

# Caregiver Chronicles

September 2021



Caring for Caregivers

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



***One of the most rewarding and important moments in life is the moment you finally find the courage to let go of what you can't change.***

***—Marc and Angel Chernoff  
authors and personal coaches***

## Transitions in Automobility

A few years ago I researched an academic paper on the transition for older adults from driver to non-driver and changes in “automobility” or the use of automobiles as our major means of transportation. During the process of researching and writing the paper, I decided to take a break one afternoon and go out for lunch. At the turn into the restaurant I came upon an accident. An older adult woman had misjudged and jumped a curb, landing half her car on top of the decorative boulder that marked the entrance to the parking lot. She was crying as she sat with a police officer and I feared I had just witnessed the end of her driving days. I felt sad for her and thought about how fortunate it was the incident that ended her driving involved no injury to her or to anyone else.

As the number of older drivers on our roads increase, the question of driving safety continues to be a pressing one for many caregivers:

- One in five drivers in the United States is 65 years or older.
- Older adults are more than twice as likely to report having a medical problem that makes it difficult to drive compared with people ages 24—64.
- Four in five older adults take one or more medicines daily. Physical changes that occur with age can change the way the body reacts to medicines, causing more side effects and effecting the ability to concentrate and drive safely.
- In 2018, almost 7,700 older adults (aged 67+) were killed in traffic crashes and more than 250,000 were treated in emergency departments for crash injuries. This means that each day, more than 20 older adults are killed and almost 700 are injured in crashes.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/older-driver-safety/index.html>, accessed 8.26.21.

As a result, the need is great to develop support for older adults to help them regulate their driving. While the overall statistics are sobering, there is a more constructive approach than focusing solely on how to take away the keys. There are strategies that can help reduce the need to give up driving prematurely. And, as for any aspect of sustainable caregiving, planning is the key.

Americans, especially those who are currently 60 plus, are generally part of a culture that loves to drive. The independence of going where you want, when you want; the romance and adventure of the road trip; and the love we have for our vehicles is ingrained in our identity. For so many of us our ability to drive is more than just getting from here to there, so when you are considering an intervention to address a loved one's driving, keep in mind that there is much more associated with it than may be apparent on the surface. Understand that you may be coming up against that person's self-image and sense of independence. A shift in thinking can greatly increase the likelihood of a positive experience and outcome.


This month's cover quote from authors and personal coaches Marc and Angel Chernoff speaks to the challenge of facing the loss of automobility: "One of the most rewarding and important moments in life is the moment you finally find the courage to let go of what you can't change." There is ideally a process of self-regulation for the older driver and they take the initiative to do what it takes to stay safe while preserving their ability to drive as long as possible. Unfortunately, for some, it takes an accident or near accident for the older adult to stop driving. Interventions aimed at promoting a feeling of personal control and autonomy can protect against the negative psychological consequences of ending an individual's driving days.

While all of us have a vested interest in safety on the road, we also have an interest in keeping older adults independent and healthy for as long as possible. The ability to drive can be a very significant part of that—from providing the means for an older adult to shop independently for nutrition, prescriptions, and other necessary items, to keeping socially engaged and connected to the larger community.

List-making and advanced planning can help make the adjustment to non-driver less traumatic. Thinking ahead and discovering new options can compensate for some of the losses. Framing it in a similar way to planning for retirement, Jane Mahoney's article, *Driving Retirement* (page 4) outlines a proactive process for discussion and evaluation. On page 5 you'll also find resources and links to help to begin the process, including the [Map Your Driving Retirement Brochure and Workbook](#), new from The Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources (GWAAR).

Planning for sustainable caregiving becomes even more valuable when a plan for driving retirement is part of it.



  
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## Driving Retirement

**D**riving is a symbol of freedom, independence and self-sufficiency but it is important to consider what happens when declining vision, medication side effects, or a degenerative condition means your loved one is no longer safe to drive. Transitioning from driver to non-driver is a difficult decision and planning ahead can alleviate some anxiety. Just like people plan for retirement when they leave the workforce, “driving retirement” planning helps prepare for a time when driving is no longer safe. It is a proactive move that gives a person control over how to live life outside of the driver’s seat. Discussing driving retirement with the person you are (or will be) caring for while the person still drives will make the transition easier.

Consider the following points as you help your care partner map out a driving retirement plan:

**Start by learning what transportation options are available.** Talk to friends, health care providers, the [Dane County Caregiver Program](#), the [ADRC](#), and [Senior Focal Point](#) in the area where your care partner lives. Find details on how to utilize them.

**Make a list of your care partner’s transportation needs and alternative ways to meet those needs.** In addition to using public transportation options they may be able to order things through the mail, use a delivery service, walk, bicycle, or ask family or friends for rides. Be sensitive to the fact that the driver in transition may not want to depend on family members for transportation, so include a variety of options in your discussion that helps them retain as much independence as possible. If services like LYFT or UBER operate in your area they may be another good option. Include family members and friends in the conversation as you develop the plan and remember to consider transportation for social activities.

