

THE Bridge

DECEMBER

Connecting services, resources, and information for the community.

Finding Support During the Holidays: National Grief Awareness Week

The holiday season is often filled with joy, togetherness, and celebration—but it can also be a time when grief feels especially heavy. It's easy to be reminded of those we've lost, and grief can sneak up on us during this season of traditions, family gatherings, and memories.

In recognition of National Grief Awareness Week, the ADRC of Green County reminds community members that support is available. Our Grief Support Group offers a safe, compassionate space to share your experiences, connect with others, and find comfort during the holidays. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month from 5:30pm – 7:00pm at the Green County Human Services Building – located in Monroe, in the Lower Level – Multipurpose Rooms 2 & 3. Address: N3152 State Road 81, Monroe, WI 53566

Attending a grief support group can help you navigate the emotions that the holidays may bring, reduce feelings of isolation, and provide practical strategies for coping with loss. Whether your loss is recent or from years past, you are welcome to join and find understanding among others who know what it's like to grieve.

This holiday season, take a moment to acknowledge your feelings, reach out for support, and remember that you don't have to face grief alone. **For more information about the Grief Support Group offered through the ADRC, please call 608-328-9499 or visit our website at www.adrcgreencounty.org.**

Here are some tips for coping with grief during the holidays:

- Give yourself permission to feel whatever comes up—sadness, anger, or even moments of joy.
- Create new traditions that honor your loved one or focus on things that bring you comfort.
- Set realistic expectations for gatherings and be gentle with yourself if plans change.
- Reach out for support—talk to friends, family, or consider joining a grief support group.
- Take care of your body and mind through rest, healthy eating, and small moments of self-care.



608-328-9499
adrcgreencounty.org



ADRC of Southwest Wisconsin

The Aging and Disability Resource Center in Green County provides information, assistance, and services to help older people and people with disabilities remain healthy and independent.

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Amber Russell

Aging Programs Supervisor

Morgan Kennison

ADRC Office Associate

Karen Daly

Elder Benefit Specialist

Mary Velcich

Disability Benefit Specialist

Julie Ames

ADRC Specialists

Mandy Johnsen

LA Klug

Heather Krueger

Education & Prevention Specialist

Laura Steiner

Adult Protective Services

Maddy Groenier

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Bus Drivers

Jan Lien

Dennis Peterson

Bill Wyss

Meal Site Managers

Linda Johnson

Catrina Bennett

Hand in Hand Staff

Heather Huschitt

Laura Short

Regional ADRC Staff

Regional Manager - Mary Mezera

Dementia Care Specialists

Bonnie Beam-Stratz

Hailey Zilliox

Ways to contact us!

Website - adrcgreencounty.org

Facebook - ADRC of Southwest Wisconsin

Email - resourcecenter@gchsd.org

Phone - 608-328-9499

Other ideas can be found online and at the website alzstore.com.

ADRC Regional Manager Retires

The regional manager of the ADRC of Southwest Wisconsin, Mary Mezera, will be retiring at the end of December. Mary started in the Regional Manager position in 2008 when the regional ADRC was formed. Throughout her time with the ADRC she has done much work in area of advocacy for ADRC funding that has attributed to the growth of ADRCs statewide as well as the additions of the Dementia Care Specialist positions in each ADRC. She is excited to spend her time in retirement with her large extended family with much traveling and enjoying the sunshine in the south.

With her retirement, the Regional ADRC will transition to local management under the ADRC of Green County, ADRC of Lafayette County, ADRC of Iowa County and the ADRC of Grant County. This transition will result in no change in services or the way each ADRC operates. Please continue to reach out to the ADRC, as you always have, for any of your questions in regards to services for those getting older and those with a disability.

Dementia and Gift-giving

by Bonnie Beam-Stratz

The Holidays are coming and identifying gifts to give can be a struggle for many of us. I know for me it is hard to think of great ideas when my mother seems to have everything she needs and generally has no ideas to share for what she may like. Her response to me usually includes "I don't need any more clothes, I don't wear jewelry and I don't want any more dust collectors". If it is difficult to buy a gift for someone who can share their thoughts, it adds an additional challenge when buying gifts for someone with difficulties communicating as a result of living with dementia.

