.

May 21st will be the date for the Spring Change of Seasons sponsored by the Office of Aging, St. Mary's Justice and Peace Committee, Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Clark County and the communities of Neillsville and Loyal. Volunteers will be gearing up to help you have those outside windows washed and other small jobs done for you.

This year the church hosting in Neillsville will be St. Mary's Catholic Church. Loyal has not at this time committed a church but we will know by the next newsletter. Both churches will be making breakfast for the volunteers as we gather to organize the teams to work together to accomplish the job list. St. Mary's in Neillsville will also serve lunch for the volunteers.

The committee has met and prepared a list of guidelines for the Change of Seasons program. For better planning a deadline of May 14 has been set for signing up for services. You can call Interfaith at 715-743-2885, the Aging Office at 715-743-5144 or Bonnie Weyer at 255-8626 to reserve your spot on the list. If you get the answering machine, please leave a message. You will receive a confirmation call as soon as possible.

Volunteer groups and families are welcomed and appreciated. You may also call the Interfaith number with questions or to volunteer.



Guidelines for the Change of Seasons

- Windows in the spring and lawns in the fall.
- No lawn mowing.
- Only exterior windows will be washed.
- Gutters will be cleaned if adult volunteers are available and weather is permitting. There must be two volunteers when cleaning gutters.
- In the fall, only the primary lawn area will be raked.
- If the weather is bad please come and eat breakfast with your community volunteers as the food has already been prepared.

If you have questions about what you need to have done please feel free to call Judy at Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers at 715-743-2885.

Wisconsin Offers Non-Expiring IDs to Seniors

by the GWAAR Legal Services Team

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation now offers non-expiring identification (ID) cards to Wisconsin residents. To qualify, an individual must be (1) a Wisconsin resident, (2) a U.S. citizen, and (3) age 65 or over.

The non-expiring ID cards give seniors the opportunity to have a state ID for voting purposes—without requiring seniors to get a new picture taken every eight years. The non-expiring ID will have the same appearance and security features as a standard expiring ID card, but in place of the expiration date it will indicate that it is “non-expiring.”

However, seniors should carefully consider whether the non-expiring ID is right for them.

First, to obtain a non-expiring ID, a senior will need to surrender his or her driver license. When an individual surrenders his or her driver license, they are ineligible to drive in any state.

Second, the non-expiring IDs are not “REAL ID”- compliant. REAL ID cards must be renewed every eight years. The REAL ID Act sets minimum security standards for sources of identification. Federal agencies cannot accept ID cards from states that do not meet the minimum security standards. For example, if you plan to visit a federal facility or a military base, you will need an ID that meets the act’s standards. According to the official Website of the Department of Homeland Security, REAL ID requirements do not apply to the following: entering federal facilities that do not require ID, voting, applying for or receiving federal benefits, being licensed to drive, accessing health or life-preserving services, or participating in law enforcement proceedings or investigations.

The non-expiring IDs are currently free of charge and serve as legal identification for voting purposes.

For more information, please see:

- <http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/dmv/license-drvs/how-to-apply/id-card.aspx>
- <https://www.dhs.gov/real-id-public-faqs>
- http://host.madison.com/wsj/news/local/seniors-can-get-non-expiring-id-in-wisconsin-drivers-doing/article_3c9d65c1-67bc-542e-b17e-da9481b3e4af.html

Answers to frequently asked Vision Questions...



Thank you for taking the time each month to read and educate yourself on your most precious sense, your eyesight. The AOA's American Eye-Q survey, found that 40 percent of respondents were concerned about losing their vision. The Eye-Q survey also revealed that the biggest concern about developing vision problems was being unable to live independently.

In this column we hope to take some time to answer questions people just like you ask, when they go to their eye doctor. Our hope is to help you care for your most precious sense, your eyesight.

My eye doctor recommended an 'optomap' or 'retinal image' during my last eye exam, what is that?

Retinal Imaging or Optomap is a technological advancement in eye care. It enables your eye doctor to take a 'picture' of your retina, blood vessels and optic nerve located at the back of your eyes. This helps in the early detection and management of diseases that can affect both your eyes and overall health.

When I have my eyes tested they take my blood pressure, what does that have to do with my vision?

Since high blood pressure and diabetes both affect the small blood vessels of the body, the eye is a place that is commonly affected by each of these conditions. High blood pressure may never cause changes to the eye, but if it does it will be recognizable to your eye doctor.

My eye doctor's staff has asked me if they can dilate my eyes, is this really important?

