

Caregiver Corner

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

New Book for Persons Caring for Family Members with Dementia Abounds with Insight, Practical Tips, and Humor

Dementia Caregivers Share Their Stories: A Support Group in a Book by Lynda A. Markut and Anatole Crane, derives its power from the stories collected by the authors.

The chapter on "Maintaining Meaningful Involvement in Life" includes an insight from a caregiver named Bernice: "One of the lessons I had from mom having vascular dementia was to slow down. Whenever I walked or cooked or gardened with her, I got to experience the pleasure in the simple things."

An anecdote from a caregiver named Renate also shows us the humor in caregiving, with this holiday anecdote: "We got a Christmas tree last year and my husband worked and worked to get it to fit in the stand. He finally got it in the stand and brought it into the

house. Mom took one look at it and said 'Why are you bringing that damn tree in the house?' That was a really funny moment. We all stopped and just laughed.

The book also offers a brief descriptions of the most common forms of dementia (Alzheimer's Disease, Lewy Body Disease, Vacular Dementia and Pick's Disease), the content progresses in a more-or-less chronological order, starting with "early symptoms and diagnosis" and exploring a dozen topics ranging from "who gives care and how to do it" to "the challenge of behavior changes" to "the final transition" which addresses coping with the death of the care recipient and the emotional aftermath that accompanies the end of a caregiving relationship.

For more information, visit

www.VanderbiltUniversityPress.com

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Resolutions for a Healthy Spirit

Rev. David L. Schriber, OSL

It's time for New Year's resolutions again! Have you made yours? Here are a dozen suggestions for a healthy spirit and soul:

- ☞ I will close the door gently on the disappointments of the past year. This is a day of new beginnings.
- ☞ I will make a sincere attempt to apologize to someone I have hurt, and to forgive someone who has hurt me.
- ☞ Besides spring housecleaning, I will do spring "soul-cleaning," getting rid of old emotional "baggage" I've had around for so long I don't even see it any more, although others may. If needed, I'll have someone help me with the bags I can't move myself.
- ☞ I will include meaningful rituals and traditions (religious, cultural, family) in my life.
- ☞ I will tell and show someone close to me how much they mean to me.
- ☞ Friendships are precious, especially as we age and old friends pass on. I will make at least one new friend this year.
- ☞ I will make one major change for a healthier life. I will make a written plan to make sure this happens.
- ☞ I will celebrate something I really enjoy doing, and do more of it; and I will learn something completely new.
- ☞ I'll take time to "smell the roses," watch the shapes in the clouds, enjoy art, music or savor a leisurely meal.
- ☞ I'll honor a friend who has died by remembering them to their family and friends, and by continuing to include their loved ones in my life.

- ☞ I'll do my part to make the world a better place. I can give blood or be a volunteer. I can share my life experience, or just be a good listener. "For one who saves a single soul, it is as if they had saved the whole world." (found in both Talmud and Qur'an)

Rev. David L. Schriber, OSL, from West Corners, is a health ministries consultant.

Website Feature of the Month

An excellent resource list has been compiled by Jane Gross of the New York Times, entitled [Caring for the Elderly](#). Jane writes a regular online column on Aging and Caregiving entitled "[The New Old Age: Caring and Coping](#)," and many of her excellent archived blogs are posted. Recent blogs include: [Adult Children, Aging Parents and the Law](#), and [How Old Is Too Old for Lifesaving Surgery?](#) Link to it at <http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com>.

Weekend Respite for Caregivers Available at Yesteryears

The Office for Aging is now offering area caregivers an Adult Day Program for their loved ones on scheduled Saturdays.

The Wayne Street Yesteryears site in Endwell is open the first and third Saturdays each month from 10:00-2:00.

New clients are welcome to join in the fun stimulating activities provided to either socially isolated seniors or those with dementia.

- ☞ It will be on an advanced reservation basis only.
- ☞ We will need to know if you plan on using this service by the Wednesday before the actual date of service.
- ☞ Space will be limited and on a first come first serve basis.
- ☞ We will be providing lunch and activities for the four hours of respite provided.
- ☞ The suggested contribution will be \$16.00 a day including lunch and all activities for Broome County residents 60 years and older, anyone under 60 or out of county please call for prices.

If you have any questions or would like to make a reservation please call 778-2946.

Programs That Help Caregivers Cope

Good Morning Broome - Did you know that the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program offers a telephone reassurance program for seniors who live alone? If you are worried about a loved one who may not have support during an illness, or an accident such as a fall, you may want to check it out. It is a free service. For details call RSVP at 231-0726 and ask about "Good Morning Broome."

Caregiver Chats

The Chat group meets on the first Monday of the month from 1-3p.m. at the Stay Healthy Center at the Oakdale Mall. Chat is an informal discussion group for people who are concerned about an older friend or relative. Contact Judy Bobinski, group facilitator, at 778-2411 with questions.

Chat for February 2nd

The Importance of Advance Planning for End of Life

Tanya Walker from Action for Older Persons' APEL (Advance Planning End of Life) Program, will address several end-of-life issues, including the importance of advance directive documents, services available in our community, and how you can talk to your family about these imperative decisions. Tanya will provide participants with free Living Will and Health Care Proxy Forms.