**Once the transportation plan is in place, encourage your loved one to start trying out new transportation methods right away.** Go with them as they ride the bus, help them make an online order, or walk with them to a nearby store. This will help to reduce stress and increase confidence.

The next step is to determine when it is time to stop driving. The following are some warning signs of unsafe driving:

- Abrupt lane changes, braking, or accelerating
- Confusion at exits or turns
- Delayed responses to unexpected situations
- Lack of attention to traffic signs or pedestrians
- Increased agitation or irritation while driving
- Vehicle crashes or near misses



There is usually not a specific day when you know it is time to stop driving. Decisions should be based on driving behavior over a period of time, not just a single incident. Because timing can be unclear, have agreed-upon measures in place in the form of a driving contract that may include regular review by family, completion of a driving assessment, or a discussion with a physician to help determine the balance between a person's desire to drive with the need for safety.

When it's time to put the driving retirement plan into action be positive and optimistic. Review the transportation plan and make adjustments as needed. Even when change is unwanted, people have the ability to adapt and thrive. Plan to visit them frequently and be sure that transportation is available to meet their social needs.

Get the conversation started about planning driving retirement to prevent a more difficult scenario in the future. Utilize the [Driving Retirement Brochure & Workbook](#) and other local resources to help you find the balance between maintaining independence and ensuring safety, for you, your family, and your community.

—Jane Mahoney, Caregiver Support Specialist  
Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources

### **Driving Retirement and Transportation Resources:**

Dane County: [Transportation Call Center](#) 608-242-6489 Monday—Friday  
Provides rides for clinic appointments and surgeries.

[Wisconsin DOT Mobility Management](#)

[Wisconsin DOT](#): Resources for Older Drivers

[AARP Driver Safety](#)

[CDC Injury Prevention & Control](#): Older Drivers Stay Safe Behind the Wheel

[Mayo Clinic: Older Drivers](#): 7 Trips for Driver Safety

[AAA \(American Automotive Association\)](#): Senior Driver Safety & Mobility

## Healthy Aging Workshops Offered in Dane County

The Wisconsin Institute for Health Aging (WIHA) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve the health and well-being of older adults in Wisconsin. They do this by administering high-level evidence-based health promotion programs. The Area Agency on Aging of Dane County is a partner of WIHA's and helps to spread healthy aging programs on a local level. Choose a workshop that's right for you and call to sign up today!

CLASS	DATE	DAY & FEE	LOCATION	TIME	REGISTRAR
Healthy Living with Diabetes	September 1- October 6	Wednesday \$20	Colonial Club Senior Activity Center	12:00pm - 2:30pm	Laura Jennings 608-837-4611, ext 129
Healthy Living with Chronic Pain	September 7- October 12	Tuesday \$25	Middleton Senior Center	1:00pm- 3:30pm	Middleton Senior Center 608-831-2373
Stepping On - Preventing Falls	September 14- October 26	Tuesday \$35	Fitchburg Senior Center	9:00am- 11:00am	Fitchburg Senior Center 608-270-4290
Stepping On - Preventing Falls	September 14- October 26	Tuesday \$35	Stoughton Area Senior Center	9:00am- 11:00am	Stoughton Area Senior Center 608-873-8585
Stepping On - Preventing Falls	September 15- October 27	Wednesday \$35	Cottage Grove Parks & Rec	10:00am- 12:00am	Cottage Grove Parks & Rec 608-873-8585
Stand Up - Reduce Sedentary Behavior	September 23 - October 14 F/U Session: November 11	Thursday \$0	Oregon Area Senior Center	12:30pm- 2:30pm	Anne Stone 608-835-8501
Mind Over Matter: Healthy Bowels; Healthy Bladder	September 22 October 6 October 20	Wednesday \$20	Mount Horeb Senior Center	1:30pm- 3:30pm	Mount Horeb Senior Center 608-437-6902
Mind Over Matter: Healthy Bowels; Healthy Bladder	October 1 October 15 October 29	Friday \$20	Warner Park Community Center	1:00pm- 3:00pm	Deenah Givens 512-0000 ext. 3002
Healthy Living with Diabetes	September 13 - October 18	Monday \$20	Jewish Social Services	1:00pm - 3:30pm	Shannon Gabriel 608-261-5678
Stepping On - Preventing Falls	October 21 - December 9 *No class 11/25	Thursday \$35	Oregon Area Senior Center	1:00pm- 3:00pm	Anne Stone 608-835-8501
Healthy Living with Chronic Pain	October 26 - November 30	Tuesday \$25	Phone-based	10:00am - 11:00am	Shannon Gabriel 608-261-5678

For more information, contact Healthy Aging Coordinator

Shannon Gabriel at 608-261-5678 or [Gabriel.Shannon@countyofdane.com](mailto:Gabriel.Shannon@countyofdane.com)

Scholarships may be available dependent on the workshop. Inquire when registering.