The gift ideas given below are meaningful in that they can ease the person's anxiety, lessen confusion, and encourage engagement for those living with dementia:

1. Fiddle/twiddle muffs or lap blankets
2. Large piece jigsaw puzzles
3. Music (focused on the person's favorites)
4. Full spectrum lights (can help reduce symptoms related to sundowning)
5. Easy-on/ adaptive clothing (silverts.com and joeandbella.com are 2 websites of many that offer such products)
6. Simple remote for the TV
7. Photo phone or one with large numbers
8. Robotic therapy dog or cat
9. Clock with reminder system
10. Weighted blanket to ease anxiety
11. Homemade coupons for 1 to 1 time (Time can be spent taking the person for a ride, going for a walk, visiting, and/or going for a meal)

I have also included a list of good ideas on gifts one can give to a caregiver:

1. **Gift cards/certificates** for food, gas, spa day, lawn care, house cleaning, and/or respite care.
2. **A home monitoring system** to ease some of their anxiety over the care receiver's safety. This can also include voice activated systems.
3. **Homemade coupons** to offer help with transportation, time for providing respite, making/providing a meal, house-keeping, running an errand, taking the caregiver for coffee/lunch date or any other need that can be identified.
4. **Helping the caregiver research and find resources/** services or assist them to navigate the healthcare system.
5. **Setting up a time each week to make a call** to give the caregiver a chance to talk and be connected to someone they know who cares.

Sometimes it may be best to ask the person directly as to what they need to help lessen the stress and anxiety related to their caregiving journey.

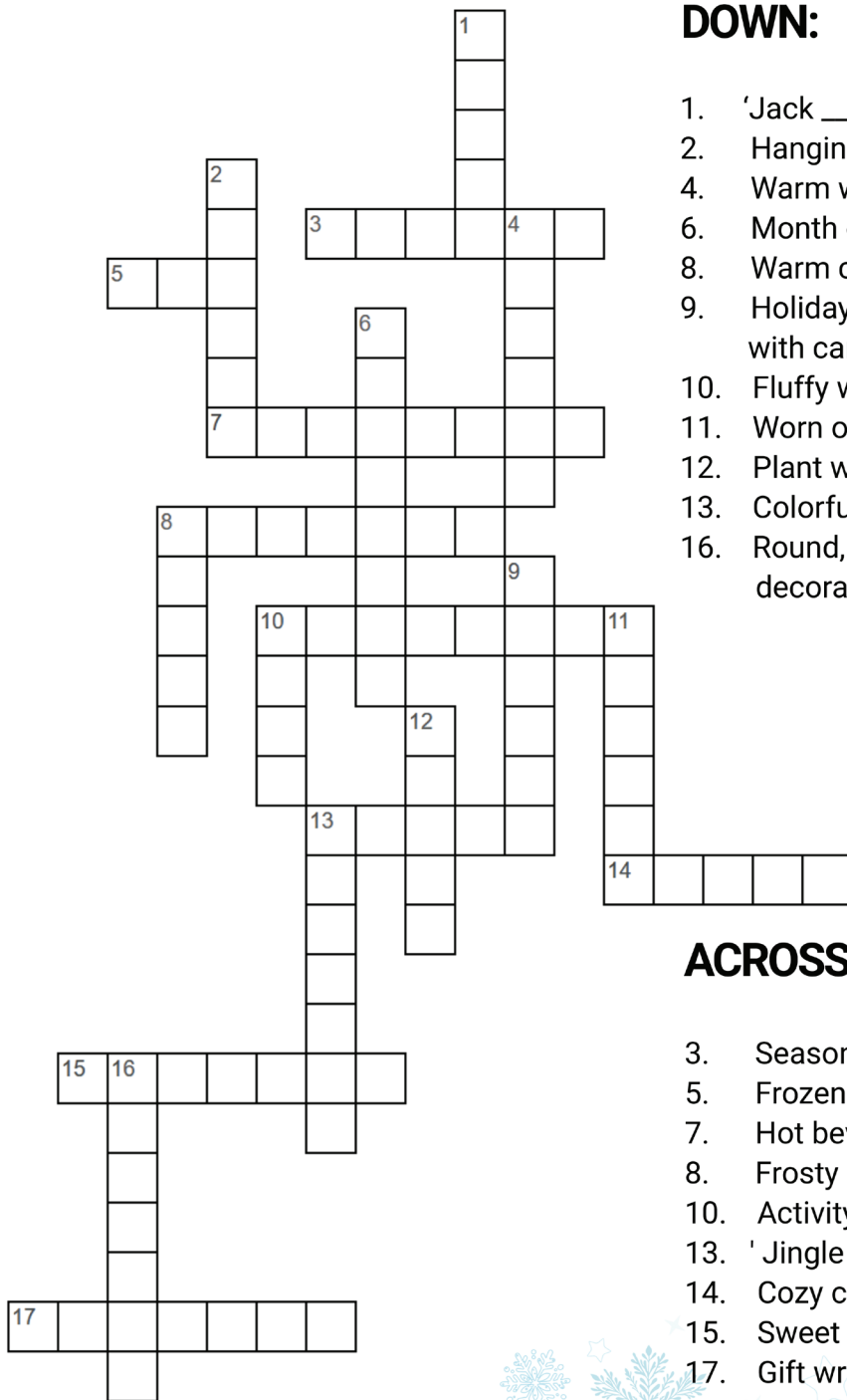
I hope these lists can help ease the frustration of finding a gift that represents the love and care you hold for someone who is living with dementia and/or for the caregiver who may need to know there are others out there wanting to provide understanding and support.



