Options Staff have been unusually busy this year. Local advocates and staff have met with legislators on two separate occasions.

On March 15th over 400 advocates from across Wisconsin attended Disability Awareness Day at the State Capitol. Two of Options staff, along with area advocates with disabilities met with legislators and/or legislative aides to discuss their concerns.

Also taking place in Madison was Independent Living Days, an annual IL event which gives Wisconsin ILC’s an opportunity to bring staff and advocates together to meet with their respective legislators and share concerns about issues having a direct impact on their lives. On March 24th over 120 IL staff, advocates, and youth advocates (including 10 from Options area) converged on the Capitol for IL Days legislative visits. It was a quiet day at the capitol as the Legislature had very recently taken a recess. This gave advocates time to sit with legislative aides and discuss significant issues for people with disabilities in our state. The annual activity is very important because it has allowed us to establish relationships with many of our Legislators. More on page 3.

In addition, Options hosted Governor Scott Walker on March 22 to sign 3 bills, all related to dementia. More can be found on page 5. The basis and purpose of these Assembly bills can also be found at the following website. http://walker.wi.gov/newsroom/press-release/governor-scott-walker-signs-three-bills-law-2

And last, more information on the changes to Wisconsin’s long term care system is beginning to emerge. The Department of Health Services is working with stakeholders on Family Care/IRIS 2.0. Look on page 4 for more details.
Upcoming Events

Options has several upcoming events we want you to know about:

Third Annual Youth Transition Conference will be held on April 20, 2016 at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Conference Center, 1 N Main Street, Oshkosh WI. Any high school student with a disability is welcome at this conference. Youth will be able to attend sessions in their interest areas and have opportunities to network with various youth from other schools. Examples of topic sessions include self-advocacy, health and wellness, college information, and job and employability skills. Youth with disabilities will be presenting in all the sessions. Cost: is $20.00 per attendee which includes lunch. For more information or to register contact Jessica Sinor-Vanne, CESA 6, at 920-236-0514 or email jsinorvanne@cesa6.org.

A Free Wheelchair Wash and Health Fair will be held at NuMotion, 920 N Westhill Blvd, in Appleton on Friday, May 6, from 11 am—5 pm. Come and get your wheelchair or scooter cleaned and inspected. There will be door prizes, community resources and wellness booths. Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Registration is appreciated. To register, please call Making the Ride Happen at 920-225-1719. Hope to see you there!

The Wash is sponsored by: Disabled Citizens Inc, Easter Seals Disability Services, Johnny B, Lutheran Social Services, Making the Ride Happen, MindWorks, NuMotion, Options for Independent Living, and St. Elizabeth Hospital.

Free Gardening Seminar for People with Disabilities and Those Who are Aging - Monday May 9th and Monday May 16th. There will be 2 sessions from 10:30 am -12:00 noon. Each session will cover different topics. The sessions will be held at Options for Independent Living, 555 Country Club Road, Green Bay. The speaker will be Veronica Flowers, OTR/L Instructor-Academic Fieldwork Coordinator Fox Valley Technical College OTA Program. Join Veronica and learn the tips and tools to make gardening easy, accessible, and available to you. A reservation is required so please call Barb at 888-465-1515, ext. 145. Reservation deadline is Monday, May 2.

Find Options on facebook!!

Options for Independent Living can be found on “facebook.” Check it out for the latest happenings, news, advocacy updates, information, etc. Then go ahead and like us on “facebook.”
Consumer Spotlight

By Alice—Options for Independent Living was my “go to” when Mother was diagnosed with Dementia. Mother wanted to remain in her home, I wanted to support her needs. Mother’s residence of 65 years required modifications to keep her safe. Options for Independent Living assisted me in determining where modifications were necessary to keep her safe. A walk in shower was constructed with no barriers and the ability to “roll in and out” of the unit if a walker or wheelchair becomes necessary. The bathroom was enlarged to accommodate assistance by another person, if necessary. All door openings were widened to 36”. The existing laundry was located in the basement. A closet was converted in a bedroom to bring the washer & dryer to the main level at wheelchair accessible height. The project required professional guidance provided by Options for Independent Living. There were so very many details that I would not have come to conclude on my own.

