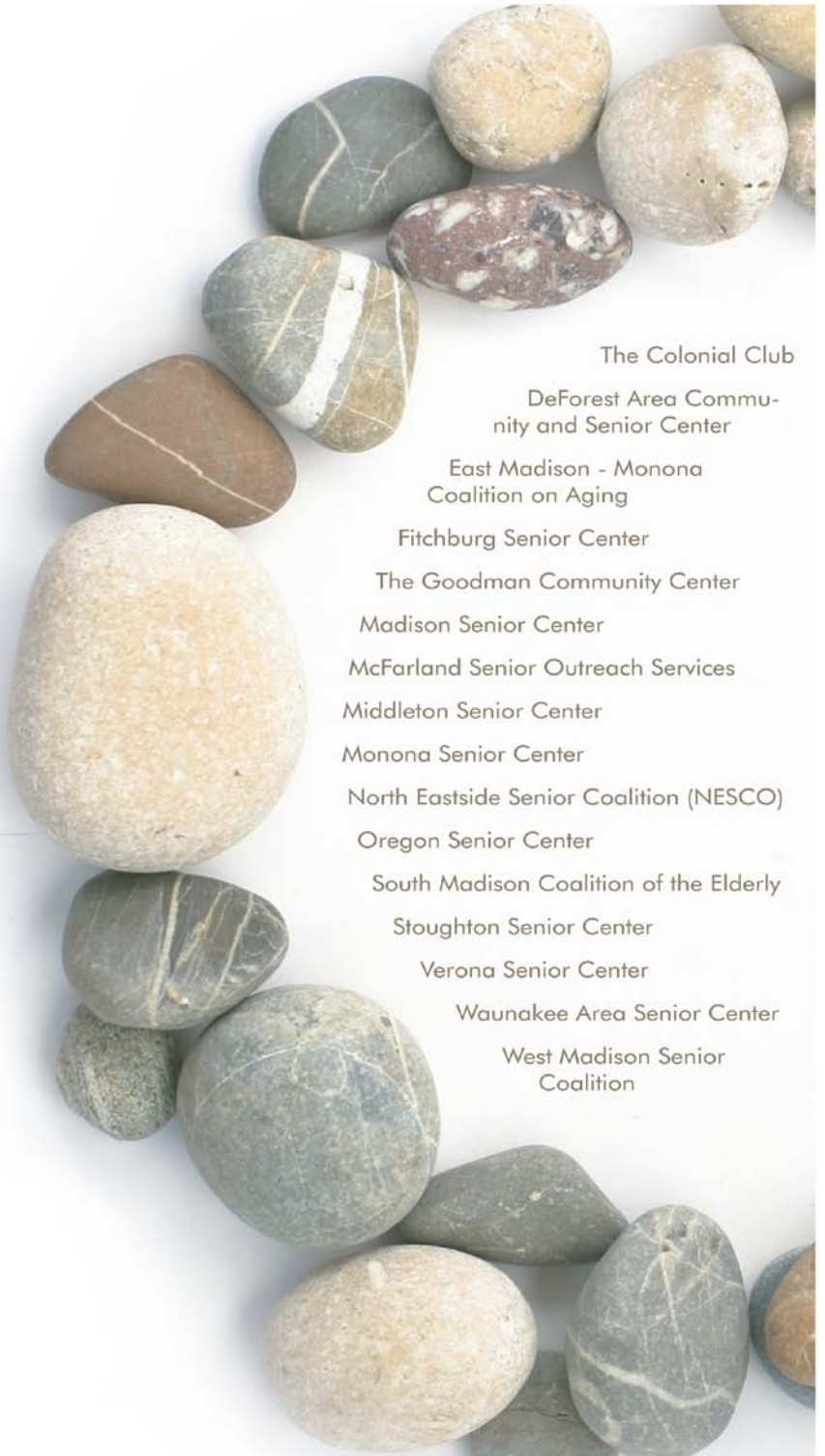


**Report on
Survey
of
Selected
Programs
for
Older
Adults
in the
Greater
Madison
Area**

March 2010



The Colonial Club

DeForest Area Community and Senior Center

East Madison - Monona Coalition on Aging

Fitchburg Senior Center

The Goodman Community Center

Madison Senior Center

McFarland Senior Outreach Services

Middleton Senior Center

Monona Senior Center

North Eastside Senior Coalition (NESCO)

Oregon Senior Center

South Madison Coalition of the Elderly

Stoughton Senior Center

Verona Senior Center

Waunakee Area Senior Center

West Madison Senior Coalition



Madison Senior Center *FOUNDATION*, Inc.