Check with your local ADRC to see what they may have available in their loan closet.

COZY UP WITH A CROSSWORD WINTER EDITION

Complete the crossword puzzle by filling in a word that fits each clue. Across answers are written horizontally (left to right). Down answers are written vertically (top to bottom).



DOWN:

1. 'Jack _____'
2. Hanging decoration made of evergreen.
4. Warm winter drink with milk and spices.
6. Month of winter holidays.
8. Warm clothing worn around the neck.
9. Holiday string decorations typically hung with care on a tree.
10. Fluffy white precipitation falling from the sky.
11. Worn on hands to keep warm.
12. Plant with green leaves and red berries.
13. Colorful round ornaments hung on trees.
14. Round, citrus fruit often used in winter decorations.

ACROSS:

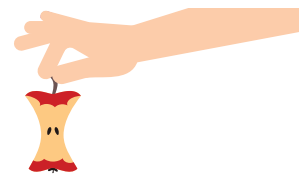
3. Season of cold weather, snow, and holidays.
5. Frozen water that covers lakes in the winter.
7. Hot beverage many enjoy in the winter.
8. Frosty figure made of snow.
10. Activity sliding down hills covered in snow.
13. 'Jingle _____'
14. Cozy coverings for cold feet.
15. Sweet treat often baked during the season.
17. Gift wrapped in shiny paper.



**SCAN
HERE
TO VIEW
THE
ANSWERS!**

*** Please note: If you are unable to scan the QR code above to view the answers, they will be published in next month's newsletter.

Food Waste



Have you ever thought about how much food we throw away? The United States alone wastes more than \$160 billion of food every year. Leftovers, spoiled produce, and uneaten foods are thrown away every day. Most of the food we waste is put into landfills. By planning, prepping, and storing food correctly, minimizing food waste can become easier.

Minimizing food waste and going green go hand in hand. There are some easy to start! First, consider saving peels and scraps from produce to add to soup stocks to add more flavor. Second, use "ugly" or very ripe foods to make smoothies. Lastly, get creative when cooking and baking! Use what produce you already have instead of buying new for a different recipe.

Before grocery shopping, plan your meals and make a list of what you plan to buy. This can help prevent you from buying ingredients you already have. Don't forget to shop your pantries, freezer, and refrigerator to use items that may be going bad soon.

Here are some challenges to help you minimize your food waste.



Monthly Tracking Calendar - Minimizing Food Waste

Record how you did with your weekly challenges

WEEK 1: Identify times during each day when you waste food and WHY you wasted it. (for example, throwing out because you are full, the portion was too large, or if it went bad).

WEEK 2: Record HOW you reduced your food waste this week. (Example: taking smaller portions, saving leftovers, watching expiration dates more closely, etc.).

WEEK 3: Encourage those around you to limit their food waste too. Help them be conscientious of the importance of minimizing food waste.

WEEK 4: Make a personal plan to continue reducing food waste in the upcoming month. How will you maintain these goals?

SOURCES:
<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2007357>
<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2005763>
<https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2005760>

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WORDS from the ADRC Specialist

This October, the nonprofit Veterans Community Project (VCP) broke ground on its sixth tiny home village, this time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to offer more military veterans a fresh start with housing and individualized care. The Veterans Community Project is national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on a mission to fix Veteran homelessness. This includes both active and non-active military members. Per the VCP website "We serve anyone who took the oath to serve our country, regardless of discharge status, type of service, or length of service."

Milwaukee's tiny home village is located on a seven-acre site on Milwaukee's northwest side. This specialized village of 40 fully furnished tiny homes will feature on-site, wraparound support services to help Veterans experiencing homelessness rebuild stable, independent lives.

Each home provides more than just shelter—it offers a sense of sanctuary, space to heal, and is part of a larger community designed to help residents regain stability and independence. Built on permanent foundations and connected to city utilities, the homes include a full kitchen, bathroom, and living area. The Village will feature 40 fully furnished tiny homes—ranging from 240 to 320 square feet—designed to house both individuals and families. At the heart of the village is the Village Center, a hub for support services and community connection. With case management offices, classrooms, and a fellowship hall, the space fosters stability, healing, and social support where residents will work with their on-site VCP case manager to address underlying housing barriers and work toward individual goals that can really get them back on their feet.