The project was carefully designed by consulting with Steve LaFrombois, Rehabilitation Technology Specialist with Options for Independent Living. Funding for the modifications came from Options HOME program and IRIS. Steve, myself & my mother met with various contractors to determine the best way to accomplishing the necessary modifications. The local contracted construction company accomplished all modifications, to detail, in a timely manner. The communication between Options, myself & the contractors was frequent. Visitation to the home by Options was periodic throughout the process to manage all details of the work. In completion of the home modifications, Mother will be able to remain in her home independent & safe. I have great respect for the professionalism of Options for Independent Living as an organization in all they have done for Mother & myself.

Independent Living Center Staff and Advocates Gather in Madison for IL Days

On March 23rd and 24th, over 120 Independent Living Center staff, Independent Living Council of WI members, and youth advocates from across the state gathered in Madison to attend Independent Living Days. This is an annual advocacy event for the ILC’s. The first day was training on topics such as coordinated transportation systems, housing, assistive technology and memory loss, what’s new in Apps for mental health, the new Voter ID law and much more. Day two staff and advocates spent the day at the Capitol talking with their legislators/aides on topics that are important for people with disabilities to remain independent, such Family Care 2.0, IRIS, and transportation.
Want to Get Involved in Legislative Advocacy?  
Join Act Now!

Justin Dart, considered the father of the Americans with Disabilities Act, is quoted as saying “Get into politics as if your life depends on it. It does!” In an effort to gather advocates together on disability related issues, Options has a strong and active legislative advocacy network called Act Now. Individuals in the network receive, via email or mail, legislative alerts and updates on issues impacting people with disabilities. When an alert or update is received, the individual is encouraged to pursue the issue by contacting their area legislator.

Contacting your legislator about issues that may affect you, or someone you know, is important. Your legislator wants to hear first hand how legislation being considered can impact your life positively or negatively. It helps in their decision making. Joining Act Now will assist you in those efforts. This network will educate you on the issues and help you to advocate more effectively. And the more people in the network, the greater the impact.

If you are interested in joining Act Now, contact Sandy Popp at Options (920) 393-1043 or toll-free at (888) 465-1515, ext. 179. Remember, your voice can make a difference!

Door County “People First” Chapter

If you are looking for a disability related advocacy group in Door County, try People First of Door County. Meetings are held at Bay View Terrace Community Room every 3rd Tuesday of the month from 4:15- 5:15, but typically can go later if needed. For more information please contact Melissa Wolfe 920-495-0690 or email curlysbae90@charter.net

Update on Family Care 2.0

The Department of Health Services (DHS) recently released its final “Concept Paper” on the revision of Wisconsin’s long term care system. Stakeholders have been involved with DHS in crafting the concept paper and will continue to work with DHS to insure the new long term care system will provide the services people with disabilities require to stay independent and safe. The next step is approval of the concept paper by the Joint Committee on Finance. Once the approval is received, DHS will then request a waiver from the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services to implement the changes. There is still a long road ahead before any changes will be implemented, and stakeholders will remain active with DHS in the process. If you would like to view the concept paper you can go online to: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycareiris2/index.htm . DHS has also released a “Frequently Asked Questions” page regarding the changes. This can be accessed online at: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/familycareiris2/paper-faq.htm. If you would like a hard copy of either document please contact Sandy Popp at 888-465-1515, ext. 179.
Assistive Technology Program for People with Dementia—AT Home with Dementia

The AT Home with Dementia program started two years ago as a collaborative effort among the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Brown County (ADRC), Curative Connections, and Options for Independent Living. The AT Home program provides in-home assessments for families who are caring for someone with dementia in an effort to provide assistance to the caretaker and improve home safety for the person with dementia. It is also designed to assess the person with dementia and see where improvements can be made in their overall well-being.