330 West Mifflin • Madison, WI 53703 • 608 266-6581

April 5, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

In May 2007 the Madison Senior Center Foundation received a national *Models of Significant Service* grant to enhance the sophistication of the Senior Center volunteer program. Selected by the National Council on Aging, *RespectAbility* initiative, we were the only senior center of 12 non-profit grantees chosen in the United States. Funded through the auspices of Atlantic Philanthropies, the grant allowed the Madison Senior Center to learn more about recruiting, training, and engaging professional volunteers who are 50 years old or better.

A focus group of Madison-area community leaders in the selected 50+ professional population provided important guidance, highlighting 'boomer' perceptions about service. All agency volunteers were re-enrolled with expanded inquiries about their education and careers to more skillfully match them to appropriate responsibilities. Leadership opportunities were identified and developed for new consultant roles. Key initiatives were: 1) exploring the use of stipends for those assuming management level positions; and 2) utilizing self-directed teams of senior adults to complete internal and external organizational projects.

This report comes from a self-directed team of adults, ranging from 65 to 80 years of age. They are a diverse group with exceptional credentials. The Team includes a municipal department director, a real estate account executive, a university assistant vice-chancellor, an attorney from state government, an educator, a senior center council member, and a board member of a neighborhood planning council. Some are retired; some continue to work. All are steadfast community leaders, serving in leadership capacities with non-profit organizations.

The Team offers readers extensive interviews with 16 selected county senior organizations and presents eight important recommendations that will impact policy and program discussions. We are honored and grateful that they have committed to this project, which not only serves the interests of the Madison Senior Center, but serves our community and its residents, especially those who are older or hope to be. On behalf of the Madison Senior Center Foundation, I am pleased to present this report for your edification and action.

Sincerely yours,

Christine K. Beatty
Executive Director



Madison Senior Center *Foundation, Inc.*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Program Development Team sincerely thanks the survey participants for their time and contributions to the success of the project. The information, site visits and interviews were essential to the process of determining the breadth and depth of existing senior programs in the Greater Madison Area. Without the participation of so many, the Program Development team would not have been able to carry out their objectives: to inventory and map the existing social/recreational program for older adults in our area; to identify beneficial, useful or needed programs: and to create a report outlining the findings of the team.

In sharing the report, it is our hope that our findings and recommendations will guide future program development by the Madison Senior Center as well as impact the efforts of many area organizations that are so vital in serving our older adults.

With grateful appreciation we acknowledge the participants and organizations:

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Background

The Madison Senior Center (MSC) was one of twelve community based organizations (and the only senior center) to receive a two-year \$40,000 grant from the National Council on Aging (NCOA), Washington DC. The grant was competitively awarded by NCOA's *RespectAbility* Initiative. Called the Models of Significant Service, it was designed to increase the civic engagement of 50+ professional volunteers in community-based organizations. The grant provided support for MSC to enhance its volunteer program and explore two important concepts: the use of cash stipends for volunteer service; and the use of self-directed teams of senior adult volunteers.

Three self-directed teams were developed during the grant period of May 2007-May 2009. MSC also received a subsequent grant for the dissemination of the ideas, strategies and techniques developed during the grant period ending January 2010.

The Program Development Team was named by MSC in March 2009 to identify and evaluate physical sites and existing programs for senior adult programming in the Greater Madison Area. The Program Development Team was responsible for facilitating a systematic and comprehensive approach to identifying potential locations, partners and needs for adult programs and activities, especially geared to those who are retired and/or 50+.

Prior to the grant, findings from a city-wide reorganization of human services recommended a senior adult program audit or "mapping" be undertaken to determine if senior adult social and/or recreational programming is available in all City of Madison areas. A charge of the Program Development Team was to determine the extent of service gaps or the existence of overlaps, and identify opportunities to expand and/or enhance MSC programming. The team worked under the supervision of Christine Beatty, Director of the Madison Senior Center, and with the assigned involvement of the Senior Center Program and Volunteer Coordinators.

The Program Development Team was tasked to do the following:

- Identify areas and neighborhoods with existing senior adult activities and programs with a listing of existing programs and contact information of key leaders.
- Detail the dimensions and capabilities of physical space and equipment.
- Summarize the level (or anticipated level) of senior adult programming, its frequency and scope.
- Note the opportunities to deliver adult programs in suitable spaces (areas where physical spaces must be developed).
- Make recommendations for future program activities.

The Program Development Team met with Christine Beatty and Rick Orton, MSC Volunteer Coordinator, for an initial informational meeting on April 3, 2009. This was followed by an organizational meeting on April 30, 2009, with Karl van Lith, Coordinator, Office of Training & Organizational Development, City of Madison.

