Freedom 55/65 News, Fall 1996

Aurora Health Care
Remember Your Aurora Pharmacy

Remember when pharmacists offered old-fashioned personal service? They were always there to answer your questions, whether they were about personal prescriptions or over-the-counter medications. They made sure you understood how you should take your medications and when to take them.

Today, you can still find that kind of quality service right in your neighborhood Aurora Pharmacy. It offers the kind of service that's only a memory at other pharmacies— and more. Like free delivery every weekday. Plus competitive pricing on brand and generic drugs as well as a 10% discount on prescriptions, including refills, for Freedom 55/65 members. Be sure to show your card at the time of purchase. Most major plans are accepted.

You may select any of these locations for your prescription and over-the-counter needs:

Let's Go On Vacation!

Baja California and San Diego Land & Cruise Tour, March 14-21

Freedom 55/65 members are invited to enjoy an unbeatable winter getaway to sunny southern California. This fully escorted, eight-day cruise/tour features three nights at the deluxe Lawrence Welk Resort in San Diego and four nights cruising aboard Royal Caribbean's Viking Serenade. The trip also includes daily breakfast, a musical dinner theater performance at the Lawrence Welk Theater, and tours of the city of San Diego and its famous San Diego Zoo. Cruise port stops include Catalina Island and Ensenada, Mexico.

Please join us for an informative video presentation about the tour on Wednesday, December 11, at 2 p.m. at St. Luke's Stiemke Auditorium, 2900 W. Oklahoma Avenue.

Individuals making a deposit on the day of the video presentation will receive a free gift. For reservations, call 1-888-5-FREEDOM or (537-3336).

For more information about the tour, call Julie or Marilyn at 325-5020.

Another special tour package for Freedom 55/65 members will be scheduled for May 1997. Information will be available in the winter newsletter.
**Hospice Volunteers Wanted**

**Wanted: Mature, compassionate adults who desire to make a difference, and have three to four hours a week to give.**

The VNA Community Hospice is seeking volunteers to help provide care for terminally ill patients of all ages, from infants to the very elderly. Hospice is a concept of specialized home care for persons with limited life expectancy. The focus is on quality of life, symptom management and control, and emotional and spiritual balance.

Volunteers are an integral part of the VNA Community Hospice team and are involved in many activities, both with patients and family members. Their role is to provide companionship, emotional support, and respite care as well as assistance with grocery shopping, picking up medications and taking patients to doctor appointments. Volunteers also provide friendly visits to patients in nursing homes, provide secretarial support and make bereavement follow-up calls.

Training is provided. For more information about hospice and volunteering, call Connie Georgenson at 328-4464.

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**Choosing the Right Tools to Build Your Financial House**

From new legislation to the electronic transfer of social security, the financial world is quickly changing around us. But with so many choices (and so much paperwork!), how do you know which money management tools are the right ones for you?

To help give you the information you need to help make smart financial choices, The Geriatrics Institute of Sinai Samaritan Medical Center and M&I Trust & Investment Management are teaming up to present a series of seminars called "Choosing the Right Tools To Build Your Financial House."

Each session is from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the auditorium of the Milwaukee Heart Institute at Sinai Samaritan, 960 N. 12th Street. Free indoor parking is available. For more information and to pre-register, please call Aurora Call-A-Nurse at 342-RNRN (7676) or toll free at 1-800-342-7676. Please feel free to register for any, or all of the seminars.

**January 14: Spring Cleaning for your Financial House** — Dust off your documents and make sure you're using the right tools. This seminar includes everything from wills and power of attorney to budgets and trusts.

**February 11: Cutting Through the Red Tape of Medicare & Medicaid** — The paperwork can get a little sticky, but this seminar will show you how to pull it all together and make some sense of it.

**March 11: The Alphabet Soup of Planned Giving** — Learn the ABCs of CRITs, CRATS, CRUTs and other creative uses for your money that can help you now and benefit charities in the future.

**April 8: Giving Your Money A Workout** — Pick up some tips on effective ways to make your money work for you, including trust, reverse mortgages and choosing an investment advisor.

