



Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving

You Are Invited...

by Sharon Beall, Wisconsin Bureau on Aging and Long Term Care

The 2002 Wisconsin Aging Network training is scheduled for April 17-19 at the Concourse Hotel in Madison, WI. This year, the conference will focus on the Older Americans Act, hence the title *The Heritage of the Older Americans Act*. In addition to refreshing memories about the Older Americans Act, the conference will provide an opportunity for Wisconsin Alliance of Family Caregiving (WAFC) members to learn more about Family Caregiving and the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

The keynote speaker on Friday, April 19, is Rhonda Montgomery, Ph.D., a noted family caregiving researcher from the University of Kansas Gerontology Center. In addition to the general session, Dr. Montgomery will be continuing her discussion in a workshop Friday morning. On a lighter note, Dr. Zorba Paster will address the audience in a closing session after Friday's luncheon. His program, entitled "Your Longevity Code - A Personal Prescription for a Longer, Sweeter Life" is certain to renew your energy and vitality.

You're invited to a reception! The Alliance is also preparing an event to provide a networking opportunity for persons trained as class leaders in *Taking Care of You: Powerful Tools for Caregivers* and friends of the Alliance. In addition to renewing friendships, we intend to discuss WAFC business and learn more from one another about the success of local caregiver programs. The reception, hosted by the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), will be held on Thursday evening from 6:00-8:00 p.m. The agenda for the reception includes an overview of the Alliance, review of the strategic plan, distribution of boilerplate materials that can be used locally to announce or advertise your caregiver programs, and more discussion about program evaluations. We are hoping that Dr. Montgomery will join us for the reception.

In the next week, you will be receiving a conference brochure and conference registration information. A special invitation to WAFC reception will accompany the conference materials. We hope you will join us in April. Please contact Sharon Beall at (608) 267-9583 or beallsm@dhfs.state.wi.us if you have questions about the reception or conference.

Future Plans

by D'Anna Bowman, AARP State Director

On January 30-31, ten members of the WI Alliance for Family Caregivers met in Wausau to review current activities, hear what other organizations are doing for caregivers, and develop a short and long term vision for the Alliance. Representatives from the Alzheimer's Association, the Respite Care Association, AAL, the Association of County Units on Aging, Interfaith and the Oneida Tribe discussed the services provided by their organizations and the caregiver activities offered in their communities.

Following the presentations, the Alliance discussed its future. After a very extensive review of caregiver needs in Wisconsin and resource limitations, the Alliance adopted the following vision for 2002 and beyond:

Short and Intermediate Vision for the Alliance (3-5 years)

- * The Alliance website will include resources, links, and local contacts.
- * Every county and tribe will have a minimum of 2 workshop leaders for the *Powerful Tools* curriculum.
- * *Powerful Tools* classes will be available to everyone in need.
- * The Alliance will sponsor an annual workshop leader meeting for caregivers of all ages, including those who care for children with disabilities, etc.
- * The Alliance will pursue certification by Legacy.
- * The Alliance will be replicated regionally.

The Alliance hopes to work with area agencies on aging to pull together these regional collaborations:

Long Term Vision (Beyond 5 years)

- * *Powerful Tools* will be just one part of the Alliance.
- * The Alliance will identify other caregiver materials covering a broad range of topics including: power of attorney / financial issues/home safety.
- * The Alliance will identify 6 curriculums for family caregivers.
- * Training and support will be given to community groups providing the curriculums.
- * The Alliance will continue to refine its vision as resources become available and other organizations become involved.

Collaboration in Caregiving

by Kathy Miller, Family Living Agent, Bayfield County

Many community agencies have stepped forward to assist family caregivers through a variety of programs such as respite care, home health care, adult day care, medical alert programs, support groups, and other various educational offerings.

While community agencies provide a wealth of support in the area of family caregiving, that support can grow exponentially when agencies work together to provide collaborative programming for families. One such example occurred recently in northern Wisconsin. The University of Wisconsin Extension Family Living Programs in Ashland and Bayfield Counties, in cooperation with the ABC Respite and Referral Project, cosponsored an educational program for family caregivers entitled, *Taking Care of You: Powerful Tools for Caregiving*.

Several community agencies, including the ABC Respite and Referral Project, the Alzheimer's Association, and the County Aging Units, offered to promote the program series in their respective newsletters and/or through personal contacts with clients. Some churches agreed to post information in their Sunday bulletins, and local nursing homes and the hospital agreed to display posters. The Respite Project offered to host the class series, providing the teaching facility and snacks for each session. The National Family Caregiver Support Act, contracted through the Respite Project, also paid for advertising in local newspapers. The editor of the *Health Matters* section of one of the newspapers agreed to feature an article on caregiving, providing some extra visibility to the class series.

Eight participants successfully completed this particular class series. At first glimpse, it might seem like a lot of planning went into a program that served a small number of people. One needs only to read the evaluations, however, to see what a positive difference the program made in the lives of the family caregiver participants. The fact that many community agencies worked together to plan and implement the program certainly contributed to its success. The benefits of collaboration were that participants were readily identified, costs and resources were shared, and working relationships among agency personnel were strengthened. In addition, class participants learned about agencies and resources that are readily available in their community to help them through their varied family caregiving challenges. Collaboration in caregiving does make a positive difference!

Marketing the Powerful Tools of Caregiving

by Judy Rank, Director, Manitowoc County Aging Resource Center

Lynn Scheinoha, Information and Assistance Specialist, and I have completed teaching four 6-week classes on *The Powerful Tools of Caregiving*, with a total of 54 participants. Our first class in mid-July had 21 participants and was for seven weeks so that we could allow for feedback on the final week. We invited the media to hear about the classes and the support these classes provide caregivers.

The workshops focus on the caregiver, yet provided support for the care receiver so that the caregivers could focus on the class. For caregivers who couldn't leave their care receiver, both day care and home health care was offered. For others, a home-delivered meal was sufficient. Materials were furnished by the National Family Caregiver Support Program. We provided lunch so no extra burdens were placed on the caregiver on the day of class.

Feedback from the first class participants suggested that classes be three hours each week for six weeks. Participants also felt they needed more time to talk about their more difficult challenges and wanted input and suggestions from the other participants. They realized they were not alone as a caregiver and wanted time to share similar experiences and challenges.

The first group, meeting monthly after the workshops were over, welcomed participants in class two into this group. Monthly support meetings are attended by 80% of the caregivers. They have had speakers on power of attorney paperwork, spousal impoverishment, housing options, drug care coverage, and CBRFs.

Participants from the first class were chosen by staff and peer counselors and have become our best source of marketing. The brochure for the program emphasizes that you are not alone if caring for a loved one. Our office would be happy to share the brochure with others by e-mail. The address is: judyrank@co.manitowoc.wi.us

The address for the Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving is:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/caregiving/>