On May 29, 2009, the Program Development Team met with Barb Thoni, Manager, Dane County Area Agency on Aging, Inc., and Hooyoung You, United Way of Dane County, Inc. The panel provided an overview of community resources impacting senior adult programming and services in the Greater Madison Area.

In the intervening months and meetings, the Program Development Team functioned as a self-directed team of individuals, working together to complete the objectives of the grant and other agreed upon tasks, and drew from the background, education, experiences and abilities of each member. As a volunteer leadership team, we are proud of our service and accomplishment. We are pleased to report our findings and recommendations in the ***Report on Programs and Services for Older Adults in the Greater Madison Area***, completed February 2010.

Dolores (D) Kester
Chair
Program Development Team

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Survey Process

The Program Development Team was charged with identifying and evaluating sites and existing programs for senior adult programming in the Greater Madison Area. Team members began with a review of available literature and on-line information on area senior centers and programming. In the process, the Team found there was no central website or on-line resource that provided information on all senior facilities and programming in Dane County. The Team was challenged to locate websites for some centers and found that content varied from one website to another. Additional insight into senior services was provided by representatives from United Way and the Dane County Area Agency on Aging.

After reviewing the background information, the Program Development Team developed a set of questions which provided the framework for the Survey Interview tool. The goal was to provide a standardized overview of programming available in a representative sample of senior organizations in Dane County. Interview questions focused on organizational structure, geographical service areas, programming, outreach and marketing, and future plans and needs. Inquiry regarding funding, diversity, unique and successful programming, and community outreach were important subsets of these categories.

The Team also developed a Protocol for the Survey process. It identified key steps in the process that included a letter of introduction which would precede agency contact by Team members. Since it was not possible to survey all senior organizations in Dane County, the Team identified 16 sites in Madison and the surrounding area for inclusion in the study.

The Program Development Team divided into interview teams to facilitate the site visits and summarize the resulting information. A “trial run” of the survey process was initially conducted with Christine Beatty, Executive Director of the Madison Senior Center.

The Interview Survey Protocol, Interview Questionnaire and Interview Visit Summaries are attached to this report.

Overview of Survey Findings

Members of the Program Development Team represented varying levels of familiarity and experience with senior centers, yet each site visit provided new insight into the many services and programs available for older adults in Dane County. The Team has the utmost respect and appreciation for all of the executive directors and staff members who assisted with the surveys. Without exception, they represent a highly qualified and dedicated group of individuals with a strong commitment to serving our seniors. They reflect energy, sincerity and true passion for their work. Their willingness to share feelings, attitudes, successes and shortcomings, was an inspiration to the Team.

Earning accreditation at either the state or national level reflects a commitment to meet the mission of the center and to achieve excellence and professionalism in service. Four centers included in the survey – Madison Senior Center, Middleton Senior Center, Stoughton Area Senior Center and the North Eastside Senior Coalition (NESCO) -- have earned national accreditation through the National Institute of Senior Centers, a unit of the National Council on Aging. This is an admirable accomplishment considering only five senior centers in Wisconsin have earned this recognition. Additionally, eight of the 16 surveyed centers have earned state accreditation through the Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers. The Team congratulates and commends all of the accredited centers.

Although the site visits provided only a glimpse of each geographic service area, Team members found a strong sense of *community* at each center. Whether serving an entire city or village, rural areas or neighborhoods in Madison, the centers create a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere for seniors. They provide needed services such as Case Management, congregate meal sites, home chores and support groups, as well as a full complement of social and educational programming. Centers correctly place emphasis on delivering *local* service and programming. To the extent funds are available and scheduling is feasible, transportation is a high priority in achieving local service delivery. Centers, however, are challenged to meet current transportation needs and this will likely be a bigger issue in the future. The transportation issue is further complicated by the expectation and need to provide “door-through-door” service for older seniors or individuals with disabilities whether physical, neurological or cognitive.

The Team found that executive directors and their staff are stretched thin, often wear several hats, and are continually challenged by shrinking budgets and resources, yet they remain optimistically creative and innovative. Directors and their staff members have developed a variety of partnerships and collaborations that both enhance and expand programs and services at their sites. They are extremely responsive to the needs and interests of their users and offer new and pilot programming whenever it fits within the constraints of their budgets and available space. Survey summaries detail programming and services at each center and are attached for the convenience of the reader.

Most centers have embraced technology by expanding their websites, doing more online marketing, and offering computer training. Many centers also provide electronic newsletters, brochures, calendars and annual reports. Bilingual staff members and cultural diversity programs increase multi-ethnic participation and visibility, although these services are not available at all sites.

