

- September 15—Board Meeting
- September 15-17—Fall Training

July-September 2010

www.wiseniorcenters.org

**“Serving Senior Centers
Since 1983”**

WASC Wellness in Waupaca

2010 Fall Training

September 15-17, 2010

Waupaca Ale House & Conference Center

Waupaca, WI

The members of District 3 (from Niagara to Sheboygan and Waupaca to Two Rivers) look forward to hosting you at this healthy and renewing conference in lovely Waupaca. We hope you will attend and know a healthy mind and spirit!



The fall training conference will open on Wednesday afternoon with an orientation for new directors and those directors who are new to the conference. Other educational and informative offerings that afternoon will include a session on healthy budgets and events centering around fitness and program sharing will round out the evening.

Thursday is a busy day beginning with the keynote speaker, Dr. Stuart Robershaw, who will bring to the group, “The Healing Power of Humor.” Other sessions over the day before and after a delicious lunch will include a roundtable discussion, marketing, programming, and a wrap Q & A session. The annual auction will entertain you in the evening.

Stay for Friday's sessions because they will leave you refreshed and entertained, as the conference closes with “Heart & Soul, Body & Mind—Celebrating the Creative Spirit.” This session will present an attractive display and interactive performance with a multitude of primitive wind and percussion instruments.

Scholarships are available for this conference. To apply, send a letter that includes a brief statement showing financial need for assistance. Only one scholarship per agency is allowed every two years. Please indicate on your registration form that you are applying for a scholarship.

For more information about the conference, please contact Sarah Gallagher at Two Rivers Senior Center at sargal@two-rivers.org.

WASC News

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From Your President...

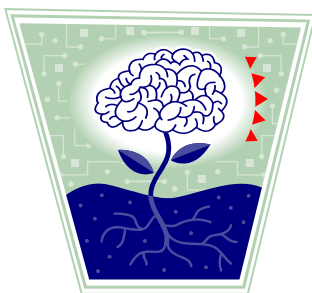
Greetings WASC members and friends:

I know it seems like every year we are fighting the same battle for money and resources. Budget times have been rough these last few years for many of us and this year looks no different so far.

We hear the term Wellness often in our lives. Wellness takes on many forms. Physical, mental, financial to name a few, all of which we all are in short supply from time to time in our line of work. What better theme for our next WASC Conference: WASC Wellness in Waupaca!

Please keep in mind that all of us in WASC are resources and support as we go through these difficult times. One way to gather this support is to be among your peers and share ideas. There is no better place to do this than at the Annual Fall Conference in Waupaca on September 15 - 17. District 3 has an exciting conference planned; I hope you can join us for informational sharing and fun!

-Cindy McGlynn, President



The More You Learn, the Better is Your Memory

A continued spirit of learning throughout one's life produces a strong and healthy brain. Learning and challenging yourself is imperative to the improvement of your brain fitness. Not only does studying, training and learning make you more confident and wise, it also keeps your brain healthy.

The act of learning exercises different areas of your brain. Depending on what new skill you are trying to learn, you may be training your memory, movement or association techniques. Different parts of your brain can be connected to certain aspects of the learning process. Your frontal lobe is associated with your reasoning, planning and problem solving skills. It is also directly related to our movement and emotions. The parietal lobe is also associated with movement among other things like orientation, recognition and perception of stimuli. Visual processing is associated with the occipital lobe. And finally, your perception and recognition of auditory stimuli, memory and speech are linked to the temporal lobe.

Learning can come at different levels of difficulties. You don't necessarily need to go back to school and get another degree in order to be learning. There are simpler (and less expensive) ways for you to train yourself in a new skill.

First, think of something that you may already be interested in. Think of something that you can do on your spare time. Something that won't cost you lots of money. You could learn how to paint, play the piano or to cook. You can challenge yourself to write a book, a short story or a poem.

Use resources online or at the bookstore to help teach you a new skill. There are endless amount of books and articles that present a step-by-step process to learning a new skill. One website that comes to mind is eHow.com. On this website, you can find articles on how to create origami art, how to install a car amplifier or how to pick a lock with your paper clip. You can

learn how to do just about anything if you just do a little homework. Find something you're interested in and then learn how to do it. Or find something you're curious about, and figure out how to create it.

Whatever you choose, try to spend about 30 minutes learning this new skill. Setting aside time each day to train your brain is better than spending hours upon hours training your brain once a week. It's about practice, and you need to practice on a daily basis. You probably won't be good at the new skill right away. So you need to train your brain slowly but at a steady pace.