**May 13: Crossing the Potomac — A Look Inside The Government** — There is plenty of talk about changes to Medicare, Social Security and taxes, but how will it impact you? In this seminar, you'll find out more about new and pending legislation that affects seniors, from social security to long term nursing home care. Wisconsin's own legislative changes also will be discussed.

The Freedom 55/65 number at St. Luke's South Shore has changed to (414) 489-4012.
Dr. Paul Sienkiewicz is an orthopedic surgeon on staff at St. Luke’s Medical Center. He recently talked with us about knee pain and arthritis.

Q: Why do some people experience pain in their knees as they get older?
A: Pain in the knees can be due to arthritis, a disease that can cause inflammation in the joints. Over time, this inflammation can damage the cartilage and other tissues of the joints, making movement hard and painful. Unfortunately, cartilage has very little capacity to repair itself.

Q: Are there different kinds of arthritis that cause knee problems?
A: The two most common types of arthritis that can affect the knee joint are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. Osteoarthritis can be caused by the wear and tear of normal aging coupled with cartilage damage from traumas such as sports injuries or falls. Obesity also increases the risk for developing osteoarthritis.

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system turns against parts of the body, especially the joints. In its more serious forms, it causes painful, badly damaged joints.

Q: Are there other things that can cause degeneration in the knee joint?
A: Sometimes, malalignment such as being bowlegged or knock-kneed, injury to the joints, repetitive motion or obesity can cause the knee to degenerate over time and lose the cartilage that covers the ends of the bones. Infections also can damage cartilage.

Q: How does degeneration of the knee joint cause pain?
A: Loss of cartilage means that the ends of the femur bone and tibia bone, which are connected by the knee joint, grind against each other without the protection of cartilage, nature’s shock absorber.

Q: What can be done about degeneration of the knee joint?
A: To decrease the symptoms of arthritis, medications such as acetaminophen, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and corticosteroids can be helpful. Physical therapy and the right balance between activity and rest also is important. Weight loss, good supportive shoes, orthotics, and joint protection measures such as canes, walkers or crutches can help by lightening the weight placed on the knees. Sometimes, knee surgery can be done to reduce the pain and maintain or increase mobility.

Q: Can’t cartilage be repaired or regrown?
A: There have been some recent attempts to remove cartilage from a person’s damaged joint, amplify it (make more) outside the body and then reapply it to the person’s own cartilage. This is done in hope that the new cartilage cells will fill in where the cartilage is missing or damaged and will harden to the strength of normal cartilage.

This cartilage treatment may hold some future promise, but at this time, it is only being done on a limited basis, and only on young people who have broken off a piece of cartilage due to trauma. It currently cannot be used when there is more generalized damage to the cartilage.

Q: At what point does knee replacement surgery make sense?
A: When nonsurgical treatments have failed, total knee replacement surgery can be performed to help reduce pain and maintain or increase mobility. This surgery, which is performed by an orthopedic surgeon, involves replacing the damaged knee joint with an artificial joint made of metal and plastic. The right time to have surgery is a decision between you and your doctor.

“If you rest, you rust.”
—Helen Hayes
Ah, the holidays . . . a happy, exciting time filled with family and friends showing their love and concern for one another . . . right?

That's how it's supposed to be, and it's lovely when it's just that way. But what happens if we start to feel sad, lonely or even depressed as winter and the holidays approach?

While loneliness is not a feeling limited to older adults, it seems to be a particularly sticky problem with this age group. Some people feel the need to keep such feelings to themselves, that "there is something wrong with them" if they can't get into the Christmas spirit. They also may fear that they are lonely because they simply are not trying hard enough to get out and do things. Some older adults long for the days when they had more people, places and things to look forward to. They are ashamed that they no longer have them.

Research indicates that loneliness is one of the most painful emotions humans experience. While psychiatrists and psychologists may not study the topic much, song writers certainly do. In fact, some of the most popular songs were so successful because everyone feels lonely sometimes. In our hearts, we know that we are lonely not because there isn't enough to do, but because we miss that certain someone, that certain place or that certain feeling that came with times that were good or for dreams that we felt would come true.