Since its founding in 2018 when they welcomed their first residents in Kansas City, VCP has helped hundreds of vets transition out of homelessness. VCP has set a new standard for how cities can address veteran homelessness, with its 85% success rate for vets who complete the program successfully and transition to sustainable permanent housing—all in an average of 335 days. So far in 2025, 29 veterans have 'graduated' from a VCP tiny home into their own permanent housing, and dozens of vets have been welcomed into the 6 tiny home communities, and are now working with on-site case managers for comprehensive assistance. There is, however, still work to be done. Studies show that currently there are approximately 351 homeless veterans in Wisconsin. Funding for the \$11.7 million Milwaukee Village includes \$2.5 million in contributions from the State of Wisconsin, as well as funding from regional partners including the Milwaukee Brewers.

In his closing remarks at the groundbreaking in October, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers said, "These tiny homes are more than a roof overhead and a safe place to sleep at night, they are a foundation that will help restore dignity, stability and community for those who have sacrificed so much for all of us. I have no doubt that our Veterans will be in good hands."

If you are a veteran, or know a veteran that is experiencing homelessness, please reach out to the Veterans Community Project. You can find more information on this incredible resource at www.vcp.org or by calling 816-599-6503.

"While we can never do enough to show gratitude to our nation's defenders, we can always do a little more," by Gary Sinise.

ADRC Specialists - Mandy, Heather and LA

2025 Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) Education Series

A free quarterly support and education series about brain health and living well with MCI

Partnering with Your Healthcare Team

Friday, December 12
9:30–11:30 a.m.



Join us for an insightful program featuring a geriatrician, a speech-language pathologist, and an occupational therapist as they share how healthcare professionals work together to provide comprehensive care for people living with MCI and their support networks. The program will end with a Q&A session. Free and open to all.

Register to attend the program in person at one of eight locations across Wisconsin. Or join us live online via Zoom from anywhere.

Guest Presenters:

Nathaniel Chin, MD
Kari Esser, MS, CCC-SLP
Sarah Gunderson, OT

Register to attend in Green County at SSM Health Clinic by contacting Bonnie Beam-Stratz at 608-426-4295 or bbeam@gchsd.org

Address: SSM Health Clinic
St. Clare Conference Room
515 22nd Avenue
Monroe, WI 53566



SSMHealth.



About the Series:

Healthy Living with Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) offers attendees guidance and science-backed strategies for living and coping with memory and thinking changes.

Join **Nathaniel Chin, MD**, and **Jennifer McAlister, BA**, from the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, and guest speakers, to learn more about Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI). Each program will end with a Q&A session.

Questions?

Contact the Wisconsin ADRC at 608-265-0407 or adrc@medicine.wisc.edu

Presented by:



Wisconsin Alzheimer's Disease Research Center
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Community Partners:



Your Bridge to Support



ONEIDA

The ADRCs of Brown, Dane, Dodge, Eagle Country, Grant, Green, and La Crosse counties, and the Oneida Nation are committed to unbiased service and cannot endorse nor recommend any organization, product, or service.



Snow Removal Safety Tips

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

As we approach this very long Wisconsin winter, it is important to remember some tips to keep you safe when shoveling or using a snowblower to remove snow. During winter, there is always a risk of slipping and falling on ice. It is especially dangerous when that ice is hidden underneath freshly fallen snow. Shoveling heavy snow can also cause back, shoulder, knee and other orthopedic injuries.

Additionally, shoveling or pushing a snow blower can cause a sudden increase in blood pressure and heart rate, and the cold air can cause constriction of the blood vessels and decrease oxygen to the heart. All of these factors can increase strain on the heart and can trigger a potentially fatal heart attack.

Safety tips to help prevent falls & orthopedic injuries:

› See what you are shoveling/snow blowing. Make sure that your hat or scarf does not block your vision. Watch for ice patches and uneven surfaces. Avoid falls by wearing shoes or boots that have slip-resistant soles. Watch for black ice and ice under freshly fallen snow, and “walk like a penguin” until you are sure that the surface where you are walking is not icy.

› Use a shovel that is comfortable for your height and strength. Do not use a shovel that is too heavy or too long for you. Consider buying a shovel that is specially designed to prevent too much stooping. Space your hands on the tool grip to increase your leverage.

› Warm up your muscles. Shoveling can be a vigorous activity. Before you begin, warm up your muscles for 10 minutes with light exercise.