Once you've learned this new skill, become a master at it and continue to stay-up-to date on this skill. For example, if your goal was to learn how to change a car battery, then go online and learn more about car batteries in general. See what people are saying about the different car battery brands. Stay current with the new developments on car batteries.

Your brain is working a mile a minute when you are learning. It is attempting to dissect the instructions you are sending it to learn the new skill while also learning new motions, programming new memories and training to remember what it's learned. Learning is an excellent way to work out your brain.

<http://www.brain-fitness-exercises.com/being-done-with-school-doesn%E2%80%99t-give-you-a-pass-on-learning>

2010 WASC Board of Directors & Committees

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Making Physical Activity a Part of an Older Adult's Life

When it comes to getting the physical activity you need each week, it's important to pick activities you enjoy and that match your abilities. This will help ensure that you stick with them.



Things to Keep in Mind

- Try to do a variety of activities. This can make physical activity more enjoyable and reduce your risk of injury.
- Regular physical activity is still safe and beneficial even if you have problems doing normal daily activities, such as climbing stairs or walking.
- If you have to take a break from your regular workout routine due to an illness such as the flu, be sure to start again at a lower level and slowly work back up to your usual level of activity.
- To get to and stay at a healthy weight, start by doing the equivalent of 150 minutes of moderate- intensity aerobic activity each week. Keep in mind that you may need to do more activity or reduce the number of calories you eat to get to your desired weight.

Improving Your Balance



Balance training

Check with your local senior center to see if they offer balance training or tai chi classes. Are you at risk for falling because you've fallen in the past or have trouble walking? Older adults who are at risk for falling should do exercises that help them with balance. Try to do balance training on at least 3 days a week and do standardized exercises from a program that's been proven to reduce falls. These exercises might include backward walking, sideways walking, heel walking, toe walking, and practicing standing from a sitting position. Tai chi, a form of martial arts developed in China, may also help with balance.

WASC Strategic Goals

To gain and sustain membership in WASC.

To explore administrative support for the organization.

To increase the influence of WASC with other organizations.



What if you have a chronic condition?

If you have a health condition such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease it doesn't mean you can't be active. In fact, it's just the opposite. Regular physical activity can improve your quality of life and even reduce your risk of developing other conditions. Talk with your doctor to find out if your health condition limits, in any way, your ability to be active. Then, work with your doctor to come up with a physical activity plan that matches your abilities. If your condition stops you from meeting the minimum *Guidelines*, try to do as much as you can. What's important is that you avoid being inactive. Even 60 minutes a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity is good for you.

What if you have a disability?

If you are an older adult with a disability, regular physical activity can provide you with important health benefits, like a stronger heart, lungs and muscles, improved mental health and a better ability to do everyday tasks. It's best to talk with your health care provider before you begin a physical activity routine. Try to get advice from a professional with experience in physical activity and disability. They can tell you more about the amounts and types of physical activity that are appropriate for you and your abilities. If you are looking for additional information, visit [The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability](http://www.ncoa.org/physicalactivity/olderadults.html).



When to Check With Your Doctor

Doing activity that requires moderate effort is safe for most people, but if you have a health condition such as heart disease, arthritis, or diabetes be sure to talk with your doctor about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you.

<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/getactive/olderadults.html>

Advocacy

Communicating with your elected officials in Washington has become very easy. With a click of several buttons, your message is carried over the internet in a brief time. Go to the web page www.ncoa.org and follow the instructions as you move through their wizard. This action can take just a few minutes to complete. Whether you are communicating with your officials about issues concerning WASC, or you have issues specific to your area, this is a good way to let your voice be heard. Advocating for seniors is near and dear to our hearts. That's what we're all about. Now it's even easier. Good luck!

-Ingrid Thompson, Legislative Chair

The Wisconsin Campaign for Better Care

(The Lowell Center is a member of CWAG, the provider of this valuable information.)

In an effort to make health care reform work for Wisconsin's older adults, lawmakers took the monumental first step to address the challenges by passing a national reform. Now, ten organizations representing hundreds of thousands of Wisconsinites have come together to form "The Wisconsin Campaign for Better Care" to take the essential next step. The

Wisconsin Campaign will work to ensure that the needs of patients and their family caregivers are front and center in the delivery of health care, and specifically that vulnerable, older adults with multiple health conditions get the comprehensive, coordinated, and patient- and family-centered health care they want and deserve.