Chat on March 2nd

Senior Scams . . . Learn What They Are and How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

People over the age of 65 make up almost 13 percent of the United States population but represent 30 percent of scam victims. Often, it is hard to spot fraud as it is happening, and the consequences can be devastating!

The March Caregiver Chat will host Mike Danaher, Assistant Attorney General at the Binghamton Regional Office. Mike will review with us the various senior scams and how the elderly are targeted. Most importantly, Mike will explain how we can stop scam artists before they strike; what our rights are under state law and the steps we can take to protect our health and assets. Mike will also share with us a publication of the Attorney General's office called *Smart Seniors*. This very comprehensive guide book includes advice on what to do if you find that you have actually been victimized.

You do not have to attend the Chat on a regular basis . . . *Stop in when you can!*

Please Note: Inclement Weather Policy for the Caregiver Chat. The Chat group will not meet if Johnson City Schools announce a snow day or close early due to inclement weather. Attempts will be made to reschedule another meeting time for the 2nd Monday of the month providing our meeting room is available. Please call Judy Bobinski to confirm.

Ask Medicare! A New Resource for Family Caregivers

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services or CMS, now have an easy to use "one-stop shop" web site for the busy caregiver of an older person. Several topics are addressed and each topic area allows you the ability to post your own question if you can't find the answer that you're looking for. Topics include but are not limited to: Medicare basics; How to Enroll? Is It Covered?; Permission to Access Health Information; Comparing Drug Plans; Comparing Health and Medigap Plans; How to Get In-Home Services; Help with Billing.

There is also a section called "Spotlight on Caregiving" which features an actual caregiver and his or her story. Also included in this section are comprehensive guides for caregivers about benefits and coverage which can be downloaded. Topics include: Learning the Basics; Planning for a Healthy Future; Coping with Chronic Illness; Paying for Prescription Drugs; Helping with Hospitalization; Securing Home Health Care; Choosing a Nursing Home; Considering Hospice Care. Caregivers can also subscribe to receive the e-Newsletter to get the latest from Medicare on an ongoing basis. All of

this, by logging on to:
www.medicare.gov/caregivers.

If you still need assistance, contact the Broome County Office for Aging at 778-2411.

Softening an Angry Heart Workshop

Do your daily demands ever make you feel out of control? Is it difficult for you to forgive when people hurt you? Do you find yourself swearing at drivers who cut you off in traffic? Join us for How to Soften an Angry Heart and Return to a Place of Peace.

Linda Humphrey, RNC at UHS Family Ties, offers workshops on this topic on Monday, January 26th 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. or 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Broome West Senior Center, 2801 Wayne Street, Endwell.

Pre-registration is required. To register please call DeeDee in Caregiver Services at 778-2411 by January 21, 2009. To make your reservation by e-mail please provide your name, which session you wish to attend (a.m. or p.m.) and a telephone number; send to ofa@co.broome.ny.us.

Directions: Going west on Watson Blvd. near Brother's Two, Turn left onto North Knight Avenue and then right on Wayne Street and the center is on the right.

Enjoy the program and plan to stay for breakfast if you can. Breakfast for Lunch, Strawberry Waffles will be available for \$2.50 to those over the age of 60 and for \$3.50 for those under 60.



Broome County Office for Aging
Caregiver Services
Presents

Organizing Paper Work

Get Organized! Feel Better! Save Time and Energy!

Topics include:

**How to Organize Your Medical Records
What to Keep - What to Toss**

Presented by: Katy Bailey, Professional Organizer

**Where: Broome West Senior Community Center
2801 Wayne Street, Endwell
(near Brother's Two)**

**When: Tuesday, February 10, 2009
10:00 - 11:30 am or 6:00 - 7:30 pm**

A donation of \$5.00 per person is suggested

Katy is a professional organizer who works in residential and small office settings. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers and specializes in working with seniors and their adult children during times of life's transitions.

Please call for reservations 778-2411.

Plan to stay for lunch at the center!

Call 785-1777 by noon on Monday, February 9th, to reserve a hot lunch (choose Liver & Onions or Chicken Marengo) or stay and enjoy the Soup & Sandwich Bar without a reservation. Suggested contribution is \$2.50 for those 60 and over; \$3.50 for all others.

Caregiver Education Schedule January through June 2009

January 26th

Softening the Angry Heart

Linda Humphrey, RNC

Session 1: 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Session 2: 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Broome West (prior to breakfast-for-lunch)

February 10th

Organizing Paper Work & Medical Records;

Katy Bailey

Session 1: 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Session 2: 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Broome West Tuesday; A suggested donation of \$5.00 per person is suggested.

March 11th

Financial Benefits for Caregivers

Lucy Dirlam, Office for Aging

6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Broome County Public Library

April 5th

How to Have a Family Meeting

Judy Bobinski,

6:00 to 7:30 pm

Broome West Senior Center

May 13th

Grief issues for Seniors

Rev. Dave Schriber

Daytime session planned. Location is pending.

June 10th

Veteran's Issues that Caregivers need to Know.

Brain Vojtisek, Director, BC Veterans

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Eastern Broome Senior Center

* This schedule is announced in advance to help you plan. Always call to confirm as changes can occur.

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January/February 2009 "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