Date	Time	Topic	A LEADING VOICE FOR CAREGIVERS
Tuesday September 7	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>COVID-19 Updates for Caregivers with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylak, MSW</b> <i>This session will answer all your questions about booster shots, and will discuss what precautions you and your loved ones should be taking against variants as our COVID pandemic endures. We'll also provide updates on vaccination rates in long term care settings.</i>	
Thursday September 9	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>Dear Lucy: How Dementia Affects Balance with Lucy Barylak, MSW</b> <i>Caregivers will receive tips on how to safeguard your loved one from falling, as well as understanding the reason why dementia affects balance.</i>	
Monday September 13	1:00 pm Eastern 12:00 pm Central 11:00 am Mountain 10:00 am Pacific	<b>Generational Planning: Financial, Legal, Possessions, and Other Legacy Planning with Tena J. Burrell</b> <i>Have you had the important discussion with you care receiver about "legacy" planning? How are remaining financial resources and possessions to be passed to survivors and the next generation? What happens if sudden incapacity changes those plans? Learn a six-step process to let the wishes of your loved one be honored and how incapacity can affect legacy planning. <b>**Sponsored by the North Central Texas Caregiver Teleconnection**</b></i>	
Tuesday September 14	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>Online - A Guide to Living with Alzheimer's Disease with Dr. Nestor H. Praderio</b> <i>N.H. Praderio, M.D. will discuss the many roles Caregivers assume through the evolving stages of the disease. Gain a better understanding about Alzheimer's Disease and it's challenges from both the caregiver and patient perspective.</i>	
Wednesday September 15	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>El Cuidar a Nuestros Adultos Mayores ya era Difícil; el COVID-19 lo volvió Caótico con Leticia Q. Guzman Spanish</b> <i>Esta sesión proporcionará a los cuidadores consejos para mejorar sus mecanismos de afrontamiento; seguir manteniéndose saludable sin rendirse a temores poco realistas; practicar hábitos de autocuidado; y mantener pensamientos positivos de esperanza.</i>	
Monday September 20	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>Online-Caregivers of America and Self-care with Dr. James Huysman, PsyD, LCSW</b> <i>Dr. Jamie Huysman will offer attendees the awareness and necessary understanding to develop a meaningful "resiliency plan" that addresses caregiving, their loved ones concerns and especially their own health and wellness in the dynamic years to come.</i>	
Tuesday September 21	12:00pm Eastern 11:00 am Central 10:00 am Mountain 9:00 am Pacific	<b>Online-What does that behavior mean? with Tam Cummings, PhD</b> <i>Anxiety, pain, depression, and caregivers can all cause behaviors in a Person With Dementia. Behaviors can also be a clue to the form of dementia or the stage of the dementia. It's all about behaviors including learning to use the Dementia Behavior Algorithm to understand what the Person With Dementia is communicating. <b>**Sponsored by VITAS Healthcare**</b></i>	
Tuesday September 28	11:00 am Eastern 10:00 am Central 9:00 am Mountain 8:00 am Pacific	<b>Disaster Preparedness 101 for Caregivers with Dr. Elliot Montgomery Sklar and Lucy Barylack, MSW</b> <i>September is National Preparedness Month, and there are specific preparations that caregivers and seniors should consider in the event of hurricanes and natural disasters. Join us as we discuss preparedness tips and planning strategies for caregivers to keep you and your loved ones safe.</i>	

## Are you a friend or family member of someone with Alzheimer's disease or dementia?



### Researchers would like to learn from you to better understand your views and experiences on times of heightened awareness or clarity experienced by people living with dementia:

- There are times when a person living with Alzheimer's disease or dementia may have periods of greater awareness or clarity. These moments, often called "lucid episodes," can be different for each person, but might include increased communication abilities such as speaking more coherently, or suddenly recalling memories or events.
- Researchers at the UW-Madison School of Nursing are studying these periods of clarity or awareness and would like to hear from friends and family members of people with dementia about their experiences, and their thoughts about how we can best study these episodes.

### Who can participate in this project:

- Any family member or friend who has provided support to a person living with dementia
- 18 years of age or older

### What participation involves:

- One interview lasting 30-45 minutes
- The interview will be held at a time that is convenient for you, in person, over the phone, or on a secure video conferencing platform.
- During the conversation, we will ask you about your experiences and views surrounding these periods of greater awareness and clarity, and your thoughts on video observation of people with dementia for research purposes.
- Researchers will not keep any information that could identify you or link answers back to you.
- You will receive \$30 for your participation!



