



SEPTEMBER 2026

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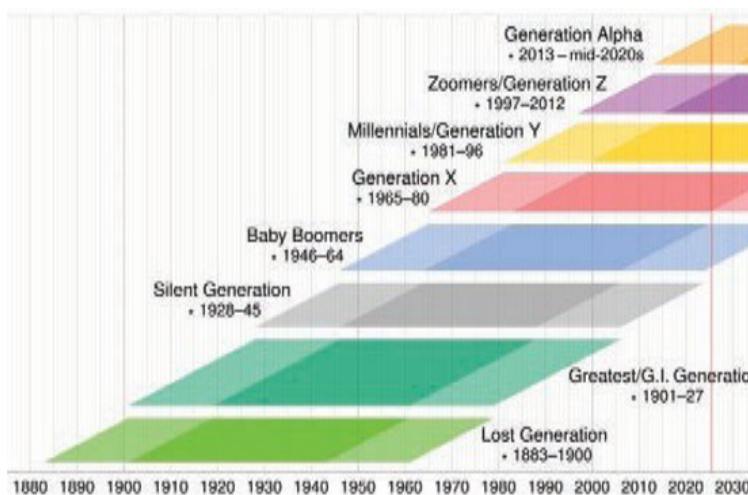
Generational Differences: Are They a Myth? By the GWAAR Legal Services Team

Differences between generations are talked about in popular culture and the workplace, from communication styles and work ethics to dating preferences and life goals. But as we know, stereotypes can be harmful. There has been a shift in attitude toward the concept of “generations” lately, with the Pew Research Center noting that arbitrary labels for generational cutoffs have no scientific basis.

In *The Myth Of Generational Differences: Why It’s Time To Drop The Labels*, Forbes discusses how reducing people to generational differences decreases trust, is divisive, and prevents the formation of genuine relationships. This is true whether in the workplace, your family, or your social networks. Also, the Wall Street Journal debunks myths in *Age Is but a Number: 8 Generational Myths to Rethink*. Myths examined include that older generations don’t use social media, or that only older generations use coupons and discounts. While focused on customers and marketing, the article shows that assumptions about people based on generations may unnecessarily narrow a pool of people or lead to you discounting someone for a project or group that would bring value.

A study, *Generations and Generational Differences: Debunking Myths in Organizational Science and Practice and Paving New Paths Forward*, busts myths such as “generational explanations are obvious,” “talking about generations is largely benign,” and “generations are easy to study.” So where does that leave us if we want to move away from generational stereotypes?

Use what you know about specific individuals to enhance your relationship with them. If stereotypes say that Gen Z will only text, but your grandchild loves to call or Facetime, let that guide how



you communicate with them. Take advantage of the opportunity to participate in intergenerational groups or activities. *Better Connecting the Generations Could Change the World* talks about the potential for younger and older people working together to tackle societal problems like climate change, improve work, and strengthen marginalized communities. Focus on shared experiences and behaviors. We are all individuals with strengths that can be used to benefit each other in the home, at work or school, and in the community.

Potential activities for younger and older people to do together are numerous, from genealogy and storytelling to cooking and gardening. There are opportunities for everyone to learn new skills and teach each other. Check out *Resources on Intergenerational Practice – #AWorld4AllAges – Global Campaign to Combat Ageism* for info on how to connect with people of all ages and reduce harmful stereotypes.

If you find the concept of generational differences hard to give up, explore learning from other generations and how to improve yourself using traits of others. The Guardian’s *Get Money Confident – From Boomer Frugality to Gen Z Fintech: My Week of Intergenerational Finance Hacks* from Get Money Confident in The Guardian explores the different financial practices of younger and older generations. The author learned a lot through her week of exploration and ultimately concluded that “there is something we could all learn from listening to each other on any topic.” This is probably the best approach to community and relationships for all of us. Approach younger and older generations with curiosity and openness, rather than letting stereotypes keep you away from potential connections and learning opportunities.

Staff Spotlight: Options Counselor



My name is Erika Stevens, and I have served as an Options Counselor with the ADRC of Chippewa County for nearly a decade. A day in the life of an ADRC is never boring! Information and resources along with individual and community needs are constant and ever changing. We are grateful to be the bridge to something helpful for you and your loved ones.

Consumer Protections Now in Place to Help Wisconsinites

Resourced from AARP

Governor Tony Evers signed bipartisan cryptocurrency kiosk consumer protection legislation, supported by AARP Wisconsin, into law on April 8, 2026.

The new law, authored by Rep. Pat Snyder (R-Weston), Rep. Steve Doyle (D-Onalaska), and Senator Jesse James (R-Thorp), prevents Wisconsinites from having their life savings stolen by criminals using crypto kiosks (also called crypto ATMs).

Americans had \$333 million stolen from them by crypto kiosk scams in 2025 alone. Key provisions of the new Wisconsin law:

- Limits crypto kiosk transactions to \$1,000 per user per day, preventing large-scale theft
- Requires kiosk operators to refund scam victims who make a report within 30 days
- Crypto kiosk customers must receive detailed transaction receipts
- Fraud warning signs must be added to all crypto kiosk machines
- Crypto kiosk operators need a Wisconsin money transmitter license

“We applaud our Senators for taking action to prevent crimes committed daily at more than 700 cryptocurrency kiosks across Wisconsin,” said AARP Wisconsin State Director Raj Shukla. “This bill

protects consumers from scammers who use, lie and cheat to steal an entire life savings in minutes using crypto kiosks.”



“No one should have to worry about being manipulated by criminals hiding behind a screen,” Shukla said. “The overwhelming evidence shows these machines are almost exclusively used to steal millions of dollars from consumers. This law goes a long way towards stopping that from happening,” Shukla said.

