

Caregiver Corner

... Ideas and information for people caring for others 778-2411

What Everyone Should Know About Veteran's Benefits

As a veteran, or a person caring for a veteran, there may be benefits or services that you are entitled to and don't know about. Come to this presentation to learn:

- What can the Veteran's Services Agency do for you?
- How do I apply for benefits?
- What is available for widows and spouses?
- What about VA health care?

There will be time for questions and handouts will be provided.

Presenter: Brian Vojtisek
 Director of the Broome County
 Veteran's Service Agency

Date: Wednesday, June 11th

Time: 6:00 - 7:45 PM

Location: Broome West Senior Center
 2801 Wayne Street, Endwell, NY

Advance registration is requested. Call Caregiver Services at 778-2411 with questions or to register.

Please note: Families of active duty servicemen and women as well as veterans are welcome to come and get information.

Contents:

1. What Everyone Should Know About Veteran's Benefits.....	1
2. How to Live a Quality Life With Vision Loss.....	1
3. Family Caregiver Training.....	1
4. ACCORD, A Center for Dispute Resolution.....	2
5. The Meaning of Father's Day.....	2
6. How to Deal with Heat Illnesses.....	3
7. Office for Aging Summer Hours.....	3
8. Take Care of Yourself While Caring For a Loved One.....	3

How to Live a Quality Life with Vision Loss



In June, Caregiver Chat will host Annie Vanderwal, Social Worker and Vision Rehabilitation

Therapist at Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment. Annie will provide practical tips for modifying your elder's environment so that it is "visually safe". She will also discuss how AVRE can help your vision-impaired elder through services such as special adaptive equipment. Handouts will be provided.

The Caregiver Chat will meet Monday, June 2nd, from 1:00-3:00 PM at the Stay Healthy Center which is located in the Oakdale Mall near Sears. Chat is an informal discussion group for people who are concerned about an older friend or relative. The group is coordinated by Judy Bobinski, Caregiver Services Case Manager. You are welcome to bring your lunch and a beverage with you and enjoy the company of other caregivers. Call Judy with questions at 778-2411.



Family Caregiver Training

You are welcome to attend this free training for family caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia. The training will cover:

- Medical overview of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias
- Communication strategies
- Tools to address challenging behaviors
- Activities of daily living
- Legal and financial planning

The training will take place from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Friday, June 27 at the United Methodist Church, 261 Main Street in Owego.

Advance registration is required by June 20th. Call the Alzheimer's Association at 607-785-7852, ext. 120



ACCORD A Center for Dispute Resolution

Do you know of a family that is struggling with decisions regarding where an elderly parent might live? Do you know a family where the children disagree about the level of care needed for an elderly parent? Do you know a family where the family members are having trouble coming to agreement on any of the issues families face in caring for elderly family members? If so, there is a new program in Broome and Tioga counties that may be able to provide assistance.

ACCORD, A Center for Dispute Resolution, Inc., has established a program in Broome and Tioga Counties for senior citizens and those who care for them entitled "Assisted Senior Communication (A Program for Seniors, their Families, and Others)" (ASC). Services in this program are free, confidential, and voluntary.

The program uses a guided or facilitated discussion process that aids individuals and families in making decisions and planning. It is a voluntary process where individuals involved in addressing a senior's needs meet with at least one professionally trained neutral party who helps them identify issues, clarify perceptions and explore options for a mutually acceptable outcome. The process can best be described as a facilitated family meeting where the family decides who should be invited to the meeting and what topics should be discussed in the meeting. If a family is having problems

discussing any issue, they can contact ACCORD to discuss whether that issue is appropriate for the Assisted Senior Communication Program, or possibly one of ACCORD's other mediation programs. Typical topics for the ASC program can include housing issues, intergenerational issues, caregiver concerns, consumer disputes, health care issues, guardianship issues, and long term care issues.

ASC mediators do not make decisions for the individuals, give medical or legal advice, or advise the parties on possible solutions. The mediators rather assist people with generating ideas and finding areas in which they agree. This process is designed to help improve a family's communication, capacity for problem solving, and decision-making about short-term and long-term changes.

ASC mediators are trained and experienced; they have knowledge of the aging process, stereotypes regarding aging, sensitivity to elder issues, and community resources.