› When possible, push the snow instead of lifting it. If you must lift, take small amounts of snow, and lift it with your legs: Squat with your legs apart, knees bent and back straight. Lift by straightening your legs, without bending at the waist. Then walk to where you want to dump the snow; holding a shovelful of snow with your arms outstretched puts too much weight on your spine.

› Do not throw the snow over your shoulder or to the side. This requires a twisting motion that stresses your back.



Safety tips to help prevent heart attacks:

✓ Check with your doctor. Because this activity places high stress on the heart, speak with your physician first. If you have a medical condition or do not exercise regularly, consider hiring someone to remove the snow.

✓ Talk to your doctor about an aspirin regimen or ask your doctor about taking a low dose of aspirin before you shovel.

✓ Dress appropriately. Light, layered, water-repellent clothing provides both ventilation and insulation. It is also important to wear the appropriate head coverings, as well as mittens or gloves and thick, warm socks. Cover your mouth to help prevent breathing cold air. Take a break if you feel yourself getting too hot or too cold.

✓ Clear snow early and often. Begin when a light covering of snow is on the ground to avoid trying to clear packed, heavy snow. However, avoid shoveling immediately after you awaken as most heart attacks occur early in the morning when blood is more prone to clotting. Wait for at least 30 minutes and warm up your muscles before starting by walking for a few minutes or marching in place.

✓ Pace yourself. Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration. If you experience chest pain, shortness of breath or other signs of a heart attack, seek emergency care.

✓ Do not eat a heavy meal before or soon after shoveling because blood gets diverted from the heart to the stomach and can put extra strain on the heart.

✓ Do not drink coffee or smoke for at least one hour before or one hour after shoveling or during breaks. These are stimulants and elevate your blood pressure and heart rate.

✓ Do not drink alcohol before or immediately after shoveling. Alcohol can increase a person's sensation of warmth and may cause you to underestimate the extra strain your body is under in the cold.

✓ Watch for warning signs of a heart attack: lightheadedness, dizziness, being short of breath, or if you have tightness or burning in your chest, neck, arms or back. If you think you are having a heart attack, call 911.



Safety tips for using a snowblower:

› Never stick your hands or feet in the snow blower. If snow becomes too impacted, stop the engine and wait at least five seconds. Use a solid object to clear wet snow or debris from the chute. Beware of the recoil of the motor and blades after the machine has been turned off.

› Do not leave the snow blower unattended when it is running. Shut off the engine if you must walk away from the machine.

› Watch the snow blower cord. If you are operating an electric snow blower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times, so you do not trip and fall.

› Add fuel before starting the snow blower. Never add fuel when the engine is running or hot. Do not operate the machine in an enclosed area.

› Read the instruction manual. Prior to using a snow blower, read the instruction manual for specific safety hazards, unfamiliar features, and whenever attempting to repair or maintain the snow blower.

DECEMBER

MENU



Albany

Brodhead

Monroe

New Glarus

Monroe & New Glarus receive hot meals Monday-Friday. Albany & Brodhead receive hot meals Monday & Friday with options for frozen on other days. The Monroe Dining Center is located in the Behring Senior Center, 325-3040. The Brodhead Dining Center is located at the Brodhead Senior Center, 897-4796.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Herb Roasted Chicken Thigh 1 Baked Potato w/Sour Cream Broccoli & Cauliflower Mix Pineapple Tidbits Jell O Cup	Cranberry Roast Pork 2 Seasoned Roasted Carrots Whole Kernel Corn Applesauce Cup Frosted Marble Cake 	Beef Stroganoff 3 Steamed Corn Green Beans Apricot Cup 	Ham & Scalloped Potatoes 4 Steamed Broccoli Roasted Zucchini Melon Cup Frosted Brownie	Beef Tips in Mushroom Gravy w/ 5 Noodles Roasted Cauliflower Salad w/Dressing Mandarin Oranges 
Bratwurst Patty w/Sauerkraut 8 Roasted Butternut Squash Baked Beans Diced Pears	BBQ Country Beef Tips 9 Roasted Red Potatoes Steamed Peas w/Butter Tropical Fruit Cup Confetti Sheet Cake	French Onion Pork Chop 10 Au Gratin Potatoes Buttered Corn Cranberry Apple Chips Yogurt Cup	Chicken Baked Ziti w/Pasta 11 Green Beans Salad w/Dressing Pear Cup Cookie	Breaded Fish w/Cheddar Cheese 12 Roasted Broccoli Mashed Potatoes Coleslaw Fruit Cocktail/Mixed Fruit
Bourbon Glazed Ham 15 Scalloped Potatoes Red Beets Pineapple Tidbits Cookie 	Chicken Patty Sandwich 16 Red Potatoes Roasted Broccoli & Cauliflower Mix Cinnamon Apples	Lasagna 17 Roasted Italian Vegetables Caesar Salad w/Dressing Mandarin Orange Cup Chocolate Sheet Cake	Sweet & Sour Pork 18 Steamed Rice Sautéed Pepper & Onion Mix Salad w/Dressing Diced Peaches 	Beef Pot Roast 19 Garlic Mashed Potatoes Creamed Corn Tropical Fruit Cup Mandarin Orange Cake 
Pulled Pork Sandwich 22 Steamed Peas w/Butter Herb Roasted Potatoes Tropical Fruit Cup	Taco Casserole w/Black Beans 23 Refried Beans w/Cheese Rice w/Stewed Tomatoes Pineapple Tidbits	CLOSED 24 	CLOSED 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS 	Breaded Fish w/Cheddar Cheese 26 Butter Red Potatoes Roasted Vegetables Pear Cup Frosted Cupcake
Sloppy Joe 29 Baked Beans Steamed Broccoli Applesauce Cup 	Baked Cod w/Lemon 30 Asparagus Cuts Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Diced Peaches	Goulash w/Noodles 31 Peas & Carrots Corn Salad w/Dressing Berry Cobbler	 Holiday Cheer	