If you or someone you know is the victim of a scam involving a cryptocurrency kiosk, contact the kiosk operator and law enforcement immediately.

Under the law, a report must be made to both law enforcement and the crypto kiosk operator within 30 days to receive a refund. Be sure to keep records of contact from the criminals, as well as your receipts, to aid law enforcement in their investigation.

Not sure where to turn after experiencing a scam? Contact the AARP Fraud Watch Network™ Helpline at (877) 908-3360.

The ADRC is Online!

Subscribe for FREE to get this eNewsletter emailed to you each month at www.chippewacountywi.gov/adrc or scan the QR code below. You can always pick up this free newspaper at most local grocery stores, or pay \$16/year for a mailed subscription. **Call the ADRC at 715-726-7777.**

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Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Staff ... *Your Bridge to Support!*

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ADRC Manager – Sarah Zielke• Administrative Assistants – Renee Price, Carmen Olson, Karen Herbison• Benefit Specialist Assistant – Breanna Schemenauer• Dementia Care Specialist – Bronson Stelzer | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disability Benefit Specialist – Stephanie Rasmussen• Elder Benefit Specialist – Cory Miller• Nutrition & Transportation Programs Supervisor – Kayla Colbenson• Nutrition Program Assistants – Jason Kolano, Jen Buckley | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nutrition Site Aides – Sue Barnum, Linda Felmlee, Cindy Sarazen, Ann Mueller, Cindy Irish, Vicky Steinmetz• Options Counselors – Sarah Hedlund, Erika Stevens, Jessica Gibson, Libby Leinenkugel, Brittany Lofquist |
|---|--|--|

Aging and Disability Resource Centers are the first place to go with your aging and disability questions. We are an “information station” where you can get accurate, unbiased information related to aging or living with a disability. Our job is to help you remain as independent as possible! Give us a call at 715-726-7777 or stop in at 711 N. Bridge Street (Courthouse), Room 118, Chippewa Falls.

Labor Day

By HISTORY.com Editors

Labor Day 2026 occurs on Monday, September 7. Labor Day pays tribute to the contributions and achievements of American workers and is traditionally observed on the first Monday in September. It was created by the labor movement in the late 19th century and became a federal holiday in 1894. Labor Day weekend also symbolizes the end of summer for many Americans and is celebrated with parties, street parades and athletic events.

When Is Labor Day?

Labor Day is always observed on the first Monday in September. Labor Day 2026 takes place on Monday, September 7.

Why Do We Celebrate Labor Day?

Labor Day, an annual celebration of workers and their achievements, originated during one of American labor history’s most dismal chapters. In the late 1800s, at the height of the Industrial Revolution in the United States, the average American worked 12-hour days and seven-day weeks in order to eke out a basic living. Despite restrictions in some states, children as young as 5 or 6 toiled in mills, factories and mines across the country, earning a fraction of their adult counterparts’ wages.

People of all ages, particularly the very poor and recent immigrants, often faced extremely unsafe working conditions, with insufficient access to fresh air, sanitary facilities and breaks.

As manufacturing increasingly supplanted agriculture as the wellspring of American employment, labor unions, which had first appeared in the late 18th century, grew more prominent and vocal. They began organizing strikes and rallies to protest poor conditions and compel employers to renegotiate hours and pay.

Many of these events turned violent during this period, including the infamous Haymarket Riot of 1886, in which several Chicago policemen and workers were killed. Others gave rise to

longstanding traditions: On September 5, 1882, 10,000 workers took unpaid time off to march from City Hall to Union Square in New York City, holding the first Labor Day parade in U.S. history.

The idea of a “workingmen’s holiday,” celebrated on the first Monday in September, caught on in other industrial centers across the country, and many states passed legislation recognizing it. Congress would not legalize the holiday until 12 years later, when a watershed moment in American labor history brought workers’ rights squarely into the public’s view. On May 11, 1894, employees of the Pullman Palace Car Company in Chicago went on strike to protest wage cuts and the firing of union representatives.



On June 26, the American Railroad Union, led by Eugene V. Debs, called for a boycott of all Pullman railway cars, crippling railroad traffic nationwide. To break the Pullman strike, the federal government dispatched troops to Chicago, unleashing a wave of riots that resulted in the deaths of more than a dozen workers.

Who Created Labor Day?

In the wake of this massive unrest and in an attempt to repair ties with American workers, Congress passed an act making Labor Day a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories. On June 28, 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed it into law. More than a century later, the true founder of Labor Day has yet to be identified.

Many credit Peter J. McGuire, cofounder of the American Federation of Labor, while others have suggested that Matthew Maguire, a secretary of the Central Labor Union, first proposed the holiday.

Labor Day Celebrations

Labor Day is still celebrated in cities and towns across the United States with parades, picnics, barbecues, fireworks displays and other public gatherings, especially over the long Labor Day weekend. For many Americans, particularly children and young adults, it represents the end of the summer and the start of the back-to-school season.

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This is open to anyone new to Medicare, currently on Medicare, caregivers, families and community partners.

Upcoming Second Wednesdays at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Chippewa Courthouse



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This project is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,061,073 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Save The Date

Friday, October 16, 2026

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Slow Down: Back to School Means Sharing the Road

By National Safety Council

School days bring congestion: School buses are picking up their passengers, kids on bikes are hurrying to get to school before the bell rings, harried parents are trying to drop their kids off before work. It's never more important for drivers to slow down and pay attention than when kids are present – especially before and after school.