Overall, the Program Development Team found the surveyed centers are providing very quality, basic programming and services for a user group largely comprised of *older* seniors and individuals with disabilities. Many centers have developed innovative and highly successful intergenerational programming, but no respondents identified a formalized marketing plan to attract younger seniors or new users who are more active, mobile and fit. Nor are they prepared for the impact these new users will likely have on programs and services. Although the Team identifies Boomers as the target group for purposes of this report, general marketing strategy should focus on all prospective users in the 50+ population. The Team also found that few of the centers are addressing cultural diversity despite the fact ethnic populations are growing everywhere, including Madison and the larger surrounding communities. Senior services, programming, staff, volunteers and users must reflect the changing populations of our communities and neighborhoods – younger, more active, and more diverse.

The lack of planning to address the changing ethnicity of our population and to attract a wider spectrum of potential users, including younger seniors, influenced the Project Development Team's conclusions. The Team put considerable time, effort and thought into making their recommendations but also recognizes our findings are limited to the number of centers surveyed.

The Program Development Team presents the following recommendations to not only reflect our findings but also to ensure the ongoing ability of our senior centers to attract and service a younger and more diverse group of users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Funding Recommendation

The objective of any non-profit or municipal organization is to provide needed services to the community. In order to meet this mission, these organizations share a common but critical challenge: funding. Nearly all of the survey respondents identified funding as their top concern for the future.

Although sources vary among the survey respondents, all receive government funding of some type. This is mainly driven by the jurisdiction(s) of the geographical service area and the specific governing structure of the organization. The Madison Senior Center, for example, is a City of Madison agency under the Department of Planning and Development. Approximately 90% of their budget is covered by the City of Madison. Several of the responding municipal centers have similar funding.

Providers also receive funding from Dane County Health and Human Services and United Way. Due to the current economy and budget tightening, most have been even more challenged to hold the line on expenses. Providers look at the need for services while funders stipulate the conditions under which the services are delivered. This creates a dependent relationship between the two, and, unfortunately, minimizes input from the actual users. Funding and services must be carefully balanced to maximize return on the investment and deliver the desired outcome for all participants.

Given the current economy and overall budget cuts by government agencies, non-profit and municipal organizations must strive just to maintain current sources of funding. Traditional funding sources, however, are likely to continue to make budget cuts that jeopardize senior services and programs. The more this funding is reduced, the greater the need for organizations to change their approach and attitude in finding new or alternate funding sources.

The Program Development Team recognizes the funding dilemma, and suggests the following measures be considered to reduce costs and develop new resources:

- Develop a centralized purchasing function where applicable to lower costs for supplies and services
- Create an “employee pool” where applicable to negotiate better rates for employee benefits
- Increase grants through more innovative and creative applications and coordinate applications between organizations to create alliance of applicants
- Seek more corporate partnerships to enhance contributions through sponsorships, donations, service exchanges, in-kind services, etc.
- Maximize use of volunteer time, talent and expertise to offset staff time and cost of outside paid services
- Increase recruitment of volunteers, particularly Boomers and younger seniors, and improve coordination of volunteers

- Maximize volunteer networking ability and corporate contacts to attract money and resources
- Train and reassure staff to work more effectively with new volunteers and their skill sets
- Increase “fee for service” for programs/services wherever possible
- Actively pursue new sources of funding by asking and keeping the need before the public -- best done through strong identification or “branding”

Clearly, volunteers – human capital -- represent one of the most viable non-monetary resources to offset funding shortfalls. Tapping new volunteers, i.e., Boomers, will require an aggressive recruiting plan, shared county-wide database. Customized opportunities for using new talents and skills, and training staff to more effectively work with the new caliber of volunteers.

The Program Development Team understands, too, that change is difficult, but also finds this to be an underlying factor for all recommendations in this report. The ability to develop new monetary or non-monetary resources will require careful evaluation of current models and attitudes. Both structure and attitude can limit the successful growth of any non-profit or municipal organization.

Cooperation and Collaboration Recommendation

Survey results show that senior organizations throughout Dane County depend on strong partnerships to deliver a variety of programs and services. Funding sources are partners. Respondents identified partnerships with the University of Wisconsin, MATC, PLATO and Edgewood College that facilitate educational programming. Partnerships with local school districts, park and recreational departments, Cub Scouts and Brownies, provide intergenerational programs and activities. Business partnerships offer a variety of in-kind services as well as other financial support.

Senior centers collaborate with churches, libraries, police departments and housing communities within their geographical service areas. These relationships are developed through formal agreements detailing the service terms, or more informal arrangements to work together to provide community assistance. Survey respondents further reported collaborations with service organizations such as the American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, Rotary and Veterans groups. These partners generally assist with special events and fundraising.