DECEMBER

MENU



Monticello

1% milk only served. Meals are prepared without salt. For serving times and more information, call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 608-328-9499. Monticello meals are available through Gempeler's Supermarket, 938-4927. *all menus are subject to change*

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The Bridge |

December 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Ham Balls 1 Scalloped Potatoes Green Beans Applesauce 	Mushroom Steak 2 Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Carrots Peaches	Chicken Breast 3 Wild Rice Peas & Carrots Banana	Turkey & Dressing 4 Sweet Potatoes Green Beans Canned Pear 	Baked Cod 5 Potato Wedges Baked Beans Coleslaw Grapes 
Pork Cutlets 8 Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Broccoli Apple Pie	Chicken Cordon Bleu 9 Chicken Cordon Bleu Boiled Potatoes Beets Fruit Cocktail 	Roast Beef 10 Potato Wedges Wax Beans Applesauce	Swiss Steak 11 Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Corn Chocolate Cake 3 Bean Salad	Tuna Noodle Casserole 12 Stewed Tomatoes Orange 
Meatloaf 15 Baked Potato Green Bean Casserole Peaches	Spaghetti 16 Carrots Tossed Salad Oatmeal Cookie Peaches 	Pork Roast 17 Sweet Potatoes Mixed Vegetables Baked Beans Pumpkin Pie	Baked Chicken 18 Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Green Beans Pears 	Ham Balls 19 Scalloped Potatoes Peas & Carrots Banana
Beef Stew w/Carrots 22 Wax Beans Orange 	Chicken Breast w/Wild Rice 23 Mashed Potatoes Carrots Pears	CLOSED 24 	CLOSED 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS 	Baked Cod 26 Potato Wedges Coleslaw Grapes 
Baked Chicken 29 Scalloped Potatoes Carrots Banana 	Roast Beef 30 Mashed Potatoes w/Gravy Peas Fruit Cocktail	Lasagna 31 Broccoli Tossed Salad Chocolate Cake Applesauce	 Warm Wishes	

Lower Your Fall Risk

By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

According to DHS, the number of emergency calls for falls has increased by 10,000 since 2023. The injuries from falls can be long-term and devastating. This increase has prompted the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging to launch its Falls Free Wisconsin campaign, aimed at reducing the fall risk for Wisconsinites across the state. The Falls Free Wisconsin website, located at <https://fallsfreewi.org/>, offers a wealth of information to help individuals and caregivers reduce the risk of falling. The Falls Free Wisconsin website provides a fall assessment, a calendar of events, and general information about fall risks and how to prevent them.

Falling can occur for several reasons and cause lasting negative effects to an individual's health and well-being. Learning about common risks and how to spot them can greatly reduce your risk of falling. Falls Free Wisconsin offers a helpful checklist to assess your home for fall risks, allowing you to eliminate them before they become an issue.

You can find that checklist at <https://fallsfreewi.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Home-Safety-Checklist.pdf>. The website also has a home walk-through example with tips to help you assess your home and reduce your risk.