If You're Dropping Off

Schools often have very specific drop-off procedures for the school year. Make sure you know them for the safety of all kids. The following apply to all school zones:

- Don't double park; it blocks visibility for other children and vehicles
- Don't load or unload children across the street from the school
- Carpool to reduce the number of vehicles at the school

Sharing the Road with Young Pedestrians

According to research by the National Safety Council, most of the children who lose their lives in bus-related incidents are 4 to 7 years old, and they're walking. They are hit by the bus, or by a motorist illegally passing a stopped bus. A few precautions go a long way toward keeping children safe:

- Don't block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or waiting to make a turn, forcing pedestrians to go around you; this could put them in the path of moving traffic
- In a school zone when flashers are blinking, stop and yield to pedestrians crossing the crosswalk or intersection
- Always stop for a school patrol officer or crossing guard holding up a stop sign
- Take extra care to look for children in school zones, near playgrounds and parks, and in all residential areas
- Don't honk or rev your engine to scare a pedestrian, even if you have the right of way
- Never pass a vehicle stopped for pedestrians
- Always use extreme caution to avoid striking pedestrians wherever they may be, no matter who has the right of way

Sharing the Road with School Buses

If you're driving behind a bus, allow a greater following distance than if you were driving behind a car. It will give you more time to stop once the yellow lights start flashing. It is illegal in all 50 states to pass a school bus that is stopped to load or unload children.

- Never pass a bus from behind – or from either direction if you're on an undivided road – if it is stopped to load or unload children
- If the yellow or red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended, traffic must stop
- The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow space to safely enter and exit the bus
- Be alert; children often are unpredictable, and they tend to ignore hazards and take risks

Sharing the Road with Bicyclists

On most roads, bicyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as vehicles, but bikes can be hard to see. Children riding bikes create special problems for drivers because usually they are not able to properly determine traffic conditions. The most common cause of collision is a driver turning left in front of a bicyclist.

- When passing a bicyclist, proceed in the same direction slowly, and leave 3 feet between your car and the cyclist
- When turning left and a bicyclist is approaching in the opposite direction, wait for the rider to pass
- If you're turning right and a bicyclist is approaching from behind on the right, let the rider go through the intersection first, and always use your turn signals
- Watch bike riders turning in front of you without looking or signaling; children especially have a tendency to do this
- Be extra vigilant in school zones and residential neighborhoods
- Watch for bikes coming from driveways or behind parked cars
- Check side mirrors before opening your door



By exercising a little extra care and caution, drivers and pedestrians can co-exist safely in school zones.

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Five Myths About Grieving

Grieving is a complicated process. Because grief is so difficult to comprehend, people often try to simplify the process by citing “truths” that supposedly apply to everybody. The trouble is that nothing about grief applies to everyone. The result is that griever are often told what they will or should experience and then feel confused because their own journey feels different.

Here is a list of five common misconceptions about the grief process.

Myth #1: Everyone’s grief is different.

We Americans treasure the idea that each of us is unique. In general, this may be true, but there is a core biological reason for grief: the need we have to bond, to attach, to form a permanent and deep relationship with one special individual. When that bond is severed by death most people respond by protesting (“NO, no, this can’t be true”), despairing (“My life is meaningless without him/her”), and only reluctantly accepting the loss (“I don’t want to go on, but I must.”) So, it would be better to say that each person’s grief experience is both universal and unique.

Myth #2: Everyone goes through five stages of grief.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross created a five-stage model for grief that originally was intended for the dying person and then was extended to griever. Denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. These stages had been accepted as accurate and predictive by the general public and professionals until recently, when good research studies found that they did not accurately describe most people’s grief experience. It would be far better to say that some griever sometimes experience one or more of these five stages.

Myth #3: The only goal of grieving is to honor the deceased.

It is true that honoring the deceased person is a major goal of grieving. But there is another equally important goal: the survivor needs to create

a new and satisfying life as a single person. It’s important to keep these two goals in balance. One example would be for the survivor to drive on the country road the two of them used to take together, and then to explore an entirely different route on their own.

Myth #4: Death ends your relationship with the loved one.

This is true in one sense: your physical relationship is over. But many griever stay emotionally connected with the deceased person indefinitely. Sometimes, for example, the living partner might “report” their experiences every night to the deceased individual and in that way maintain a sense of connection.

Myth #5: Grief lasts forever.

I presented this idea as a truth to my family and to others because I was told that although your grief will never end it will gradually become less and less intense. Surprisingly, a few people responded by saying they felt they had completed grieving. It was important to grieve but now it was over and even when they thought of the deceased person, they no longer felt any lingering sadness. Again, we need to remember that nothing about grief experience applies to everyone.

Ron Potter-Efron, MSW, is a facilitator for the Chippewa Valley Grief Support Group. Our support group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, from 3-4:30 p.m., at Central Lutheran Church, 28E. Columbia Street. For more information, contact Ron at 715-797-3817 or rpottere@gmail.com



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Dementia Support

This group is for people living with dementia and their caregivers, friends and neighbors. Join us for support, strategies and resources

**2nd Thursday of the month
1 pm - 2:30 pm**



**Central Lutheran Church
28 East Columbia Street *
Chippewa Falls**



For more information, contact the ADRC at 715-726-7777

VIRTUAL DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUPS

All support groups listed are provided by Dementia Care Specialist at the Aging & Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) throughout Wisconsin. Join us for support, encouragement and resources. The groups listed are for those living in or caring for someone living in Wisconsin. For more information on local dementia resources near you, contact your local ADRC.