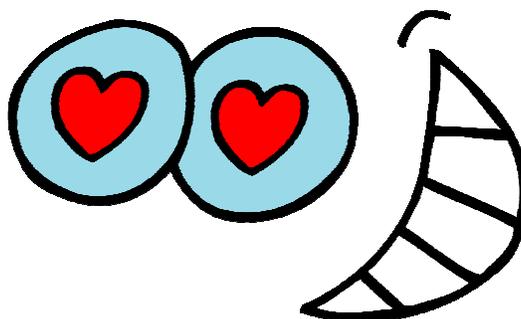
Eye dilation can actually be key to helping your doctor diagnose a variety of conditions. Drops placed on your eyes relax the iris, the colored part of your eye, and makes the pupil widen. This allows your eye doctor to see the back of your eye more clearly to detect diabetes, tumors, retinal detachment, high blood pressure, macular degeneration and a variety of other issues in their early stages.

We hope this information has been beneficial in answering some of the 'common' questions you may have. If at any time you would like to submit a question please feel free to contact us at

info.medford@healthvieweyecare.com.

Please note you will not receive an email back, your question will be answered in an upcoming article.

Dr. Andy Baldus is an optometrist at HealthView Eye Care Center-Colby, you can contact him at (715)223-4003.



March Is Colon Health Month

by the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Colorectal cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the U.S. and the second leading cause of death from cancer. It is important for people to be aware that early detection can help prevent up to 60% of the deaths from colorectal cancer.

People aged 50 and older are at the highest risk for colorectal cancer. Therefore, the American Cancer Society, the U.S. Dept. of Health Services, and the CDC recommend that people start getting screened for colorectal cancer at age 50 and have regular screenings thereafter. Several types of screenings are available—a colonoscopy (generally recommended every 10 years); a fecal occult blood test (generally annually); and a sigmoidoscopy (generally every 5 years). People with a high risk of colorectal cancer may need to have screening tests done more frequently. People are encouraged to talk to their doctors to assess their risk and find out which test is right for them.

Medicare pays for screening tests to detect colorectal cancer. The following tests are typically covered by Medicare as preventive:

- Screening fecal occult blood test—covered once every year for ages 50+.
- Screening flexible sigmoidoscopy—covered once every 48 month for ages 50+.
- Screening colonoscopy—covered once every 10 years (2 years if high risk).
- Screening barium enema—covered once every 48 months if age 50+ if used instead of a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. (Note: This test is not covered 100% by Medicare; it is covered at the typical 80/20% by Medicare Part B.)

The first three preventive visits listed above have 100% coverage under Medicare Part B if the person goes to a provider that accepts Medicare assignment. However, if the screening results in a diagnostic treatment, then Medicare pays at 80/20% under Part B. For example, a colonoscopy is covered at 100% every 10 years. However, if the doctor performing the colonoscopy finds and removes a polyp during the exam, then that part of the exam qualifies as treatment (rather than a screening), and Medicare covers the removal of the polyp at 80/20%.

Timely screening can detect colon cancer before any symptoms develop. It is estimated that half of the colon cancer deaths could be prevented if early screening had occurred. The American Cancer Society encourages people to talk to family members about their medical history and discuss this information with their doctors.

For more information, see: <http://healthfinder.gov>, www.hhs.gov, www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources, www.cancer.org

Medicare Reminder

<http://www.medicareinteractive.org/>

If you were denied coverage for a prescription drug, you should ask your plan to reconsider its decision by filing an appeal. Your appeal process will be the same whether you have a stand-alone Part D prescription drug plan or a Medicare Advantage plan that includes your Part D prescription drug coverage.

If your pharmacist tells you that your plan will not pay for your prescription drug, you should call your plan to find out the reason it is not covering your drug. Then, you should talk to your prescribing physician about your options. If switching to another drug is not an option, you should file an exception request – a formal coverage request – with your plan. Your doctor can help you fill out the paperwork for an exception request.

Your plan should issue a decision within 72 hours. File an expedited request if you need your drug right away, and your plan should issue a decision within 24 hours. If your request is approved, your drug will be covered. If it is denied, you should follow the directions on the written denial you receive to appeal.



Important Facts about Falls

<http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html>



Each year, millions of older people—those 65 and older—fall. In fact, one out of three older people falls each year, but less than half tell their doctor. Falling once doubles your chances of falling again.

Falls Are Serious and Costly

- One out of five falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury.^{1,2}
- Each year, 2.5 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries.³
- Over 700,000 patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture.³
- Each year at least 250,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures.⁵
- More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling,⁶ usually by falling sideways.⁷
- Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI).⁸
- Adjusted for inflation, the direct medical costs for fall injuries are \$34 billion annually.⁸ Hospital costs account for two-thirds of the total.