Reducing your risk of falling also involves help from your family, caregivers, and doctors. Conversations with your loved ones or a health provider about your concerns with falling can be tough to start. Listed below are some things you can do to make the conversation about your fall concerns a little easier:

- **Write down your concerns and questions** about your fall risk. This will help ensure that you ask everything you want to and express all your concerns.
- **Be honest about your concerns.** You can't get the help you need if you aren't truthful about the concerns you have.
- **Take notes when you have these conversations.** Notes will help to ensure that you understand your next steps, and they can be used to help you make a plan to reduce your risk of falling.
- **Keep talking about your concerns.** Continuing the conversation about your concerns can help ensure

that others understand them and offer support that meets those needs. You can find information to help your caregivers support your needs at <https://fallsfreewi.org/prevent-falls/caregivers/>.

Not all falls can be prevented. Knowing how to fall safely can reduce your risk of injury. Discuss with your doctor how to prevent injuries when falling. Some general tips for reducing injuries from falls are listed below:

- **Protect your head and hips.** These areas cause the most serious injuries with long-term effects.
- **If possible, fall on softer surfaces** like carpet or grass.
- **Try to land on "meatier" areas of your body**, like your butt or thighs.
- **Don't panic if you fall.** Take a few minutes to calm down and assess yourself for injuries before you try to get up.
- **You should talk with your doctor** about using any of these tips before attempting them.
- **If you don't know if you're injured**, call for help immediately.

Other considerations to reduce your risk of falling include regular exercise, wearing fitted clothing, having regular vision and hearing checks, and using assistive devices. Participating in a balance and strengthening exercise class can help improve your balance and endurance while walking. Check your clothing to make sure that your shoes fit properly and your pants or skirt aren't dragging on the floor. Work with your doctor to have your vision and hearing checked regularly so that you can be aware of your surroundings. Consider using assistive devices that can help you walk around safely and more independently.

Falling can have lasting effects on your health and overall well-being. It's essential to discuss fall concerns with loved ones and healthcare professionals. Together, you can help safeguard your home and find tools that help to reduce your risk of falling. Check out Falls Free Wisconsin at <https://fallsfreewi.org/> for more information and tools to help you be fall free.

MEDICARE COVERAGE OF AMBULANCE SERVICES

—By the GWAAR Legal Services Team—

If you ever find yourself experiencing a medical emergency, you may need to call an ambulance. You may also need medical transport via ambulance between two different medical providers. But how do you know if Original Medicare or your Medicare Advantage plan will cover the charges?

CRITERIA FOR AN EMERGENCY CALL

You can get emergency ambulance transportation when you've had a sudden medical emergency and your health is in serious danger because you can't be safely transported by other means, like by car or taxi. Even if a car or taxi is not available to transport you, if you could have safely taken that mode of transportation, Medicare will not cover the ambulance services. The ambulance must also transport you to the nearest appropriate facility, usually a hospital. If you call an ambulance but are not transported, Medicare will not cover the cost of the ambulance call. If you are not transported to the nearest appropriate facility, Medicare will not cover the extra mileage to that facility. The nearest appropriate facility means that the institution is generally equipped to provide the needed hospital or skilled nursing care for the illness or injury involved. For example, someone with end-stage renal disease may need to be transported to a hospital that has dialysis capabilities.

CRITERIA FOR FACILITY-TO-FACILITY TRANSPORT

You may be able to get emergency or non-emergency ambulance transportation from one medical facility to another if you need it to treat or diagnose your health condition and the use of any other transportation method could endanger your health. In some cases, Medicare may cover limited, medically necessary, non-emergency ambulance transportation if your doctor writes an order stating that ambulance transportation is necessary due to your medical condition. Even if a situation isn't an emergency, ambulance transportation may be medically necessary to get you to a hospital or other covered health facility. For example, someone needing a specialized kind of surgery may need to be transported to the nearest facility that has the required specialist on staff. Again, if you are transported to a facility farther away, Medicare will not pay for that extra mileage.

***Note:** if you have a Medicare Advantage plan, it must cover at least what Original Medicare covers, but it may provide additional coverage. For information about that coverage, see your plan's evidence of coverage or contact your plan directly.

If you end up with ambulance services that have been denied, you have the option to appeal. For Original Medicare, you follow the appeal procedures outlined in your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). For Medicare Advantage appeals, you will follow the appeal procedures outlined in your explanation of benefits (EOB). For assistance with these appeals, you may reach out to your local Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS). To find the EBS in your area, visit: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/benefit-specialists/counties.htm>.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

Support Groups

Offered by the Aging and Disability Resource Center

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

For individuals who have experienced a loss of a loved one and are looking for support. Talk or Listen. You're not alone.

3rd Tuesday of the month from 5:30pm-7:00pm
Green County Human Services Building
Lower Level: Multipurpose Rooms 2 & 3
N3152 State Road 81, Monroe, WI

CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

For family, friends, and other caregivers who are caring for a person with a chronic illness or disability. Day & night time offerings.