MONDAY COFFEE CONNECT EVERY MONDAY 10:00- 11:00 AM

This support group is for caregivers of loved ones living at home, it offers a safe, welcoming space to connect with other caregivers weekly. Ask questions, gain support, and brainstorm solutions—participate by video or phone via Microsoft Teams. For more information contact Kelsey at kflock@lacossecounty.org

MONDAY D.I.S.H. 1ST MONDAY OF THE MONTH 7:00 - 8:00 PM

This group was created to support adult working children, friends and spouses of someone living with dementia. Join us as we support each other working through challenges and sharing strategies. To join, contact Carla at cberscheit@dunncountywi.gov

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT 3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH 2:00-3:00 PM

Is a support group for people caring for someone living with brain changes. Join to share encouragement, resources and struggles with each other. Contact Teresa at teresa.gander@vernoncountywi.gov

EVENING CONVERSATIONS 2ND THURSDAY OF THE MONTH 7:00 - 8:00 PM

This support group is for people caring for someone with brain changes. Join us as we share education, strategies, challenges, encouragement and resources. Contact Teresa at teresa.gander@vernoncountywi.gov

MINDS & VOICES 2ND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH 10:30 - 11:30 AM

A virtual advocacy group for people living with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or living with any form of dementia. We meet every 2nd Wednesday from 10:30-11:30am. Building a better tomorrow starts with the making changes today. Your voice, opinions, and feedback matter. Contact Tonya at 920-675-4035 or tonyar@jeffersoncountywi.gov

to find an ADRC near you www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc

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DICE APPROACH TO DEMENTIA AUGUST 11

Sometimes people with dementia can have behaviors related to their brain changes. Learn practical strategies to manage them.

DEMENTIA & HOME SAFETY NOVEMBER 10

Learn low tech and high tech devices that can help keep your loved one safe at home.

Join Hannah Quicker and Bronson Stelzer, Dementia Care Specialists to gain knowledge, understanding and resources.



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Registration is required



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- Contact **Medicare** directly by calling (800) 633-4227 or visiting <https://www.medicare.gov>



- The **Medigap Helpline** (800) 242-1060 is a toll-free helpline operated by the Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long-Term Care that provides counseling for all Wisconsin Medicare beneficiaries on Medicare, Medicare supplement insurance, employer-based health insurance, Medicare Advantage plans, long-term care insurance, and related topics.

- The **Wisconsin Medigap Part D and Prescription Drug Helpline** (855) 677-2783 is a toll-free helpline that answers questions from Wisconsin residents aged 60 and over about Medicare Part D and other prescription drug coverage options.

- **Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing video phone** (262) 347-3045 provides outreach and individual counseling in American Sign Language.

- **Legal Action of Wisconsin** (855) 947-2529 provides outreach and benefits counseling to low-income persons living in Northern Wisconsin and Native Americans statewide.

- The **Wisconsin Senior Medicare Patrol** (888) 818-2611 has a toll-free helpline for Medicare beneficiaries and their families to call to report suspected Medicare fraud, errors, and abuse.


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Visit our website for the full schedule, locations, and virtual options

Upcoming Session

09-09-2026 from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Holcombe United Methodist Church
27841 Co Hwy M, Holcombe, WI

This project is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,061,673 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Making Memories During Apple Season



By Bronson Stelzer, Dementia Care Specialist

September is one of the most beautiful times of the year in Chippewa County. The cooler temperatures, changing leaves, and apple season make it a great opportunity to spend meaningful time with loved ones living with dementia. The goal isn't to pack the day with activities, but to enjoy simple moments that encourage conversation, stimulate the senses, and create new memories.



Here are a few easy ways to enjoy the season:

- Visit a local apple orchard such as Bushel & A Peck, Connell's Family Orchard, or Family Roots Orchard. Even a short visit to enjoy the sights, smells, fresh cider, or baked goods can be a meaningful outing.
- Stop by the Chippewa Falls Downtown Farmers Market to browse fresh produce, flowers, baked goods, and local crafts. Smaller community events can provide enjoyable social interaction without feeling overwhelmed.
- Take a scenic drive through Chippewa County to enjoy the fall colors. Sometimes a peaceful drive with favorite music is all it takes to brighten someone's day.
- Bring the season home by baking an apple crisp, making homemade applesauce, or simply sharing warm apple cider while looking through family photo albums and reminiscing.
- Keep outings flexible. Plan activities during the time of day your loved one feels their best and remember that even 20 or 30 minutes can make for a successful trip. Focus on enjoying the moment rather than following a schedule.

Dementia Care Specialist Tip of the Month - The changing seasons remind us that meaningful moments don't have to be complicated. Whether it's picking apples, enjoying the fall colors, or sharing a favorite family recipe, these simple experiences can bring comfort, connection, and joy for both individuals living with dementia and those who care for them.

Recipe: Apple Crisp

By Francesca Zani at Delish Test Kitchen

Ingredients

- 5 Honeycrisp, Granny Smith, and/or Cripp's Pink apples, peeled, cored, sliced 1/4" to 1/2" thick
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon, divided
- 1 1/2 cups (135 g.) rolled oats
- 3/4 cup (160 g.) packed light brown sugar
- 2/3 cup (80 g.) all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)



Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a medium bowl, toss apples, cornstarch, lemon juice, granulated sugar, nutmeg, and 1 teaspoon cinnamon.
2. In a small bowl, toss oats, brown sugar, flour, salt, and remaining 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Add butter and stir until a crumbly mixture forms resembling wet sand.
3. Arrange apple mixture in a 2-quart ceramic baking dish. Top with oat mixture.
4. Bake until apples are soft, topping is crisp and golden brown, and juices are bubbling around edges of dish, 55 to 70 minutes. Serve warm with ice cream (if using).