Specialists go into the home and discuss with the family specific concerns or issues. Each of the Specialists share samples of assistive technology that may be beneficial. It is important to note that all equipment can be tried out for a period of time to see if it is helpful. If the equipment is found helpful, the Specialists can assist the family with ordering the equipment and find funding if necessary. Many of the items can be put into use immediately and are quite inexpensive, while others may need to be ordered or are more high tech.

Unfortunately, the AT Home with Dementia program is coming to an end on June 30th. But there is still time to request an assessment. Please contact (920) 593–3521 for more information.

Funding for this program was provided through a grant from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership of the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation, including the U.S. Venture Open Fund for Basic Needs, the J.J. Keller Foundation, and donors of the Community Foundation.

Governor Walker Signs Three Dementia Care related bills into law at Options

On March 22, Governor Walker came to Options to sign three Dementia Care related bills into law. The Bills are numbered AB786, AB787, and AB790. AB786 works to help counties create better response plans for people with dementia who experience a crisis. AB787 provides $1 million of additional funding for respite care that is distributed to all 72 Wisconsin counties under the Alzheimer’s Family and Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP). AB790 provides $250,000 in General Purpose Revenue (GPR) for the Department of Health Services (DHS) to award grants to counties or regions to provide training for mobile crisis teams to better respond to people experiencing dementia-related crises. All three bills were passed uncontested with bi-partisan support.
Did you know Options has a LEND Program for durable medical equipment?

Options for Independent Living has a loan equipment network distribution (LEND) which loans donated durable medical equipment such as canes, crutches, wheelchairs, bath benches, commodes, etc., to people without medical insurance coverage for such items. The donations come to Options from people in the community who no longer have a need for the equipment.

Our LEND Program served over 713 people last year giving out 976 pieces of equipment for short–term and long–term use. The numbers show the need in our community is great. We especially receive requests for manual wheelchairs, bath benches, transfer tub benches, and lift chairs. If you have durable medical equipment in good working condition you are no longer in need of, consider donating the items to Options LEND Program. You will be happy you did! You can contact Barb at Options, 888-465-1515, with any questions.

Options has HOME funds for Home Accessibility, Rehabilitation, or Repair

Options for Independent Living, Inc. has received federal funding through the State of Wisconsin Department of Administration, Division of Housing to administer the HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME Loan Program). The HOME Loan Program provides deferred no payment and no interest loans to low or moderate income persons with a disability and those who are older for the purpose of making accessibility improvements and general home improvements or repairs to their single family home. The loan must be paid back when the property is sold, transferred or ceases to be the borrower’s principal place of residence.

Types of projects include (but not limited to) ramp construction, bathroom, kitchen and bedroom modifications, along with general housing rehabilitation and repairs. The counties served by this program include Brown (outside Green Bay city limits), Calumet, Door, Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, Marquette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Sheboygan, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago Counties. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements to be considered for a loan. For more information contact Steve LaFrombois at Options, 920-490-0500 or toll-free at 1-888-465-1515, ext. 122.
Spring/Summer Recreation

**WI State Parks** - There is so much to do and enjoy in our state parks, the following is just a sample. There are accessible cabins and rustic camping sites for the camping enthusiast. There are rustic cabins located at Copper Falls and Blue Mound state parks as well as larger cabins with more amenities at Mirror Lake, Buckhorn, Harrington Beach, High Cliff, Kohler-Andrae, and Potawatomi state parks, Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit, and the Richard Bong State Recreation Area. These cabins are available only to people with disabilities and their guests and must be reserved ahead of time. Cabins fill up quickly so make your reservations early to take advantage of the wonderful accessible camping opportunities.

WI State Parks also have adaptive equipment that can be used to enjoy the parks. For individuals with mobility disabilities, they now offer a unique way to experience the outdoors. **Buckhorn**, **Council Grounds**, **Devil's Lake**, **Mirror Lake**, and **Perrot** state parks all have kayaks available equipped with a number of adaptive devices.