Area senior organizations create a number of agreements in which they provide only the rental space. This is not only a way to offset their operating budgets, but also a means to offer high-level programming from outside sources, such as educational classes.

Although there is some partnering between organizations surveyed, the Program Development Team found limited examples. The most noted collaborations are Case Management and nutrition programs. Several respondents mentioned making referrals to NESCO's cultural diversity programs for African Americans and Latinos. NESCO is the only focal point in Dane County with Spanish-speaking case workers and they offer a special support program for Latino grandparents raising grandchildren, facilitated through grant funding.

The Program Development Team recommends further collaboration between organizations wherever possible. Surveyed centers described teaming for travel trips to reduce costs and ensure participation. They could consider more collaboration for services, programs, supplies, space and more. There is an apparent need for additional collaboration and standardized efficiency, particularly in areas that extend beyond social programming.

Cooperation and coordination will be key factors for future collaboration. The Program Development Team suggests evaluating the most successful or unique programming offered by area organizations. Rather than imitating those programs, consideration could be given to jointly offering the programs. The Program Development Team sensed "friendly competition" between organizations but there is an ongoing need to provide senior services and programming for a very diverse group of users. A number of centers also noted not having available space to increase programs and services.

Cooperation and coordination could extend to evaluating staffing, programs and services throughout Dane County and objectively focusing on overlaps, gaps and duplication. It is also a well known fact that users migrate from center to center, picking and choosing between locations, nutrition sites and social offerings. This will continue and any enforced geographic boundaries should be eliminated wherever possible.

The Program Development Team did find a situation through the Fitchburg Senior Center in which seniors living within immediate proximity of their facility were unable to use all services and programs. They were referred to NESCO, some distance away. There are funding issues that must be considered in providing programs and services, but this, too, could be viewed with a more “collaborative eye.”

In this report, the Program Development Team details the need for a comprehensive county-wide initiative to reach younger seniors. This is also part of the recommendation for further collaboration between organizations that serve seniors. A county-wide database of volunteers and central website could link all senior organizations, programs and services.

To better determine the diverse interests and needs of users, centers could also partner to conduct surveys and focus groups. All findings and resources would be shared.

There is a need for more collaboration between all providers of senior services and programming, but not an easily resolved one. The Program Development Team acknowledges, too, that it will be difficult to coordinate the variety of funding sources and governing jurisdictions that support senior services and programming in Dane County, but even a small effort to begin the process would be a good start.

Marketing to Boomers: *The Encore Initiative Recommendation*

Anticipation of the first of the Baby Boom generation turning 65 in 2010 has been widely publicized. This shift in age will ripple across the country, creating the largest generation in U.S. history. Boomers will continue to affect everything in American life – work, leisure, consumerism, housing and volunteerism. Their influence will be everywhere and will particularly impact on organizations such as senior centers. Boomers not only represent a huge pool of potential volunteers but they also represent a vast number of prospective new users.

The Program Development Team included a survey question to address outreach and marketing to Boomers: What is your organization doing to attract or address the needs/interests of younger seniors and new users? Most respondents only indicated “they should be doing something about it.”

The Program Development Team recommends creation of a county-wide campaign – *the Encore Initiative* – to market volunteer opportunities to Boomers or anyone in the 50+ population, particularly those nearing retirement but still in the workforce. The Encore Initiative would need the full commitment and participation of all senior and nonprofit organizations, related agencies and services, and funding sources to build new corporate and community partnerships through an innovative and aggressive marketing campaign. The use of more online resources for recruiting and the development of a county-wide volunteer database are other considerations in the Encore Initiative.

The model for the Encore Initiative is drawn from The Maricopa County (Arizona) Next Chapter Initiative as detailed in their final report, July 2008:

“The Next Chapter concept calls on communities to create new institutional approaches or adapt existing ones to help adults make the transition to a new productive life phase by providing support and community connections for ongoing learning, development and contribution to society. The model was based on research that indicates that Americans in the second half of life – regardless of income, educational level, or race – want to:

- Explore options for the next stage of life.
- Retool skills, obtain new training, or pursue educational interests.
- Use their skills and experience in flexible work or service opportunities.
- Make meaningful connections with their peers and their community.”

The Encore Initiative would focus on a similar comprehensive approach to reach 50+ adults while developing a model of inclusiveness that reflects the changing diversity and needs of our population. Just as “The Next Chapter was not designed as a one-size-fits-

all approach,” the Encore Initiative may also have to emerge in different projects or variations of a single theme.