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September Food Month Spotlight: Chicken

A Healthy, Versatile Favorite

Chicken is one of the most popular proteins because it's affordable, easy to prepare, and packed with nutrients. Whether you're grilling, baking, roasting, or slow cooking, chicken can be the centerpiece of a delicious and nutritious meal.



Nutrition Highlights

A 3-ounce serving of cooked, skinless chicken breast provides approximately:

- 140 calories
- 26 grams of protein
- 3 grams of fat
- Rich in niacin (Vitamin B3) for energy production
- Excellent source of Vitamin B6 for brain health
- Provides phosphorus and selenium to support healthy bones and immune function

Protein helps build and repair muscles, keeps you feeling full longer, and supports overall health.

Buying Chicken

Choose chicken that is:

- Cold to the touch and well refrigerated
- Pink in color with little or no odor
- Packaged without tears or leaks
- Purchased last before checking out to keep it cold

If using fresh chicken, cook or freeze it within 1–2 days of purchase.

Safe Storage Tips

Refrigerator

- Raw chicken: 1–2 days
- Cooked chicken: 3–4 days

Freezer

- Raw chicken pieces: Up to 9 months
- Whole chicken: Up to 1 year
- Cooked chicken: 2–6 months

Food Safety Reminder

Always thaw chicken safely:

- In the refrigerator
- In cold water (change water every 30 minutes)
- In the microwave if cooking immediately afterward

Never thaw chicken on the countertop.

Cook chicken to an internal temperature of 165°F using a food thermometer.

Easy Recipe: Lemon Garlic Baked Chicken

Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Mix olive oil, garlic, lemon juice, and seasonings.
3. Coat chicken evenly with the mixture.
4. Bake for 20–25 minutes, or until the internal temperature reaches 165°F.
5. Let rest for 5 minutes before serving.

Serve with: roasted vegetables, brown rice, or a fresh green salad.

Healthy Tip

Remove the skin before eating to reduce saturated fat, and try baking, grilling, or air frying instead of deep frying for a heart-healthy meal. Enjoy Chicken Month by trying a new recipe, adding colorful vegetables, and making protein the star of your plate!

Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild

Single tickets go on sale September 8. Go to cvtg.org.

 OCTOBER 1-11 GRAND THEATRE	 NOV. 12-15 JAMF, PABLO	 DEC. 3-13 GRAND THEATRE	 JAN. 14-24 GRAND THEATRE
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ECWIT (Eau Claire Women in Theatre) proudly presents their suffrage show, *Failure is Impossible*, written by Debbie Brown!

These Wisconsin women fought for your right to vote

Learn more about Wisconsin's role in the fight for women's suffrage at ECWIT's *Failure is Impossible*

7:30PM, SEPT. 18
1:30PM, SEPT. 19
GRAND THEATRE

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Building Balance Through Connection

September is Falls Prevention Awareness Month! The Falls Free Wisconsin Coalition, a statewide effort to reduce falls as we age, and Aging & Disability Resource Center of Eau Claire County are encouraging all of us to add connection to our toolbox this September and beyond. **Strong social connections help us stay active, supported, and mobile as we age.**



Most of us feel lonely at some point in our lives, and for many people those feelings are temporary. People of all ages and backgrounds can experience loneliness or social isolation (meaning having little or no regular contact with others). As we age, the risk of loneliness and isolation can increase, and for many older adults, it can become a regular part of life.

Social connection, on the other hand, means having meaningful relationships and feeling like we belong, are cared for, and are supported. **Strong social connections don't just make life better, they also help protect our health and can lower the risk of heart disease, stroke, dementia, depression, anxiety, and even falls.**

Here are some simple ways to stay connected and active, and help reduce our risk of falling as we age:

- Attend a community exercise class—and invite a friend to join you!
- Check in on friends or neighbors on a regular basis.
- Ask someone you trust to go with you to a doctor's appointment for support and an extra set of ears.
- Try something new together, like using mobility tools like walking poles, or a new activity.
- Visit a congregate meal site to enjoy a healthy meal and connect with others.
- Turn shoe shopping into a social outing while choosing safe, supportive footwear.
- Help family or friends schedule important appointments like a medication review or vision check.
- Make movement social—walk, dance, stretch, or stay active together.

Small moments of connection can make a big difference. They help us stay healthy, confident, and steady as we age.

While falls are common, they are not a normal part of aging. If you have fallen, you are not alone. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 1 in 4 adults aged 65 and older fall each year. Staying connected to the people and communities around us is an important way to stay strong, mobile, and independent.

Visit FallsFreeWI.org to find tools and resources, including a balance and strength exercise guide to try with a friend and more. You can also discover ways to build relationships and belonging at ConnectWI.org.

Healthy Living Programs Available to YOU

StrongBodies Information Session for new participants
Strength training is especially important as we age. Being physically active and socially connected are both essential for health and well-being. The StrongBodies program provides a safe environment for older adults to improve strength and balance with a fun group of peers. Learn more in this free orientation and sign up for classes starting September 28, 2026.
Thursday, 10:00 - 11:15 am/ September 3, 2026 (virtual and phone conference)

Med Wise Rx

Medication errors can result in unwanted effects from medicines, and worse, falls, hospitalizations and even death. The pharmacist is important to help people manage their medications and address their medication-related questions and concerns. Yet, patients and caregivers often are unsure what questions to ask or how to ask them. In this program you will learn to identify potential risks with medicine use and to ask key medication questions to learn more about your medicines. Two 1 - 1 ½ hour presentations, separated by one week for home practice.