Adapted kayak features adjustable outriggers and a raised back with extra side supports. Most noticeable are the outriggers near the back of the kayak. Able to adjust to four different widths depending on the user's level of function, these provide incredible stability on the water. A raised back with side supports offer the user a comfortable and secure seat while paddling. Not only is this adjustable as well, but parts of it can be removed altogether for individuals with greater upper-body function. Lastly, the paddle is equipped with hand braces that make paddling easier for individuals with limited grip. These adapted kayaks are available just for people with disabilities. Whether you were a paddler prior to a disability or have never had an opportunity to get out on the water in a kayak due to physical limitations, we highly encourage you to get to one of these four state parks to give it a try.

The Department of Natural Resources also has many accessible piers for fishing and boat access throughout WI. There are also accessible hiking trails. All of this allows people with disabilities to enjoy the outdoors. So much to do and so little time!

For more information on the accessible cabins, campsites, adaptive equipment, piers or hiking trails contact Anthonette Gilpatrick (608) 266-2181 and (608) 267-2752 TTY or toll-free at (888) 936-7463. You can also check out the website at: [http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/openoutdoors/](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/openoutdoors/).
Tech Closet News

*Options* has a technology closet filled with items that people can try-out before they purchase them. *Options* AT Specialist can assess an individual with a disability to determine the role assistive technology can play in achieving greater independence. Below are a couple items from our tech closet. If you would like more information on the items below or how assistive technology can help you in your goal of independence, contact Calvin Richtig, *Options* AT Specialist, at 920-490-8270, ext.130 or toll-free at 888-465-1515, ext.130.

**LEVO G2 Book/Tablet Holder Floor Stand**

This breakthrough book holder adjusts so you can read in a bed, a recliner, standing at a kitchen counter, or wherever you desire to read in hands-free comfort. The adjustable arm positions the book at perfect eye level and angle. No more fatigued arms and back. Also available as a tablet holder for iPad, Android tablets or e-readers. Great for individuals who have neck pain, range of motion limitations or individuals who are working from a reclined position or lying in bed.

**Exercise ball desk chair**

There has been much discussion regarding swapping out a desk chair for an exercise (yoga) ball. There have been very mixed reviews regarding the results and medical evidence as to whether it helps or creates unnecessary fatigue. Many studies have shown it to help in the areas of back pain due to posture, muscle tone due to the contractions of the core, hip and leg muscles required to maintain balance, and mental focus and stimulation especially with individuals with ADHD or just plain “fidgety”.
Support Groups Meeting at Options

Options for Independent Living hosts several support group meetings:

CARE Café – “A place for adults on the spectrum.” This is a social/support group for adults 18 and over on the autism spectrum. Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Friday from 6-8 pm at Options. The meetings are free. For more information contact CARE Café on facebook or email mortongbay@aol.com or jjmorton@spectrumblue.net. You can also request that you be added to their email roster which will include updates on meeting plans and location, any meeting changes, etc.

Epilepsy Support Group – Meetings are held at Options every 1st Wednesday of the month from 6:30 – 8 pm. For more information contact Ann Hubbard toll-free at 1-800-693-2287 or direct at 715-341-5811 or email her at ahubbard@epilepsywisconsin.org.

ALS Support Group - Meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Options from 6 pm—8 pm. For more information contact Carolynne Younk, MS, Care Service Coordinator for ALS Association WI Chapter Satellite office in Green Bay. Contact number is 920-288-7095.

NEW Tourette Syndrome Support Group - Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month from noon to 2:00 p.m. at Options. Open to all who are interested in learning more about Tourette Syndrome (TS). For more information, please contact Patti Bani at (920) 217-0032 or kbani@new.rr.com.

MDA Parent and Family Caregiver Support Group of Children Living with Muscle Disease Meetings are held at Options every third Thursday from 6:00 P.M. – 7:30 P.M. For more information, please contact Sarah Arndt at the Muscular Dystrophy Association at sarndt@mdausa.org or 920-499-45

How did Options staff and services make a difference in your life?

Below are the responses to this satisfaction survey question from residents with disabilities in Options 17 county area who utilized our services in 2014 – 15.