Andrea Gilmore-Bykovskiy, PhD, RN  
Lead Researcher



Laura Block, BSN, RN  
Project Support

Contact the Study Team for more information or to participate in this project!

**Phone: 608-262-6490**

**Email:**

[lucidity@nursing.wisc.edu](mailto:lucidity@nursing.wisc.edu)



Clark Benson, BS  
Project Support



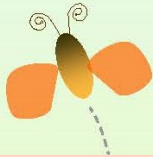
Erica Smith, MA  
Project Support



**Free Call in Program:**

**1-833-558-0712**

*Access Code 199 195 6932 ##*



**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”

Gary Glazner

**Free call in program  
for seniors!!**



**September 15th at 10 a.m.**

New York based poet Gary Glazner leads a fun, high-energy poetry party. We will perform classic, well-known poems together. We will create an original group poem. Most of all we will connect with humor and compassion. Please join us for this inspirational event.

*Gary Glazner is the founder and Executive Director of the Alzheimer's Poetry Project, (APP). The National Endowment for the Arts listed the APP as a “best practice.” NBC's “Today” show, PBS NewsHour and NPR's “All Things Considered” have featured segments on his work. Glazner is the author of **Dementia Arts: Celebrating Creativity in Elder Care**, 2014. Glazner was published in **JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association**, 2018. The paper includes his most in-depth description of what is happening at the neurological level when you are performing poetry. The APP has provided programming in 36 states and internationally in Australia, Canada, England, Germany, Poland, South Korea and Turkey.*





# 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: Help With Medication Costs

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

Each year in late September, Medicare Advantage (Part C) plans or Part D (prescription drug) plans will send you an **Annual Notice of Change** (ANOC). The ANOC is the notice you receive that gives a summary of any changes in the current plan's cost and coverage that will take effect January 1 of the next year. Review this notice to see if your plan will continue to meet your health care needs. The ANOC is typically mailed with the plan's Evidence of Coverage (EOC), which is a more comprehensive list of the plan's cost and benefits for the upcoming year.

### **If you are having difficulty paying for medications, there are programs that can help!**

If you have limited income and resources, you may be able to get **Extra Help** through the Social Security Administration (SSA) program by that name with paying premiums, deductibles, and copayments for Medicare Part D. You may need to apply for Extra Help separately with SSA. You can apply or get more information about Extra Help by calling the SSA nationally at 800-772-1213 (TTY 800-325-0778) or locally in Dane County at 866-770-2262 or visiting [www.socialsecurity.gov/extrahelp](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/extrahelp). The Extra Help program is income-based.

**SeniorCare** is for Wisconsin residents who are ages 65 and older that also helps members cover the costs of prescription drugs. While SeniorCare and Medicare Part D are stand-alone programs, you can enroll in both at the same time. Wisconsin's SeniorCare prescription drug assistance program is considered "creditable coverage." This means SeniorCare meets or exceeds the standard Medicare Part D plan, so you will not have a penalty if you choose SeniorCare *instead* of Medicare Part D. A penalty will incur if you go without either Part D or SeniorCare, however. Call the SeniorCare Customer Service hotline at 800-657-2038 for questions, or you can find more information here: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/seniorcare/index.htm>. This program is available to all incomes, however with varying levels of assistance based on [income](#).

*Adapted from Medicareinteractive.org and dhs.wisconsin.gov.*

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



ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT FALLING?

# Only Leaves Should Fall

## FREE VIRTUAL Falls Prevention Event

### Thursday, September 30, 2021

### 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



#### SPEAKER

**Dr. Zorba Paster**, Family Physician,  
WPR Radio Host, Newspaper Columnist,  
TV Contributor



#### MODERATOR

**Dr. Corinda Rainey-Moore**,  
Community Engagement Manager at  
UnityPoint Health-Meriter



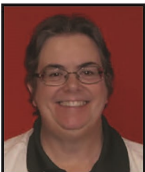
#### PANELIST

**Aaron Gabriel Perry**, Founder and  
President of Rebalanced-Life Wellness  
Association



#### PANELIST

**Dr. Roanne Osborne**, MD, MBA,  
FAAFP CPE, Chief Medical Officer at  
MercyCare Health Plans



#### PANELIST

**Dr. Judy Dewane**, Associate  
Professor, Physical Therapy Program  
at UW-Madison



#### PANELIST

**Ms. Charlie Daniel**, African American  
Opioid Coalition Founder and  
Diversity and Inclusion Manager at Safe  
Communities

Join us for this  
**FREE,**  
Live Virtual Event

To register, contact:  
**Ashley Hillman at**

[ahillman@safercommunity.net](mailto:ahillman@safercommunity.net)

or 608-235-1957

#### Sponsors:

Dane Co. Falls Prevention Task Force  
Dane Co. Area Agency on Aging



United Way  
of Dane County



The Power of Many. Working for All.

