

CAREGIVER NEWS

Region IV Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Newsletter

June/July 2021

Best help

When people get married, they quickly learn they have made commitments to more than one person. Regardless of your relationship with your spouse's family, as in-laws age, more responsibility for their well-being creeps into your lives.

As your husband or wife takes on the role of care-giver, they will need your emotional support. As they vent to you, be mindful whether your spouse seeks moral support, or advice.

Beyond that, learning about the medical issues and care tasks your spouse is dealing with will be beneficial. One of the best things family and friends can do for caregivers is lend a helping hand. Offering to take the car to be serviced, pick up the kids from school, do laundry or cook supper are just a few small gestures that can make all the difference.

-information on this page and the back cover is excerpted from Aging-Care.com article "The Best Ways to Support a Caregiving Spouse" by Carol Bradley Bursack

Environmentally
conscious?

Prefer email?

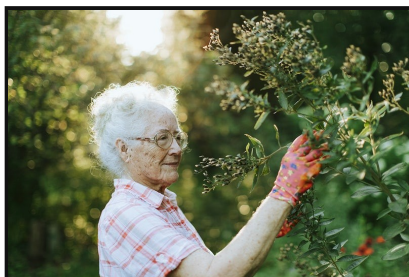
Send us an email at

info@AreaAgencyonAging.org

to be added to our

Caregiver News

email list



My Life. My Choice.

We can help you know your options and get the support you need to live as independently as possible in the setting of your choice

Call (800) 654-2810

Serving Berrien, Cass and
Van Buren Counties



Offering Choices for Independent Lives

In This Issue

- Caregiver Spouse Roles
- Fun Free Classes
- Summer Reading List
- The Power of Music

... and more!

Free Zoom Classes Through RIV AAA

Area
Agency
on
Aging's

Campus for Creative Aging classes are online, live!
And we're ready to enjoy some time with you.

If you need instructions to use Zoom, we can help!

Opioids: Safe Use, Safe Storage, a Healthier You, June 3, 10, 17, and/or 24, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Musical Mondays with Brandon Pierce Mondays including June 7, 14, 21, 28, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Strawberry Party, June 10, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Caregiver Support Group Hosted in Conjunction with Caring Circle, June 15, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Up Your Garden Game, June 17, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Musical Mondays with Brandon Pierce, Mondays including July 5, 12, 19, 26, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Healthy Cooking: On the Tropical Shores, July 7, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Outdoor Excursions, July 8, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Healthy Travels, July 15, 9:00-10:00 a.m.

PATH (Personal Action Toward Health), 6-week workshops to help you with your Chronic conditions or Diabetes. Multiple dates available in July and August. See website below for details.

Caregiver Support Group Hosted in Conjunction with Caring Circle, July 20, 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Healthy Hydration, July 21, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

All classes are free, interactive Zoom sessions.
Register: CampusForCreativeAging.org/classes/
or call Amy Nichols at (269) 982-7748.

Summer Reading

These books come highly recommended by geriatric professionals:

- How to Say It to Seniors: Closing the Communication Gap with Elders, by David Solie
- 29: A Novel, by Adena Halpern
- Passages in Caregiving: Turning Chaos into Confidence, by Gail Sheehy
- Loving Hard-to Love Parents: A Handbook for Adult Children of Difficult Older Parents, by Paul Chafetz, Ph.D.
- The 36-Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer's Disease, Related Dementias, and Memory Loss, by Nancy L. Mace and Peter V. Rabins
- Emotional Blackmail: When the People in Your Life Use Fear, Obligation and Guilt to Manipulate You, by Susan Forward, Ph.D.
- Still Alice, by Lisa Genova, Ph.D.

Healing with Harmonies

Here are some great tips to incorporate music in your day:

- Make music together with simple percussion, guitar or harmonica.
- Download an app on your phone that simulates musical instruments such as a trombone or piano, to make low-key music at a manageable decibel level.
- Watch old Lawrence Welk shows together; pair “oldies” with reminiscing.
- Join our own Brandon Pierce “Musical Mondays” Zoom (see page 2).
- Select music to evoke the mood you’re seeking in your loved one: Quiet tunes to promote relaxation during difficult activities, peppy tunes before a busy day.
- Sing with the grandchildren. Both generations benefit from singing together in the car, on the phone, on the front porch.

- material on page 3 excerpted from AgingCare.com article “Healing Harmonies: Music Therapy for Seniors and Caregivers” by Anne-Marie Botek



Music's Power

Humans are governed by rhythms. They influence our heartbeat, the cadence of our speech, and even when we fall asleep and wake up.

A study by the University of Helsinki found that stroke survivors who listened to music daily improved in auditory and verbal memory, focus and mood. Compared to stroke patients who listened to audiobooks or nothing, those who listened to music for two hours daily regained verbal skills faster. They were also less depressed and confused—two common stroke side effects.

Another study found that patients recovering from open-heart surgery had lower levels of stress hormone cortisol after 30 minutes of classical music compared to patients who did not listen. Relaxing music was more calming pre-surgery than midazolam, a common sedative.

You don't have to be a musician or music therapist to incorporate music. Try some of the ideas listed in the sidebar, and you both will enjoy the benefits!

Region IV Area Agency on Aging
2900 Lakeview Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Are you
scanning this
newsletter over

Flip Side of the Coin

your care-giving spouse's shoulder? If so, good for you.
Your interest is evidence that you care, as well.

If you find yourself getting frustrated with caregiving-related changes in your spouse's routine and priorities, you're not alone. Many couples struggle to achieve balance while caring for loved ones, and it's easy to get wrapped up in the unfairness of such an arrangement.

Think back to a time when your significant other helped you through challenges in your life. Did they encourage you to pursue a major goal, support you during a career change, or care for you following a surgery or during an illness?

This is a time you can step up to the plate and show your spouse what you're made of and how much your marriage means to you.

Contact us at:

**Info-
Line**

for

Aging and Disability

(800) 654-2810

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AreaAgencyonAging.org

Region IV Area Agency on Aging supports your caregiving and aging needs