- Enlighten me with detailed information about finances, government benefits and independence;
- It started the process of our bath remodel;
- Taught my daughter how to do living skills. She would not take order or opinions from me;
- Provided equipment which allows me to work from home;
- Helped me learn hygiene & cleaning skills.
Wisconsin WisLoan Program

WisLoan is a state-wide alternative loan program helping Wisconsin residents with a disability to purchase assistive technology that assists them in living more independently and productively. Any Wisconsin resident with a disability over the age of 18 in need of assistive technology or home modifications is eligible to apply for a loan.

Some examples of assistive technology include wheelchairs, hearing aids, CCTV’s, and vehicles with modifications. In addition, loans have been approved for home modifications such as ramp construction and roll-in showers. Loan amounts range from $500.00 to $50,000.00, but the actual loan amount will depend on the items purchased and ability to repay.

Current interest rate on a WisLoan is 6.5%. If you have bad credit, including bankruptcy, your application will still be considered. The focus is on the ability to make monthly payments to pay back the loan. For more information or to apply for WisLoan call Options at 920-490-0500 or toll-free at 1-888-465-1515.

WisLoan is a federally-funded project of the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation, and a cooperative service of the WI Dept. of Health and Family Services, IndependenceFirst, and BMO Harris Bank.

Telework Loan Program

The Wisconsin Telework program is a statewide, alternative loan program that allows Wisconsin residents with disabilities to purchase computers and other equipment needed to work from home or from other remotes sites away from the office, such as work on the road or at a telework center. Loan funds can be used to purchase equipment, training to use equipment, extended warranties, and cost of maintenance and repairs.

You can apply for the amount you need, but actual loan amounts will depend on the item purchased and your ability to repay the loan. The interest rate is 6.5%. Term length depends on the amount of the loan and the item purchased. For more information contact the staff at Options for Independent Living at 920-490-0500 or toll-free at 1-888-465-1515.

This program is made possible through a grant from Rehabilitative Services Administration and authorized by section (303)b of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and implemented by subsequent program regulation 34 C F R Part 373. The Department of Workforce Development-Division of Rehabilitation received the grant and provides programmatic and fiscal oversight. IndependenceFirst, a community based and consumer-controlled independent living center based in Milwaukee, administers the program in partnership with BMO Harris Bank and WI Independent Living Centers.
Options Medicaid Personal Care Program

Options offers a Personal Care Program for people with permanent physical disabilities who are: Medicaid beneficiaries, medically stable, require personal care services, and have identified an individual to provide personal care.

The program is consumer directed and includes personal care assistance with: bathing, dressing/undressing, prosthetics, grooming, eating, mobility in home, toileting, transferring, and incidental services (laundry, light housekeeping, meal prep). The consumer must agree to responsibly use personal care services and have back-up support available as needed. Options does not provide emergency or back-up personal care services.

Consumers utilizing Options Personal Care Program must have chosen an individual who they are interested in hiring. The Personal Care Worker (PCW) candidate must be at least 18 years old and, ideally, be trained in the skill(s) necessary to provide cares to the consumer. The PCW can not be a parent/guardian of a minor child or a spouse.

If you have a referral or would like more information on Options Personal Care Program please contact Maia Xiong, HR Manager/Personal Care Program, at 920-490-8270 ext. 114 or toll-free at 888-465-1515, ext. 114 or e-mail at maiax@optionsil.org.

CenterPoint Going Green!