What Can Happen After a Fall?

Many falls do not cause injuries. But one out of five falls does cause a serious injury such as a broken bone or a head injury.^{1,2} These injuries can make it hard for a person to get around, do everyday activities, or live on their own.

- Falls can cause broken bones, like wrist, arm, ankle, and hip fractures.
- Falls can cause head injuries. These can be very serious, especially if the person is taking certain medicines (like blood thinners). An older person who falls and hits their head should see their doctor right away to make sure they don't have a brain injury.
- Many people who fall, even if they're not injured, become afraid of falling. This fear may cause a person to cut down on their everyday activities. When a person is less active, they become weaker and this increases their chances of falling.⁹

What Conditions Make You More Likely to Fall?

Research has identified many conditions that contribute to falling. These are called risk factors. Many risk factors can be changed or modified to help prevent falls. They include:

- Lower body weakness
- Vitamin D deficiency (that is, not enough vitamin D in your system)
- Difficulties with walking and balance
- Use of medicines, such as tranquilizers, sedatives, or antidepressants. Even some over-the-counter medicines can affect balance and how steady you are on your feet.
- Vision problems
- Foot pain or poor footwear
- Home hazards or dangers such as
 - broken or uneven steps,
 - throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over, and
 - no handrails along stairs or in the bathroom.

Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors. The more risk factors a person has, the greater their chances of falling.

Healthcare providers can help cut down a person's risk by reducing the fall risk factors listed above.

Falls can be prevented. These are some simple things you can do to keep yourself from falling.

Talk to Your Doctor

- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to **evaluate your risk** for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do.

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to **review your medicines** to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy. This should include prescription medicines and over-the counter medicines.
- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about taking **vitamin D** supplements with calcium.

Do Strength and Balance Exercises

Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance. Tai Chi is a good example of this kind of exercise.

Have Your Eyes Checked

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year, and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed.

If you have bifocal or progressive lenses, you may want to get a pair of glasses with only your distance prescription for outdoor activities, such as walking. Sometimes these types of lenses can make things seem closer or farther away than they really are.

Make Your Home Safer

- Get rid of things you could trip over.
- Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet.
- Put railings on both sides of stairs.
- Make sure your home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs.

HOMESTEAD

The gross income limit to qualify for this program is \$24,680. If your income is below \$24,680 and you pay property tax or rent your home, you **may** qualify for the Homestead Tax Credit. The Clark County Aging Office will continue to assist clients 60+ years of age with Homestead Tax Credit applications. See Dates on the back page of the newsletter. Call 715-743-5144 for more information.



The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP)

The Clark County Aging Office will continue to assist clients Age 60+ With Energy Assistance Application thru May 15th. This is for year 2015-16. We will start taking applications for the next heating season in October 2016. If you have questions about crisis funds, please call Social Services at 715-743-5233

Family Feuds and Caring for Older Parents

by the GWAAR Legal Services Team

When an older person's health and financial circumstances change, children are often the first to step in to provide care and make decisions for their aging parents. Siblings do not always agree on what that help should look like or what those decisions should be. It's hard enough for many older adults to ask for (or surrender to) help in the first place, so it makes it even more difficult to know that their children are in conflict. This article discusses the most common factors and types of discord among siblings and offers some helpful tips for navigating these choppy waters.

The most common factors leading to sibling feuds over aging parent care are the siblings' abilities to make important decisions, their abilities to divide the caregiving workload, and their overall level of teamwork. Fights are bound to crop up where one sibling refuses to participate in the discussions, wants no part in helping the parent in any way, or creates barriers to reaching agreements. On the flip side, a sibling who wants to control the decisions, wants to provide all care and limit access to information, and does not respect the input of others can wreak just as much havoc.

When disagreements do surface, here are some of the most common themes:

- **Roles and rivalries from childhood.** Often, unresolved conflicts or behaviors from childhood surface, making it difficult to see each other as grown adults with equal footing to solve the problems.
- **Disagreements over the parent's condition and capabilities.** What appears to be a crisis in one sibling's mind may not be in another's.
- **Arguments over financial matters, estate planning, and family inheritance.** Paying for care is a huge source of tension. When siblings are asked to chip in, not everyone may agree about what is fair and what isn't.
- **Burden of care.** The most common type of argument stems from those cases where the burden of caring for an older parent is unequal. Usually one sibling will take on most of the caregiving tasks which can lead to resentment in the eyes of the caregiver. On the other side of the coin, other siblings may feel shut out.
- **Parents resist care.** This scenario can make already-tough decisions tougher.
- **A "controlling" child excludes others from decision-making.** This child probably believes that he or she knows what's best, but that doesn't mean that the other siblings' (and parent's!) opinions aren't valid.
- **Children caring for parents and young children of their own.** This "sandwich generation," as it is commonly referred to, is becoming increasingly more prevalent and imposing financial and emotional constraints on those stuck in the middle.
- **Caring for both parents at once.** When parents are experiencing different care needs, it may make decisions about relocating or finding appropriate care even more difficult.
- **End-of-life care.** One sibling may be adamant about dying with dignity, while another believes that the parent should fight to the end. If the parent is no longer able to express

his or her wishes and no advanced directive is in place, these disagreements can be devastating.

The following tips may be helpful for families:

- **Engage the parent in the issues.** Give the parent every opportunity to make his or her own decisions and participate in the process.
- **Remember the past, but don't get stuck there.** Focus on the positive from the past and remember that we all have the ability to grow and learn and our perspectives change over time.
- **Make decisions based on values, not old scores.** Some people don't want to participate in caregiving because they feel like the person now needing the care didn't do a good job caring for them. Instead, a person could agree to care for the parent because he or she believes that we should all help one another.
- **Hold family meetings.** Get as many medical/social work/home health care opinions you can before holding a family meeting. Involve a neutral third party, if needed.
- **Plan before a crisis happens, if you can.** Estate planning can help avoid some of the feuds surrounding paying for care and family inheritance. An advanced directive for healthcare can provide peace of mind that everyone is acting in the way the parent would want when that time comes. Having these discussions and getting these documents in place before they're needed can alleviate a lot of tension.
- **Don't make promises to never institutionalize the parent.** You don't know what the future will bring!
- **Ask for help.** This is especially important for those siblings who are providing primary care. Make sure you're sharing information (and not just when there are emergencies) so that everyone is always up-to-speed. You may have to be detailed with what you ask for, but you don't have to do everything alone.
- **Stay in touch.** If you are a sibling who is far away geographically, ask what you can do to help, and check in often—both with the sibling and the parent.

Coming together and making difficult decisions is a lot to ask of any group of people. When you mix in complicated family histories and the very real issues of declining health and limited resources, disagreements are inevitable. When siblings can agree to disagree and acknowledge that their decisions are coming from a place of love, these disagreements can be minimized and can result in the best care for their aging parents.

Sources:

- 10 Reasons Families Fight about Senior Care, www.aplaceformom.com.
- Jacobs, Barry J., When a Troubled Past Affects Present Caregiving, AARP, Jan. 27, 2016.
- Making Decisions for Elderly Parents, www.keystoneelderlaw.com.
- Spencer, Paula, How to Avoid Strained Sibling Relationships When a Parent Has Alzheimer's, www.caring.com.
- When Families Feud, Elderly Parents Lose, www.caregiverstress.com.

CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DEMENTIA

[HTTP://WWW.HELPPFORALZHEIMERSFAMILIES.COM/ALZHEIMERS-DEMENTIA-DEALING/CAPTURING-MEMORIES/ASKING-GOOD-QUESTIONS-ALZHEIMERS-PATIENT/](http://www.helpforalzheimersfamilies.com/alzheimers-dementia-dealing/capturing-memories/asking-good-questions-alzheimers-patient/)

Most days Mom just sat in her armchair in front of the TV with a glazed look in her eyes. I tried to perk her up by talking about what was on the news or what I was cooking for dinner, but she didn't seem interested. With her Alzheimer's, I'm not even sure she understood what I was saying.

One day, a commercial came on for engagement rings, and I casually asked her, "Mom, do you remember when Dad proposed to you?" Suddenly her eyes lit up, as if I had unlocked a long-forgotten memory that brought her great joy. She proceeded to tell me the proposal story in great detail, which was more than I had heard her talk in weeks. I discovered Mom retained many vivid recollections of her past, and she seemed delighted to tell me her stories. All I had to do was ask a good question.

Asking questions can spark a meaningful conversation full of special memories. Someone living with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias will particularly appreciate the opportunity to pass on personal history and wisdom before it's too late.

When you begin a conversation, prompt the person with dementia to elaborate by asking open-ended questions and then listen patiently. Here are some questions you might ask:

- What chores did you have to do when you were growing up?
- When you were a teenager, what did you and your friends do for fun?
- What are some of the most valuable things you learned from your parents?
- What did your grandparents and great grandparents do for a living?
- When you were growing up, what did you dream you would do with your life?
- What accomplishments in your life are you most proud of?
- What are some of the things you are most grateful for?
- What was the happiest moment of your life?
- How would you like to be remembered?