The Campaign's Goal Are To:

1. Make improvements in the health care system so that it delivers high quality, comprehensive, and coordinated care, especially for vulnerable older adults and people with chronic conditions.
2. Change fee for service compensation and replace it with quality measures, patient safety, and quality outcomes.
3. Fulfill the need for coordinated and continuity of care through increasing the number of primary care and family care doctors to triage people through the labyrinth of health care in Wisconsin.
4. Advocate for greater insurance coverage for wellness and prevention health care programs.
5. Build a strong and lasting consumer voice for better health care by mobilizing consumer advocates, older adults, and their families through CWAG district meetings, CWAG Annual Convention, state presentation and training/advocate programs.

Members of The Wisconsin Campaign for Better Care Are:

- ◆ AARP Wisconsin (www.aarp.org/states/wi/)
- ◆ The Aging and Disability Professional Association of Wisconsin
- ◆ Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org)
- ◆ Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups-CWAG (www.cwag.org)
- ◆ Greater Wisconsin Aging Area Resources GWAAR (www.gwaar.org)
- ◆ Interfaith Senior Programs, Inc. (www.interfaithwaukesha.org)
- ◆ Milwaukee County Commission on Aging (www.milwaukeecounty.org/CommissiononAging/12692.htm)
- ◆ WI Alliance of Retired Americans (www.wisconsinara.org/)
- ◆ Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (www.wis4a.net/index.html)
- ◆ Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (www.wiseniorcenters.org)
- ◆ Wisconsin Citizen Action (<http://citizenactionwi.org>)
- ◆ WI Counties Association - 72 WI Counties (www.wicounties.org)
- ◆ Wisconsin Retired Educators Association- WREAC (www.wrea.net)
- ◆ Wisconsin Nurses Association (WNA) (www.wisconsinnurses.org)
- ◆ Wisconsin Medical Society (www.wisconsinmedicalsociety.org)

If you or your organization is interested in joining the campaign, call CWAG at 1-800-366-2990 ext. 346.

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September is National Senior Center Month

Use NISC resources and materials to celebrate! Get proven ideas for activities to showcase your work and involve the community. Examples include health festivals, home safety fairs, holiday meals, and intergenerational play dates. Explore case studies of award-winning programs from centers around the country. Type this address into your browser address bar and follow the links—<http://www.ncoa.org/strengthening-community-organizations/senior-centers/national-senior-center-month-1.html>,

Planning Suggestions for your Senior Center (Taken from the NISC guide)

- **To Your Health! Festival**—Plan a wellness festival for older adults and their families. Start with a free Tai Chi or yoga demonstration, and collaborate with a local health care provider to offer foot, cholesterol, osteoporosis, blood pressure, vision, or hearing screenings. Have healthy snacks on hand and a nutritionist who can offer tips. Check out pages 12-15 for other health education ideas.
- **BenefitsCheckUp Day**—Show the BenefitsCheckUp video, available on <http://www.benefitscheckup.org> and give an overview of the tool. Have computers and counselors on hand to help visitors complete screenings onsite, or help guests make follow-up appointments for one-on-one assistance. Invite representatives from state and local assistance programs to set up booths and distribute information.
- **Reinventing Retirement Career Fair**—Host a panel of older workers, recruiters and human resources representatives. Offer tips for resumes and interviews, as well as information about computers and skills training. Invite employers to set up booths at your center. Be sure to include your local Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) office.
- **Make a Difference Day**—Invite older adults and their families to your center for a day of volunteerism. Begin with an overview of volunteer opportunities available in your community, and then break into smaller groups to do a few different projects.
- **Senior Home Safety Fair**—Distribute fall prevention resources like the Home Safety Checklist or find out about other proven health programs on NCOA's healthy aging page. Plan a demonstration of common hazards (how many can you spot?), and invite local contractors to speak about remodeling options. Share information on programs to help pay for home modifications.
- **Intergenerational Play Date**—Launch a monthly intergenerational play date to be held at your senior center. Contact a local parents' group or advertise at the library, playground, etc. See if your library has someone who can lead a story time. Grandparent's Day on September 13th may be the perfect day. <http://www.grandparents-day.com/>



This is just a sample of the Senior Center Month ideas in NISC's brochure. Be sure to download the entire PDF document and get started now!



WASC

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