Just like trying to reuse durable medical equipment, Options tries to be environmentally friendly as much as possible. Therefore, we would like your help. Options publishes CenterPoint three times a year. We mail out approximately 2,500 editions each time. CenterPoint is now available in electronic form, PDF and Word text formats, through Options website at www.optionsil.com. You can also sign up to receive an email with the newsletter attachments. Go to the website Home page, scroll down and click on Newsletter Sign-up tab on the bottom left. Once you sign up, you will receive the newsletter via an email with a PDF and a Word Text attachment. Help us save the cost of paper, printing and postage by signing up today! Thank you!
For Sale Items

1996 Ford Econoline 150 Full size van with power lift that stows under van. Lift is only 5 years old. Van has 116,555 miles. Full bench seat in back. Driver and passenger captain seats. Passenger seat can be removed so person can ride up front, with tiedowns included. Asking $8000 or best offer. Contact Kathy at 469-2627 or email kittyk1950@aol.com. Green Bay

Duralife shower chair on wheels. Easy to move. Includes seatbelt. 50.00 or best offer; Commode made out of steel, adjustable height, 600# weight limit, asking $35; Hospital bedside table, raises and lowers, 20.00 or best offer; Full Size Homecare Heavy Duty Electric Hospital Bed, Tuffcare T500 Series, 1000 lb limit. Bedrails, mattress and remote included. Asking $1200.00 or best offer; Invacare TDX series - SI Electric Wheelchair with gel cushion, larger electric chair, 4 years old, $1200 or best offer. Contact Kathy at 469-2627 or email kittyk1950@aol.com. Green Bay

CCTV with stand on wheels - Optelec ClearView + Color Reader with 19" Ultra Flexible Arm. Ideal for extended reading and writing. Bought new $2595.00. Will sell for $1100 with stand or negotiable. Contact Bob at 920-465-8350. Green Bay

Hamar hitch mount mobility scooter lift. Can be placed on the back of a vehicle with a trailer hitch. No lifting of scooter needed. Asking $400. Contact 920-562-0017 De Pere

Acorn brand stair lift. Only got a few weeks' worth of use and now is not needed. Paid $3000. Would like $1500 but would negotiate. Will need to have someone disassemble and reassemble. Contact 920-209-4241. Appleton

Bariactric Rollator Walker—Has a seat and basket. Hold up to 250 lbs. Hardly used. Asking $50 Contact Ivan at 920-632-7097. De Pere

Other Used Medical Equipment Resources

Options website has a classified tab where you may find other items listed that are not in the newsletter so check it out at www.optionsil.com. If you do not have access to the internet and want a print out of the website’s for sale list, contact Barb at Options, 888-465-1515, ext 145, and the list will be sent to you. Options also has a LEND closet that contains donated medical equipment for people to use, such as walkers, bath benches, toilet seat risers, crutches, etc. If you do not have medical insurance that will cover these items and are in need of them, please give Barb at Options a call at 888-465-1515, ext 145. We may have what you need in LEND.

IndependenceFirst Mobility Store (Formerly the Wheelchair Recycling Program) - used medical equipment. Call (608) 243-1785 - Madison area or (414) 988-5333 - Greater Milwaukee area. Website: http://ifmobility.mcservices.com/
**Options for Independent Living Inc.**

**VISION STATEMENT:** *Options* for Independent Living empowers people with disabilities.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *Options* for Independent Living, serving people with disabilities in 17 counties of Northeast Wisconsin, is the pre- eminent non-profit organization of choice to empower people with disabilities. *Options* provides opportunities, through advocacy and education, for individuals with all disabilities and ages, to actively access their communities, maximize their independence, and connect with the resources and funding available to them.

### Staff Directory

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TTY 920-490-0600  
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<th>Counties served:</th>
<th>Mark your Calendars!</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>April 20, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Calumet</td>
<td>Third Annual Youth Transition Conference</td>
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<td>Door</td>
<td>Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Conference Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fond du Lac</td>
<td>1 N Main Street  Oshkosh WI</td>
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<td>Green Lake</td>
<td>Friday, May 6</td>
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<td>Kewaunee</td>
<td>Appleton 16th Annual Wheelchair Wash and Health Fair</td>
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<td>Manitowoc</td>
<td>NuMotion  920 N Westhill Blvd Appleton</td>
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<td>Marinette</td>
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<td>Marquette</td>
<td>May 9th and May 16th</td>
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<td>Menominee</td>
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<td>Options for Independent Living</td>
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<td>Shawano</td>
<td>555 Country Club Road, Green Bay WI</td>
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<td>More info on all the above on page 2</td>
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