

Caregiver Corner

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

New Book on Alzheimer's

Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers - A Practical Tips Guide



This book is written by Frank Broyles, Athletic Director at University of Arkansas. His wife Barbara has Alzheimer's Disease. It is written like a Coach's playbook and also

comes with a pocket style "carry along" tips flip style booklet that can be taken in a purse or pocket. It talks about all three stages of the illness: Early, Middle, and Late. They are color coded by stage. Purple for Early which is considered 2 to 4 years, although it could be longer. Gold for Middle which may be 2 to 10 years. Blue for Late which can be 1 to 3 years in length.

In the Early stage a Doctor should be seen so that medications can be started but many people do not realize this. Sometimes the memory changes or the difficulties are not even noticed. One sign to look for is if the person is having trouble with numbers. Another sign is if they stop doing things that they have always enjoyed like going to church or playing Bingo. A key to getting help is finding a good Doctor. The regular family Doctor does not always have the right training to find the cause or know the correct medications to prescribe. Your local Alzheimer's Association Chapter can direct you to a Doctor in your area.

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Some of the questions the Doctor will ask include:

- When the changes started?
- What have you seen the person doing?
- How are you coping with the changes?

Blood tests and brain scans may be done.

In helping your loved one it can become difficult for yourself. You need to remember to take care of you. The book is filled with all kinds of tips on how to do this at each stage. Each stage has its own section with information on what to expect and how to deal with things in that stage. At the end there is a list of places with contact information for you to turn if you feel you need further assistance.

To receive a copy of this book you can call toll free at 1-800-272-3900. There is also a website www.alzheimersplaybook.com.

For additional information about dementia related illnesses you can call The Alzheimer's Association of the Southern Tier at 607-785-7852.

Learn Disaster Preparedness While Building Your Own First Aid Kit - September 8



In September, the Caregiver Chat will host Amber Bowers, Director of Health and Safety Services for the American Red Cross, Southern Tier Chapter. Amber will teach us how to "Be

Red Cross Ready," a three step disaster preparedness training, customized for the specific needs of seniors. Come and learn how to help your older person prepare for the unexpected while building your own first aid kit (free!).

Please Note location change: In order to have sufficient room to assemble kits, **we will meet at the American Red Cross on Monday, September 8th from 1-3PM.** The Red Cross is located at **620 E. Main Street in Endicott.** Just a few blocks down from the Union-Endicott High School, on the same side of the street parking is behind the Red Cross building.

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. Call Judy with questions at 778-2411.

Ten Tips for Family Caregivers



1. Caregiving is a job and respite is your earned right. Reward yourself with respite breaks often.
2. Watch for signs of depression, and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.
3. When people offer to help, accept the help and suggest specific things that they can do.
4. Educate yourself about your loved one's condition and how to communicate effectively with doctors.
5. There's a difference between caring and doing. Be open to technologies and idea that promote your loved one's independence.
6. Trust your instincts. Most of the time, they'll lead you in the right direction.

7. Grieve for your losses. And then allow yourself to dream new dreams.
8. Stand up for your rights as a caregiver and a citizen.
9. Seek support from other caregivers. There is great strength in knowing you are not alone.
10. Caregivers often do a lot of lifting, pushing, and pulling. Be good to your back.

Source: The National Family Caregivers Association, www.thefamilycaregiver.org

Program Will Help Seniors and Caregivers to Understand Legal Issues



Do you know about planning for disability or long-term care? Do you have or need a health care proxy? What about your will?

The Broome County Office for Aging Caregiver Services will be hosting a presentation that will help to answer these questions. Our speaker will be Attorney Martin J. Kane, from Hinman, Howard, and Kattell, LLP. He will be speaking about several legal issues important to older people and those who care for them from **6-7:45 PM on September 10th at the Broome West Senior Center.** The Center is located at **2801 Wayne Street (off Watson Boulevard) in Endwell.**

Recent changes in New York State laws have facilitated new planning. Issues to be discussed include estate planning, options other than a traditional will, including revocable living trusts, payable on death designations, use of joint property, etc.. The use of Advanced Directives and Power of Attorneys will be reviewed. Copies of critical documents will be provided.

The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 has affected options in long term care. The evening will help attendees better understand Medicaid. The complexities of the Medicaid program will be reviewed in everyday terms.

This overview of legal issues will especially help those who are just assuming the role of a caregiver.

Advanced registration is required. Please call Caregiver Services at 778-2411 and ask to make a reservation with Andrea.

Faith in Action Volunteers Mini-bus Information



As requests for rides to medical appointments and grocery shopping increases, and the program continues to improve, the *Faith in Action Volunteers* mini-bus will be dispatched on a weekly schedule for transportation. As the price of gasoline continues to affect all of our spending, we are consolidating vehicles and drivers via the mini-bus. Plan accordingly.

Tuesdays:

Binghamton General Hospital and Southside Area -- Park Avenue, Mitchell Avenue, Vestal Avenue, Oak Street, Plaza Drive Vestal

Wednesdays:

Wilson Hospital and the area around it -- Baldwin Street, Harrison Street, Hudson Street, St. Charles, Main Street

Thursdays:

Lourdes Hospital and some of Binghamton -- Lourdes Road, Riverside Drive, The Circle, Leroy Street

On each mini-bus run, there will be a driver and a monitor to help you on and off the bus, to and from your home and to your destination. Here is how transportation clients can help:

1. Call (607) 724-9130 at least 7-10 days ahead whenever you need a ride.
2. Please try and schedule your future medical appointments to coincide with the following schedules, we realize current appointments may not be able to be changed.
3. Please tell us the addresses of where you need to go.

For questions call the office at 724-9130 and ask to speak to Joanne Kays.

(This article was adapted with permission from the Summer edition of *Faith in Action News* distributed by Broome County Council of Churches)

What Can I Do to Help? (As found in the Caregiver Courier from Fulton County)



The next time friends or relatives ask you what they can do to help you out, consider these suggestions. Some won't be practical for your situation, but some may give you an emotional lift or the few extra minutes that you need.

- ☺ Bring over home cooked meals, ready to heat and eat.
- ☺ Arrange for respite care, so you can get to church or shopping or just be alone.
- ☺ Drop by for a visit. (Let people know the best time to come.)
- ☺ Assist with shopping, running errands, or handling other chores that are difficult for you to get done.
- ☺ Help with yard work, fall chores, cleaning, or housekeeping.

Ideas for out-of town friends and family:

- ☺ Come for occasional visits to tackle special projects, help to care for your loved one, or simply vary your routine.

- ☺ Include you in special occasions by making videotapes and sending them for you to watch.
- ☺ Send you a pre-paid phone card so you can keep in touch without worrying about the phone bill.

Use these blanks to add ideas of your own and post them to share with people:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Second Annual Senior Legal Clinic

The area's Second Annual Senior Legal Clinic will be on October 25 from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. The event will be held at the Binghamton University Downtown Center, 67 Washington Street, Binghamton. Free and ample parking will be available.

Receive a 1/2 hour legal consultation from an attorney in any of the following areas: Wills/Trusts, Powers of Attorney/Health Care Proxies, Medicaid Planning, Landlord-Tenant, Real Estate, Grandparent's Rights, Debt Collection/Bankruptcy and more.

Registration is required. To pre-register, call 607-584-4249 between the hours of 9:00 am and 5:00 pm from September 23 through October 20.

This event is FREE to all residents of Broome County age 60+. Co-sponsored by the Broome County Bar Association and Legal Aid Society of Mid-New York, Inc.

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