It helps to know that sadness and loneliness, while painful, are really made worse by feeling that we need to "force" ourselves to be happy. The holidays may be a time where we seek out people who have shared important times in our lives even if they are far away. It also may be a time where bringing some joy to someone or extending a helping hand may be just what the doctor ordered.

Certainly, if you suffer in a way that prevents proper sleep, appetite, energy, concentration, or if it just doesn't feel like life is worth living, you need to contact your family doctor. If you don't have a doctor, we can help you find one.

Robert D. Lerner, MD
Psychiatry, Sinai Samaritan Medical Center

Physician Referral Services
St. Luke's Medical Center/Main and South Shore campus
649-6565
Sinai Samaritan Medical Center
342-7676
West Allis Memorial Hospital
328-6800
Lakeland Medical Center
741-2352

**Do Holidays Make You Lonely?**

**Signs and Symptoms of Depression**

*St. Luke's Medical Center Mental Health Services*

More than 15 million Americans suffer from depression each year.

While this condition can be successfully treated in 80% of all cases, many people do not seek treatment because they are unaware of the symptoms. When depression is recognized and treated, most people will begin to feel better within a few months.

Some common symptoms include:

- Changes in appetite
- Feelings of extreme sadness
- Alteration of regular sleep pattern
- Decreased concentration and motivation
- Inability to enjoy usual leisure/social activities
- Thoughts of death or suicide
Doc Around The World

Saturday, February 1 at 8 p.m.
Uihlein Hall, Marcus Center for the Performing Arts

Your toes won’t stop tapping when Doc Severinsen leads the Milwaukee Symphony Pops and Symphonic Klezmer in dances around the world. The centerpiece of this concert will be the joyous B’Sha-ah Tovah (“All in Good Time”), a colorful tapestry of Yiddish songs, brilliant improvisations and wild dances. In sold-out performances everywhere, this five-piece Klezmer band leaves audiences feeling exhilarated, energized and happy.

Tickets must be ordered by January 10. For more information, call the Milwaukee Symphony at 291-6010.

Make checks payable to:
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra.

Mail your check, the completed form on the right and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:
Audrey Baird
Director of Group Sales
330 East Kilbourn Avenue
Suite 900
Milwaukee, WI 53202-6623

Ticket price is less 20% discount plus $1.50 facility fee.

Freedom 55/65 Birthday Bash A Big Hit At Senior Celebration!

This summer’s Senior Celebration was a huge success with nearly 7,800 Freedom 55/65 members and other seniors enjoying beautiful weather and a fun-filled day of activities that included health screenings, health information programs, entertainment, refreshments and bingo. Next year’s Senior Celebration is already in the planning stages. Mark your calendar for August 29, 1997!

Congratulations to the following Freedom 55/65 prize winners:
• Five-day Motorcoach Tour for Two to Branson, MO Dewey Gay
• Edelweiss Lunch Cruise for Four Jim Valentine
• Zenith 19” Color TV Margaret Hoefl
• Harold’s Restaurant $75 Gift Certificate Lilly Scholl
• Sony Boombox with CD Player Hazel Erickson
• AT&T Cordless Phone Marion Matthies
• Bread & Dough Maker Helen Anderson
• Aurora Fleece Jacket Virginia Mekash
• Fireside Restaurant and Playhouse $85 Gift Certificate Betty Plaman
• Brewer Package for Four, Lower Box and Parking Pass Marion Ward
"Caregiver" is a word that has always provoked images of a young woman dressed in a crisp, white uniform and starched nurse's cap, eager to meet the needs of her patient. While nurses are still professional caregivers, along with doctors and many other health care professionals, today, family and friends provide much of the care for their loved ones.

Providing care and support for those we love can be a very rewarding experience, but it also can be overwhelming. According to Sharon Feucht, RN, Geriatrics Care Manager at Hartford Memorial Hospital, family caregivers often have to serve multiple roles. "They are a combination of nurse, coach, housekeeper, cook, financial advisor, driver and friend all in one," says Feucht. "This can be too much for one person to deal with effectively."