You can use these questions as conversation starters at mealtimes, while completing daily activities together, or at a family gathering. Work up to the deeper questions like "How would you like to be remembered?" and follow up with related questions to keep the conversation going. If your family member with dementia gets confused, frustrated or upset by your questions, change the subject. You can always rephrase the question and try asking it again at another time.

By asking good questions, you're inviting your family member with dementia to share important life experiences that you can continue to remember and cherish even when that person no longer can. You'll not only enrich your loved one's life during the moments those memories are shared, but you'll be able to preserve the memories until it's time to pass them along to the next generation.



NEWSLETTER COMMENTS BY MARY



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK: April 10-16, 2016

Volunteers are the roots of strong communities". The staff of the Clark county Aging Department and Aging & Disability Resource Center as well as the members of the Clark County Committee on Aging would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our local community who volunteer their time and talents to worthy causes across our Clark County. We appreciate the folks from all walks of life who reach out beyond themselves to engage in kindness and caring for others. It is inspiring to see the number of folks who are involved in providing services to our elderly and disabled population.

This is our opportunity to say "THANK YOU" for all you do. Some of the projects volunteers are involved with include:

- Assisting at the Senior Dining (Nutrition) sites and serving on the advisory committee members
- Assembling the Aging newsletter
- Supporting the Aging Department Food Pantry thru food donations, supplies, and personal care products and stocking the pantry shelves
- Friendly visiting and phone check-ups to check on the well-being of others
- Assisting in the Aging Department
- Donations of durable medical equipment
- Assistance with Spring and fall clean-up (Change of Seasons)
- AARP Tax Aid volunteers who assist the elderly with income taxes
- Providing rides to the Nutrition centers, grocery shopping, etc.
- Senior center activities and fund raising to meet local center needs
- Other activities as needed

Thank you for all you do to make Clark County a better place to live. You join a force of more than 63 million folks nationwide who make up our country's volunteer force.

"VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE TIME;

THEY JUST HAVE THE HEART





WHY BE A VOLUNTEER?

It is not for the money, it's not for the fame.

It's not for any personal gain.

It's just for love of fellowman.

It's just to send a helping hand.

It's just to give the tith of self.

That's something you can't buy with wealth.

It's not medals won with pride.

It's for that feeling deep inside.

It's that reward down in your heart.

It's that feeling that you've been a part,

Of helping others far and near,

That makes you be a Volunteer!

Author unknown

APRIL & MAY EVENTS:

April: Continued assistance with Energy Assistance & Homestead Credit
April 12/ May 10: Alzheimer's & Caregiver Support Group

May: Older American's Month
May 15: Staff training: centers closed (Serving Safe Foods)
May 21: Change of Seasons in Neillsville and Loyal
May 24: Food Distribution at the Clark County Fairgrounds

STAYING MOTIVATED: Tips excerpted from total Body Diet for Dummies by Victoria Shanta, RDN,
LDN

- Clear your pantry, fridge, & freezer of foods with a lot of sugar, fat, salt
- Add healthful foods into your day, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lean proteins
- Factor in fiber with vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, beans, peas, & lentils
- Slow down your eating by taking at least 20 minutes to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner (it takes 20 minutes to feel fullness)
- Forge ahead – don't let a bump in the road of your healthy lifestyle get you down. Keep your goals at the top of your mind and move forward.

April Schedule

Senior Citizen Meetings

Abbotsford	April 12
Dorchester	April 14
Granton	April 14
Loyal	April 4
Neillsville	April 26
Thorp	April 4

Alzheimer's Support Group Meeting

April 12, 2016 1:30 p.m.

Neillsville Senior Center, 602 Oak St.



Aging Office Website: <http://www.co.clark.wi.us/index.aspx?nid=99>

Nutrition Committee Meetings

Abbotsford	April 27
Colby	April 26
Dorchester	April 6
Greenwood	April 19
Loyal	April 25
Neillsville	April 12
Owen	April 7
Thorp	April 5

Clark County Office of Aging/Nutrition

517 Court St., Rm. 201

Neillsville, WI 54456

Local Call Number 715-743-5144

Toll-Free Call Number 1-866-743-5144

**Elder Benefit Specialist Outreach &
Homestead Application Dates
Thorp April 21**

- ❖ Mary Sladich, Director
- ❖ Amy Nigon, Elder Benefit Specialist
- ❖ Lynn Crothers, Admin. Secretary

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