For further information on the Assisted Senior Communication Program in Broome County, please contact Tom Botts or Dick Squire at 607-724-5153. In Tioga County please contact Barb Bohling at 607-687-8222.

The above article was submitted by Tom Botts from ACCORD.

The Meaning of Father's Day (Adapted from an on-line article.)



This year Father's Day is Sunday, June 15th. In some ways, this might be thought of as "the other parent's day." In the U.S., fewer dollars are spent on Father's Day than on Mother's Day and shopping is more likely to be done at the last minute. The only measure on which Father's Day

ranks higher than Mother's Day is the collect calls. In fact, Father's Day wasn't even made an official holiday until 1972 when it was proclaimed by Richard Nixon. Remember to show appreciation to your father in whatever way works best for you.



How to Deal with Heat Illnesses

Hot, humid weather-- particularly over a series of days--can cause serious illnesses, including heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Anyone can be affected by these illnesses, but some people are at greater risk and need to take extra precautions. Those with the greatest risk are older people, people who are extremely overweight, and those taking certain medications.

In periods of high temperatures and high humidity, the following are steps that can be followed to lessen the chances of getting heat illnesses:

- ✓ Avoid overexertion, particularly during warmer periods of the day.
- ✓ Keep windows shut and curtains and blinds drawn during the hotter part of the day.
- ✓ Move to cooler rooms during the hotter parts of the day.
- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids.
- ✓ Dress in loose-fitting and light colored clothing.
- ✓ Try to lose weight if needed.
- ✓ Eat a little more salt, unless your diet restricts it.



Office for Aging Summer Hours

Starting Tuesday, May 27th, and ending Tuesday, September 2nd, Broome County offices will observe "Summer Hours" to help conserve energy. The Office for Aging will open at 8:00 AM and close at 4:00 PM. Thank you for your cooperation during this time.

Take Care of Yourself While Caring for a Loved One

By Karen Rowinsky



Self-care for the spirit

Our spirit is the part of us that enjoys life, feels fulfilled, and experiences pleasure. Even in the hard times, we need to attend to our spirit. It's hard to imagine that you can have a joyful spirit in times of extreme stress, but by doing the following, you will be giving yourself a chance at joy:

1. **Take time out** - Schedule time every day to get away from your situation. You need some "away time," even if it is just 15 minutes sitting on the front porch or lying in bed staring at the ceiling.
2. **Don't over commit** - When you are taking care of a loved one, you have the right, and the obligation, to limit your commitments. Unless it's your boss asking you to do something, use the words "I don't want to!" liberally. Given what you're going through, expect that the world should and will cut you some slack.
3. **Create a calming environment** - Have at least one room in your home that is soothing to your senses. Beautiful music can relax you. You might even try a tabletop fountain to set a mood of serenity.

4. **Reduce overload at home** - Be reasonable with your standards. If friends ask how they can help, suggest they give you a day of house cleaning service or make you a meal. Most people want to do something for you and will be thrilled when you tell them what you need.
5. **Change "guilt" to "regret."** - It's easy to feel guilty about things you can't do, feelings you have, even words you wish you hadn't said. You don't have time for guilt, though. Instead of "I feel guilty that I can't..." say "I regret that I can't..."
6. **Give yourself a pat on the back.** - Take pride in what you are accomplishing and applaud the courage you have exhibited in meeting the needs of your loved one. Sometimes it may feel as if no one notices your sacrifices. It doesn't matter, though, if *you* feel good about doing the right thing.

7. **Learn something new** - Get a book from the library, read a magazine article, or watch a television show about a topic unfamiliar to you. Trying to learn or understand about something new can provide much-needed distraction.
8. **Have a hobby** - Handwork such as knitting, crocheting, quilting, or counted cross-stitch can give you something to do when you don't have the energy to use your mind. Choosing and working on a project is fun, gives you a ready source of gift items, and dissipates nervous energy. Any hobby can offer a chance to take yourself away from your current situation, if even for just a few minutes.

Caregiver Services and its publication, "*Caregiver Corner*" are supported by a grant from the New York State Office for the Aging.

Your June 2008 "Caregiver Corner"

Broome County Office for Aging
44 Hawley Street
PO Box 1766
Binghamton, NY 13902-1766



Broome County Office for Aging
...bringing seniors and services together