For senior centers to successfully recruit Boomers, rethinking and retooling their organizations with particular focus on their volunteer programs will likely be necessary. The National Council on Aging (NCOA) created the RespectAbility Initiative with a core goal to increase the numbers of older Americans involved in civic engagement. More specifically, Models of Significant Service (MSS) is one of three current efforts to achieve RespectAbility’s goals by working with community-based organizations to develop, test and document new models for volunteerism. (MSC developed three self-directed teams through NCOA’s RespectAbility Initiative and Models of Significant Service.)

Senior centers need to assess their current strategies, structure, resources, technology, partnerships, culture and values as they proceed with plans to attract Boomers. Further, organizations need to consider collaborating with a single plan rather than “going it alone.” The Team’s survey results indicate most centers do not have formalized plans to reach younger seniors. There was no reference to working together or sharing resources to develop a plan.

Changing the image of aging is another consideration in marketing to Boomers. There is no generally accepted term but it will require a “label” that conveys activity and excitement. The concept of retirement is also becoming outdated as Boomers are expected to work longer or start second careers. The Encore Initiative could focus on helping Boomers explore new options to transition their work experience into meaningful volunteer opportunities. Boomers won’t be content to be the “envelope stuffers!”

Given the current economic downturn, many Boomers may not be financially prepared for retirement and are likely to continue working. In this scenario, building corporate partnerships through the Encore Initiative could be the most effective way to engage these younger seniors. Corporate buy-in will be challenging but also necessary for the success of the initiative. A business organization, such as the Chamber of Commerce, willing to support and recommend the Encore Initiative to their membership, could become a key partner in launching the campaign.

Corporate support of volunteerism could start with volunteer fairs or brown bag recruiting sessions and grow to include volunteer release time for pre-retirees and employee volunteer sabbaticals. Building business partnerships can also establish new sources of corporate funding. Companies that support an active volunteer program are more likely to financially support a nonprofit organization or its fund raising efforts.

Volunteer positions will need to be treated more like paid positions with the expectation that both volunteers and volunteer coordinators will be elevated in status. Other considerations for the new volunteers are more flexible and customized volunteer opportunities.

Boomers will challenge the organization, culture and values of senior centers and likely add to the workload of staff. But they also represent a new pool of volunteers with high levels of skill and expertise. They will bring strategy and business ideas from their past or current employment, extensive networking ability, strong corporate ties for fundraising, and high energy.

Other communities have successfully implemented programs like the Encore Initiative, but it requires ongoing planning and commitment. A unified communication strategy that conveys a strong message, consistent logo, taglines, good design elements and talking points needs to be directed at a target audience as one message will not fit all. Branding is the key consideration in making the Encore Initiative a successful marketing program.

Changes in the attitudes and behaviors of senior center leaders, social marketing and Boomers themselves will be difficult and slow. Boomers are ready to lead and the best way to target and reach them may be to let them research, design and deliver the Encore Initiative.

Survey Methods Recommendations

The Program Development Team surveyed respondents to learn how they determine service needs and programming and if they conduct regular user surveys. They found that most organizations provide opportunities for seniors to comment on programs. This information not only provides information for improving the quality of existing programs but also provides information for program enhancement.

Several of the senior centers have included an annual survey questionnaire in their organization newsletters, and others have conducted surveys of individuals who have attended programs or participated in services provided by the agency. NESCO took advantage of a unique opportunity. The center is housed in the Warner Park Community Recreation Center which is also a Madison voting location. NESCO invited individuals who appeared to be 55+ to provide information about preferences for services and programming. As a result, they have added several new programs and extended hours to include some evening hours. The additions of program such as Spanish classes and wine tasting events have been very successful.

All survey respondents expressed concern about attracting new users, and more specifically, reaching a broader age range and more socially and ethnically diverse populations.

The Program Development Team recommends that senior centers consider the use of venues such as focus groups and community-based interview opportunities to reach a wider group of potential users. Outreach efforts should also consider targeting groups for age, race, gender and ethnic populations. New users will likely be drawn from a younger, more active and more ethnically diverse population.

Community-based focus groups can provide a depth of information not currently available to the agencies. Future programs, opportunities for encouraging new members, creative ideas for diversifying programs are just a few of the potential benefits.

Use of existing survey processes such as DaneTrak to obtain feedback across a broader population would provide information for future planning. Engaging this type of community survey process would provide reliable survey methods while not increasing the agency staff work load.

Senior centers could also consider collaborating to conduct surveys or focus groups. This would allow organizations to share the work load, to provide more consistency in the survey process, and to obtain information on a broader basis. It would also provide insight into additional opportunities for collaborative programming and services. Centers already know that many of their current users receive services and participate in programs at multiple locations.

Name Change Recommendation

The ability to offer a broad spectrum of programs and services is primarily driven by funding, but the interests and involvement of local participants, available staff and volunteers, and community support also impact the offerings of senior centers. Organizations need to develop alternate funding sources and they need to develop new programs to continue to attract users, volunteers and community support that better represent today's aging population – more diverse and younger. Specifically, Boomers are the focus.