2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30pm-7:00pm
Monroe Public Library: First Floor Conference Room
925 16th Avenue, Monroe, WI

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Please note that beginning in 2026, the Night Time Caregiver Support Group will no longer be offered. We encourage participants to join our Day Time Caregiver Support Group for continued support.

4th Thursday of the month from 10:30am-12:00pm
Green County Human Services Building
Lower Level: Multipurpose Room 1
N3152 State Road 81, Monroe, WI

For a full listing of other available support groups in the area, please call the ADRC at 608.328.9499.

Medicare 101

Turning 65 presents new choices for your healthcare. It is normal to have many questions such as what are my Medicare options, when do I need to apply and just what does Medicare A, B, C and D mean? The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) is offering an informational, non-biased seminar to help you navigate this time of your life.

**Will Resume
in 2026**



Health & Wellness

Embracing the Gift of Well-Being This Holiday Season

Finding Balance, Joy, and Connection as the Year Comes to a Close

The holiday season is here once again—a time for celebration, togetherness, and gratitude. As the year winds down, it's also the perfect opportunity to pause, reflect, and focus on what truly matters: your health, happiness, and peace of mind. Amid the busyness of shopping, gatherings, and year-end to-do lists, a few mindful habits can help you stay centered, energized, and well.

Keep Moving - Little Steps Make a Big Impact

Shorter days and chilly weather can make it easy to slow down, but a little movement goes a long way. Try gentle indoor stretches, safe walks through a decorated neighborhood, or a few minutes of dancing to your favorite holiday songs. Movement keeps your body strong, boosts mood, and reduces stress. Remember—something is always better than nothing, and consistency builds confidence!

Eat Well - Nourish, Don't Neglect

Holiday foods bring comfort and connection, but balance is key. Pair your favorite festive treats with fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein-rich foods to stay satisfied and energized. Stay hydrated by keeping water nearby, and aim to eat slowly so you can truly enjoy each flavor. Treats are meant to be enjoyed—just in moderation and with mindfulness.

Find Calm in the Chaos - Protect Your Peace

The holidays can be joyful, but they can also be overwhelming. Take time to breathe, rest, and give yourself permission to say no when you need to. A quiet moment with a warm cup of tea, a short nap, or a phone call with a friend can make all the difference. Remember that your well-being matters, too—it's not selfish to rest; it's essential.

Connect and Reflect - Heartfelt Moments Matter Most

The season invites us to reflect on the year gone by—the challenges we faced, the growth we experienced, and the memories we've made. Reaching out to others, whether through a handwritten card, a visit, or a simple phone call, can lift spirits on both ends. Meaningful connection is one of the best ways to nurture emotional and mental wellness as we age.

Look Ahead with Intention - A Gentle Start to the New Year

Rather than setting big resolutions, try focusing on small, realistic intentions that bring joy and purpose—like adding a short walk to your routine, spending more time outdoors, or trying a new hobby. Every small step counts toward a healthier, happier you.

As we wrap up 2025, may you give yourself the greatest gift of all—the gift of well-being. Take time to care for your body, your mind, and your heart. Wishing you a season filled with peace, laughter, and gratitude, and a new year that begins with renewed health, hope, and happiness.

Our Education & Prevention Specialist is working hard to develop next year's class schedule, to help support the health and wellness of our aging community. These programs are designed to address common health concerns and promote confidence, overall independence, and better quality of life. Be on the look out in our Bridge newsletter, or you can visit our website at www.adrcgreencounty.org



Need A Ride? ADRC Shuttle Bus Services

Reservations are required as space is limited.
All ages welcome, with priority seating reserved for the elderly and those with a disability.

All shuttle bus services are a suggested donation.

Every Monday	Around Monroe	\$5.00
Dec 25th	CLOSED - Merry Christmas	\$15.00
Dec 10th	Belleville - New Glarus - Monticello to Monroe	\$8.00
Dec 3rd & 17th	Albany - Brodhead - Juda to Monroe	\$8.00
Dec 4th	Monroe - Monticello - New Glarus - Belleville to Westside of Madison	\$15.00

Day by Day Memory Café

Join us social gathering for individuals living with memory loss, early stage dementia including Alzheimer's, and their family and friends.



It will be a time to gather for laughter, relaxation, activities and companionship. It is not an educational workshop or support group about dementia. It is fun, welcoming, friendly environment where everyone will be accepted and no one will feel alone.

**4th Thursday of the Month
1:00 PM- 2:30 PM**

**St. Johns United Church of Christ
(1724 14th Street Monroe, WI)**

Please call 608-205-8203 to RSVP