Fridays, 10:00 - 11:00 am/ **September 4 & 18, 2026**
Fairchild Public Library, 208 Huron Street, Fairchild

Stepping On fall prevention program

Are you feeling unsteady on your feet? Stepping On can help you avoid a dangerous and costly fall so you can keep doing the things you love to do. In just 7 weeks, you will learn: Strength and balance exercises you can adapt to your individual level, to identify and remove or avoid fall hazards both inside and outside your home. How vision, hearing, medication, and footwear affect your risk of falling, to get back on your feet the right way if you do fall.
Tuesdays, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm/ **September 8 - October 20, 2026**
Lake Street Methodist Church, 337 Lake Street, Eau Claire

REGISTER at least one week prior: Call the ADRC at **715-839-4735** or go to www.adrcevents.org.

StrongBodies 10-week workshops, classes meet twice weekly for one hour each.

Virtual: Mondays & Wednesdays, **September 28 - December 9, 2026** at 8:30 am, October 19 - December 9, 2026 at 11:15 am, *and* Tuesdays & Thursdays, September 29 - December 10, 2026 at 8:30 am

In-person: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 8:00 am (Augusta Senior & Community Center), Mondays & Wednesdays, 5:00 pm (Dove Healthcare-West Eau Claire) and Tuesdays & Thursdays, **September 29 - December 10, 2026** at 1:00 pm (Grace Lutheran Church)

Repeat participants must complete a Re-enrollment Consent Form to sign up by September 14. \$20 Suggested contribution for repeat participants. Download form at www.adrcevents.org, email adrc@eauclairecounty.gov or call the ADRC at 715-839-4735 to request a form by mail.

Digging Into Wellness: The Health Benefits of Gardening for Older Adults

By Susan Krolow, SMP Volunteer Coordinator

Gardening is more than just a hobby – it's a powerful way for older adults to support healthy aging while enjoying the beauty of nature. Whether tending a backyard vegetable garden, planting flowers in containers, or simply pulling weeds and watering plants, gardening offers physical, mental, and emotional benefits that can improve overall well-being.



A Natural Way to Stay Active

Gardening encourages movement through activities like digging, planting, watering, and pruning. These motions help improve flexibility, strength, balance, and coordination. Even light gardening tasks can provide low-impact exercise that supports joint health and mobility. Regular physical activity can also help reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Boosting Mental Health and Reducing Stress

Spending time outdoors and connecting with nature has been shown to reduce stress and improve mood. Gardening can provide a sense of calm, purpose, and accomplishment. Many older adults find that caring for plants helps ease feelings of anxiety, loneliness, or depression. Watching something grow from seed to harvest can be deeply rewarding and uplifting.

Supporting Brain Health

Gardening engages the mind through planning, problem-solving, and learning. Remembering planting schedules, caring for different plants, and maintaining a garden can help keep the brain active and stimulated. Some studies suggest that regular gardening activities may even help reduce the risk of cognitive decline.

Encouraging Healthy Eating

For seniors, growing vegetables, herbs, or fruits can lead to healthier eating habits. Fresh produce from the garden is nutritious, flavorful, and often encourages people to eat more fruits and vegetables. Gardening can also increase appreciation for where food comes from and inspire healthier meal choices.

Creating Social Connections Community gardens and gardening clubs offer opportunities for social interaction and friendship. Sharing gardening tips, exchanging plants, or working alongside others can help reduce isolation and foster meaningful connections. Gardening can also become a wonderful multigenerational activity to enjoy with children and grandchildren.

Gardening Safely

While gardening has many benefits, it's important for older adults to garden safely:

- Stretch before and after gardening
- Use lightweight tools with easy-grip handles
- Stay hydrated
- Wear sunscreen and a hat
- Take breaks when needed
- Consider raised garden beds or container gardening to reduce bending and strain

Gardening reminds us that growth, renewal, and beauty can flourish at every age. Whether planting a single flowerpot or cultivating a full garden, spending time with plants is a simple and enjoyable way to support healthy aging – one seed at a time.

STRONG BODIES Senior Exercise Class for Strength, Balance & Vitality

Location: Bloomer Senior Center

Days: Every Tuesday & Friday

Time: 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM

Program Begins: Tuesday, September 9

Cost: Free to attend!

Please note: There will be no class on Friday, September 26

What You'll Gain:

- Improved strength & flexibility
- Better balance & coordination
- Boosted energy & mood
- A fun, social environment
- Expert guidance from a certified instructor

All fitness levels welcome! Whether you're new to exercise or looking to stay active, Strong Bodies is designed to help you feel empowered and energized.

How to Join: No need to pre-register—just show up and join the fun!

Questions? Contact Maria Seibel at 715-577-7728

Let's build strength together—one movement at a time. Wear comfy clothes, bring water, and come ready to feel great!

UW-Stout Polytechnic Continuing Education & Conferences

At UW-Stout Polytechnic Continuing Education & Conferences, we believe learning doesn't stop after retirement. Whether you want to explore new interests close to home, develop a new skill, connect with others, or simply have an exciting and engaging experience, we offer a growing selection of personal enrichment classes on the Stout campus.

This fall, community members can explore Japanese culture through our "Discovering Japan: Culture and Community Workshop Series," featuring two hands-on experiences with Japanese washi paper and traditional archery. Those interested in communication and community engagement can participate in our "Constructive Dialogue Workshop Series," a three-session program focused on navigating challenging conversations and building stronger dialogue skills - join one or all three.

Creative learners may enjoy "From Memories to Memoir: Crafting Your Story," a multi-week class that helps participants turn life experiences into meaningful written stories. Additional hands-on opportunities include "Bend, Bead, Wear: A Beginner's Guide to Wire Earrings" and "Hook, Loop, Create: Beginner Crochet for New Makers."