Boomers are expected to have the same impact on senior centers that they've had on every aspect of society. But unlike the "G.I." generation of World War II or the "silent generation" shaped by the 1950s and 60s, Boomers will change the image of aging. That also means changing the concept of "senior centers." High-energy exercise and fitness classes can join traditional activities like bingo and blood pressure clinics. Center hours could be extended to include evenings and weekends since Boomers are likely to continue working longer and retire later than previous generations. Updated surroundings project a more positive and welcoming image.

Changing the concept of aging includes the debated issue that the name, "senior center," is outdated and will not attract the Boomers. Survey respondents were specifically asked if they think there is a stigma attached to the name "senior center" that may turn off some users. Although the response was mixed, there is warranted concern. Respondents recognize the need to infuse their organizations with new programming, volunteers and users, but are concerned that a name change could be confusing for current users. A "senior center" must be "recognized for what it is."

The Program Development Team recommends program planning to accommodate the Boomers and name changes that represent what the facility does and who it serves, such as Adult Activity Center or Community and Senior Center. It will require an all-inclusive and visionary approach to find the right name and not lessen the focus on the existing older user group who is very comfortable with the brand. All stakeholders should be encouraged to be part of the naming process.

Organizations that have already incorporated "community center" into their titles appear to have an advantage. They are perceived as being more intergenerational and as having stronger ties to local businesses, schools and other community organizations. Their facilities are multi-purpose in use and often share space with other groups. Boomers are already familiar and comfortable with coming to the building. The Waunakee Senior Center, for example, not only is housed in the new and inviting Village Center, but it also shares the facility with a state-of-the-art fitness center. Boomers regularly use the fitness center with hours that span 5:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday-Friday, Saturday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday noon to 5:00 p.m.

Many of the surveyed organizations are both named and identified by their geographic service area, i.e., North Eastside Senior Coalition, shortened to NESCO. Acronyms, however, can facilitate a gradual evolution of branding and eventual name change. In response to consumer concerns, Kentucky Fried Chicken became KFC, and gradually changed both their image and menu. The Madison Senior Center could become MSC in the “Heart of Madison.” Increased focus on the tagline could effectively introduce the new image and programming, i.e., Active Exercise for Your Heart, The Heart of Care Giving, Writing from the Heart, etc.

What’s in a name? For Boomers – who dismiss the thought of becoming frail and dependent – you probably can’t underestimate the importance. This is not a matter of accepting a stereotype that something is wrong with aging or that marketing has an inherent bias toward youth, but rather it signals that a major societal change is taking place. One size no longer fits all. It could be time to shake up the status quo and be on the cutting edge.

A name change can be the catalyst for the successful re-invention of senior centers and the ability to attract seniors of all ages. “Senior Center” may no longer accurately and clearly describe the type of facility that can attract new volunteers, users and community support.

The vision of an organization’s leadership – executive director and governing board -- defines its identity, mission and course of action. The senior center’s executive director can take the lead in implementing change. The Boomers are arriving along with a broader and more diverse senior population. It could be the right time to make changes that accommodate everyone.

Activity Central Website Recommendation

The Program Development Team's interview process found that nearly all the surveyed sites have nicely designed websites which list their programs and services, contact information for their director and staff, and links to view and print copies of their newsletter. There is currently no central website, however, that provides comprehensive information on all county-wide senior programs/services or links the senior centers and focal points.

In March 2003, Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk appointed the Task Force on Aging to study the impact of Baby Boomers – 30% of the county's population -- on everything from housing and transportation to healthcare and safety. Findings and many viable recommendations were included in the full report. Among them was a recommendation to have regularly scheduled updating of the *Over 60 Resource Directory*, printed copies in other languages, and to consider making it available on the "Web." In February 2009, the Area Agency on Aging of Dane County added the directory to its website under the heading of Information and Assistance. This is welcome and helpful information for seniors and their families. The Team also recommends continued updating of the directory and availability in other languages.

There is a strong need to develop a county-wide website or hub to provide a single point of information for all schedules, programs, services, nutrition sites, recreation and social events, and to include another link to the online *Over 60 Resource Directory*. Such a website could be marketed and branded as "Activity Central," and could include an optional "My Schedule" to help users develop an individual itinerary.

The Monona Senior Center will soon participate in a pilot program for their users, The Daily EZ™, developed by a Madison company, JetNett Corporation. The online application includes Senior Quick Links for timely and relevant information on senior topics, and Daily EZzentials with easy links to e-mail, social networks, news, entertainment and more. Seniors receive computer training as part of the pilot program. A personalized activity calendar is also being developed to complement The Daily EZ™.