To help ease the demands that caregiving places on family and friends, Hartford Memorial Hospital has established the Almost Home Adult Day Care program and the Respite Care program. The Almost Home program, located at the hospital, provides a place where skilled professionals care for loved ones during the week while caregivers pursue a career or other activities. The Respite Care program, on the other hand, provides occasional 24-hour supportive care for adults, so that their families and other caregivers can have personal time for vacations, health needs or special events.

"Many older adults need support in meeting daily health and social needs," says Feucht. "Our programs are designed to promote independence and deter the need for nursing home placement."

Both programs at Hartford Memorial Hospital offer recreation, companionship and personal care. Activities are directed by experienced activity therapists. Program participants enjoy games, music, current events discussions, arts and crafts, chair exercises, gardening, rest and relaxation.

Feucht encourages all caregivers to take advantage of programs such as Almost Home and Respite Care for their own good health. "Many times, the caregiver minimizes the importance of maintaining his or her own social, physical and spiritual well-being," says Feucht. "If the caregiver neglects his or her own life, both the loved one and caregiver will suffer. Caregivers need to recognize the importance of maintaining their own support systems, private times and self-worth."

In addition to the Almost Home and Respite Care programs, Hartford Memorial Hospital also offers a Caregivers Support Group which meets on the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. This group, open to all caregivers, provides an opportunity to share concerns and frustrations, stress management techniques, information about services in the community, and to provide strength and energy for one another. The group is facilitated by Feucht and Kathee Hoppe, a social worker.

For more information about any of the caregivers programs at Hartford Memorial Hospital, please call (414) 670-7733.
Helping Older Adults and Their Families Meet the Challenges of Aging

To help families cope with the challenges of caregiving, Family Service of Milwaukee is pleased to introduce ElderService Consultants, a specialized program providing comprehensive care management for older adults and their families.

ElderService Consultants helps families identify the needs of the older adult and other family members in a caring, supportive atmosphere. After assessing the family's needs, a professional care manager, with extensive experience in health care and family issues, helps family members choose the most appropriate care for their particular situation and develops a plan to locate, arrange and monitor the chosen services. Caregivers receive guidance and support in helping them maintain their own health, home and job responsibilities. Recognizing the progressive nature of age-related illnesses, the care manager stays in touch with families to assure that needs are being met and to respond quickly to any problems or changes that occur.

The following are examples of situations where ElderService Consultants could help:

- A nursing home placement for a family member seems imminent. The family wants to explore if there are any safe and realistic alternatives that would allow the older adult to remain at home.
- An older adult's health is deteriorating and his out-of-town family members are very concerned about him but unable to locate, arrange or supervise service from a distance.
- An older adult is a caregiver for an ill spouse and the strain of caregiving is putting her/his own health at risk.

Family Service of Milwaukee has been involved in the delivery of family-centered home care services to the elderly for over 50 years. In addition to the more comprehensive ElderService Consultants program, services to meet individualized needs include family counseling, personal care, homemaking services, respite care and money management. Staff members have extensive knowledge of community resources and work collaboratively with other agencies and organizations serving older adults.

For more information on how ElderService Consultants can help you and your family, call Aviva Zweben or Kathy Intravaia at 344-3344.

West Allis Caregiver’s Group Begins 10th Year

West Allis Memorial Hospital and the Village at Manor Park recently celebrated the ninth anniversary of their Care for the Caregiver Support Group. The continued success of this group can be attributed to the sharing of feelings and experiences by each member. The group is led by Melanie Walloch, RN, and Mary Sue Coffey, RN, from West Allis Memorial Hospital, along with Chaplain Bob Rogers and Gloria Griffiths from the Village at Manor Park. Meetings are held every other Thursday from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Heritage Room at West Allis Memorial Hospital. New members are always welcome.

For more information, please call 328-7405.
“One must never be in haste to end a day; there are too few of them in a lifetime.”

–Dale Rex Coman