We are also pleased to offer free classes and opportunities, including "Insurance Literacy for Retirees: The ABCs & Ds of Medicare and Other Insurance Essentials" and the "Freshwater Friday" faculty lecture series.

Our aim is to offer fun, informative classes designed to cultivate new skills, hobbies, and connections. To learn more about these and other upcoming offerings, we invite you to visit our website and explore our full catalog of classes and events. Because we are continually adding new classes throughout the year, we also encourage you to sign up for our bi-monthly newsletter to stay informed about upcoming classes, educational experiences, and special events designed for curious adults. And if you don't see a class that matches your interests, we'd love to hear from you. Our programs are shaped by community interests and feedback, and your ideas may help inspire future learning opportunities. Whether you're exploring a longtime passion or discovering something entirely new, we're here to support your lifelong learning journey.

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Sep. 10 / Sep. 17 / Sep. 24

Constructive Dialogue Series

Hard Conversations, Better Outcomes:
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Sep. 29

Bend, Bead, Wear: A Beginner's
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How Assisted Living Can Enhance Quality of Life

By Shelley Krupa, Business Operations Coordinator at
Lake Hallie Memory Care

As people age, their needs evolve, and sometimes living independently can become challenging.

Assisted living facilities offer a blend of independence and support, ensuring that seniors can enjoy a

higher quality of life. Here are several ways in which assisted living can significantly enhance the lives of residents.



Safety and Security

Assisted living facilities are designed with seniors in mind, featuring emergency call systems, handrails, non-slip flooring, and 24/7 staffing. For seniors prone to falls or medical emergencies, having immediate access to help can be life-saving. The constant presence of staff ensures that any health issues are promptly addressed, providing peace of mind for both residents and their families.

Professional Care and Support

Assisted living facilities offer professional care and support tailored to individual needs. This includes assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, medication management, and meal preparation. For many seniors, managing these tasks independently can become increasingly difficult and stressful. Trained caregivers can provide personalized care plans with the appropriate level of support needed, allowing residents to maintain their dignity and independence.

Social Interaction and Community

Loneliness and social isolation are common issues among seniors, which can lead to depression and a decline in physical health. Assisted living communities foster a vibrant social environment with numerous opportunities for interaction. Residents can participate in organized activities, outings, and events that cater to a variety of interests. Communal dining areas encourage socialization during meals, helping residents form friendships and stay engaged. The sense of community and belonging that develops in assisted living can significantly improve mental and emotional health.

Nutritious Meals and Dining Experience

Maintaining a healthy diet is crucial for seniors, but it can be challenging to prepare nutritious meals consistently. Assisted living facilities provide balanced, dietitian-approved meals that cater to the dietary needs and preferences of residents. The communal dining experience not only ensures that residents receive proper nutrition but also promotes social interaction. Special dietary needs, such as low-sodium or diabetic-friendly options, are also accommodated, ensuring that each resident's health is prioritized.

Opportunities for Physical and Mental Stimulation

Assisted living communities offer a range of activities designed to promote physical and mental stimulation. Exercise classes, gardening,

CELEBRATE NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING WEEK SEPTEMBER 13-19

arts and crafts, and educational programs keep residents active and engaged. Physical activity is essential for maintaining mobility and overall health, while mental stimulation helps prevent cognitive decline.

Maintenance-Free Living

One of the significant advantages of assisted living is the maintenance-free lifestyle it offers. Residents no longer need to worry about household chores, home maintenance, or yard work. This freedom from daily responsibilities allows them to focus on enjoying their hobbies and interests. Housekeeping, laundry, and transportation services are also typically included.

Peace of Mind for Families

Knowing that a loved one is safe, well-cared-for, and enjoying life can provide immense peace of mind for families. Assisted living facilities keep families informed about their loved one's well-being and involve them in care plans and activities. This open communication ensures that families feel connected and reassured about their loved one's happiness and health.

Assisted living facilities offer a comprehensive approach to enhancing the quality of life for seniors. By providing a safe environment, professional care, social opportunities, nutritious meals, and a maintenance-free lifestyle, these communities help seniors live their golden years with dignity, joy, and fulfillment. For many families, choosing assisted living is a positive step toward ensuring their loved one's health, happiness, and well-being.



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Things to Consider About Assisted Living

Weigh the advantages for your particular stage of life

By Carl A. Trapani, MA, MS, LPC, Chippewa Manor Campus Chaplain

It's no secret that neighbors in rural Wisconsin tend to know each other. They look after each other's interests and help each other through life's seasons. The best assisted living communities follow that tradition. They don't simply provide housing—they create neighborhoods where people know your name, notice when you're missing from dinner, celebrate birthdays, lend a helping hand, and remind you that you still belong. Their goal isn't just adding years to your life—it's adding life to those years.

If you ask ten seniors what they think about assisted living, you'll probably get eleven opinions. One person says, "I'd rather leave feet first than move out of my house." Another says, "I should have moved here five years ago!" The truth? Both may be right. Choosing assisted living isn't about finding the perfect place—because no place is perfect. It's about deciding whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages for your particular stage of life. Let's look honestly at both sides.

Many seniors don't realize how isolated they've become. It starts gradually. The children and neighbors move away. Driving becomes difficult. Friends pass away or relocate. Before long, an entire day may pass without speaking to another person. One survey found that about 40% of adults over age 45 report feeling lonely, and loneliness has been linked to poorer physical and emotional health. Something unexpected happens after moving into assisted living. Instead of eating dinner alone while watching television – you have someone to debate with whether the Packers or the Bears have the better quarterback.

You will eat better. Cooking for one person isn't much fun. Many seniors admit that dinner is often a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, cold cereal, or whatever is left in the refrigerator. In assisted living, meals are freshly prepared. Someone else shops, cooks, serves, and washes the dishes. Many residents enjoy meals because they become social occasions instead of chores.

Assisted living isn't a nursing home. Most residents are still independent but may need help with things like bathing, dressing, medications, or mobility. There's tremendous peace of mind in knowing that if something goes wrong, help isn't twenty miles away. It's down the hallway. Adult children are relieved of an invisible burden. "Did Mom remember her medicine?" "Has Dad fallen?" "Why isn't he answering the phone?" After a move, many families say the greatest gift isn't convenience. It's relief. Visits become visits again—not rescue missions.

Let's be honest. Assisted living has drawbacks. "This Isn't My House." Home isn't just a building. It's where birthdays happened. It's where grandchildren took their first steps. It's a garden where loving care went into every tomato, turnip or rose plant. It's where every scratch on the dining room table tells a story. Leaving that behind hurts. Even when the move is the right decision.

Quality assisted living isn't inexpensive. It costs real money. Like everything else, rates have continued to rise in recent years. So before deciding to move, families should ask detailed questions about, medication fees, personal care, charges, transportation, laundry and level of care increases. Keeping in mind that the current prices will not be permanent. Discovering that not every community is excellent - is perhaps the most important point.

Some assisted living communities are outstanding. Others struggle with communication, or consistency. So before you sign up – visit a place more than once. Visit at lunchtime. Visit on weekends. Talk to

residents—not just the marketing director.

So...Who Should Consider Assisted Living? It may be a wise choice if:

- You're falling frequently.
- Cooking has become difficult.
- You're missing medications.
- The house has become overwhelming.
- You're lonely most days.
- You no longer can drive safely.
- Family caregivers are becoming exhausted.

Assisted living isn't about giving up. It's about choosing the place where you can live your best life. For some people, that's the family farmhouse. For others, it's an apartment where someone else shovels the snow while they enjoy coffee with friends. Sometimes moving doesn't mean life gets smaller. Sometimes it simply means life gets shared.



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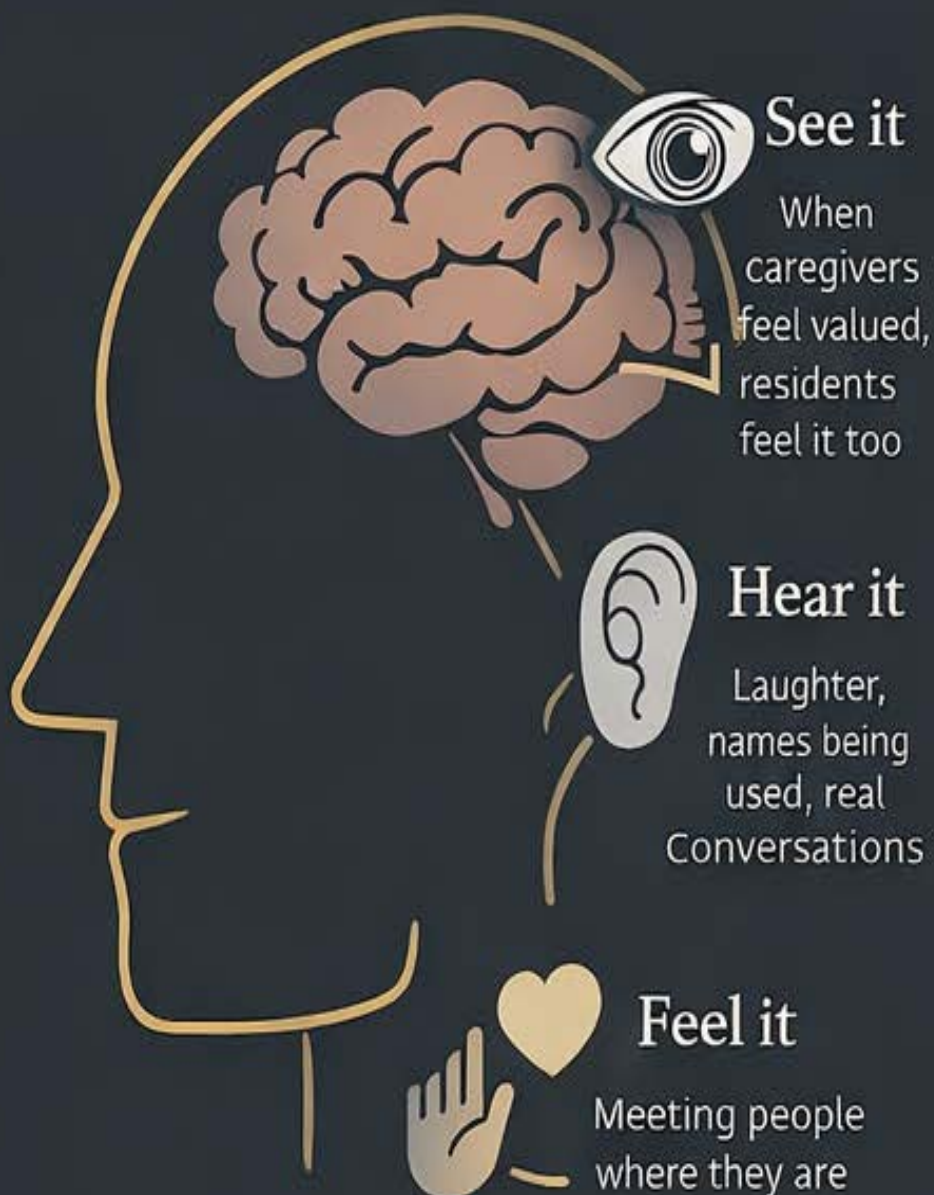
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