Through the interview process the Program Development Team noted that many of the senior site users are quite mobile and choose to use a variety of locations to best match their interests. Without a central website, users must hop from one website to another to obtain the information they need about programming and services.

The Stoughton Senior Center has not only developed their own printed directory of services, the *Stoughton Area Guide for Senior Services*, but they have also taken it online. It can be viewed at www.cityofstoughton.com, under the Senior Center's Community Resources.

The Program Development Team recognizes that seniors are still learning computer skills, but many are computer literate and future senior populations will be increasingly so. The Program Development Team also believes a central website will be necessary to attract Boomers and other new users and volunteers.

Implementation of such a central website will require setting standards or formatting a template to maintain site-wide consistency. All web postings must be standardized for appeal, timeliness, and ease of use.

A central website could have other useful applications as well. For example, it could include registration for volunteers and a volunteer database that senior centers and focal points could access. Website administrators—however defined—could evaluate options for networking with other websites which share the goal of enhancing programs and services for seniors. This could include national websites such as the National Council on Aging (NCOA).

Consideration also needs to be given to well-defined plan for the funding, updating, maintaining and ongoing efficiency of a central website. The interview sites which are part of city or village departments have access to information technology resources that may be able to contribute to the development of a consortium of IT experts. Or, this represents a great opportunity to use the “techie talent” of the new and highly anticipated volunteers!

Coordination of Volunteers Recommendation

The Program Development Team's interview process noted that nearly all the surveyed sites have a dedicated cadre of volunteers who donate their time and expertise on a regular basis or for specific projects—many have volunteered for several decades. Good use of volunteers is a lifesaving factor when budgets are limited, and can also enhance community support of senior centers.

Despite having long-standing, loyal volunteers, the Program Development Team found for a variety of reasons, the sites are not always using their volunteers to their maximum advantage. Sometimes the problem is simply that resources are so challenged that staff lacks time to coordinate volunteers. As a corollary, staff members who coordinate volunteers often don't have time to try better ways of organizing and planning volunteer time. Senior Centers also find that the current pool of volunteers doesn't always have the level of skill they need for projects and activities.

Survey respondents are very open to new ideas and offers to volunteer from individuals or groups. This has resulted in a number of excellent new programs and services at many of the interview sites -- seminars and workshops on will preparation and financial planning, language classes, introduction to computer technology, book discussion groups, and more. Often, however, volunteer time has been limited to stuffing envelopes, answering phones, or other administrative tasks. As valuable as this service is to senior centers, the ability to attract new and younger volunteers will require better use of their time, skills and expertise.

The Program Development Team recommends improved coordination of volunteers so that sites can take full advantage of the availability and expertise of a new pool of volunteers. This is a timely opportunity that can help sites stretch their dwindling resources and enhance their programs and services for seniors.

Information exists on good use of volunteers. In addition to national publications and organizations that provide information on volunteer management and webinars for fundraising, local organizations such as United Way are available as a resource to assist in developing better volunteer programs and training. Senior centers can also collaborate to provide volunteer training.

As noted elsewhere in this report, a county-wide registration for volunteers would be feasible with a central website, and all senior centers would benefit from having access to a comprehensive volunteer database.

Ethnic Minorities and Diversity Recommendation

In the census of 2000, nearly 20 percent of the children and 11 percent of the adults in Dane County were ethnic minorities. Census data supports the continuation of these trends. Ethnic populations are growing everywhere, including Madison and the surrounding Dane County communities. The diversity among young children is also reflected in their extended families. Grandparents and great-grandparents will migrate to the Madison area to be closer to grandchildren, thus creating a more diverse senior population.

Recognizing these trends and anticipating results of the census of 2010, the Program Development Team asked survey respondents to describe their marketing approach to reach minority and non-English speaking seniors. Since senior centers and non-profit organizations receive public funding, they also need to ensure that their “public face” truly reflects the increasing diversity in our population. There is work to be done in Madison and Dane County.

NESCO has led the way in innovative programming to reach both African American and Latino seniors. Although NESCO receives referrals from other senior centers to help meet the needs of a more diverse senior population, minority services cannot be limited to or “ghettoized” within only one organization. The services and programming of senior centers must have greater multi-ethnic visibility and availability.

Senior organizations can develop marketing to show ethnicity in advertising, programs and services. Advertising and publication of services could be inserted in weekly and monthly multi-ethnic publications such as The Madison Times, Umojaa and the Hues. Senior centers could focus more on reaching minority populations that are well-represented at the University of Wisconsin, MATC, and within the ranks of city, county and state government. Models for inclusiveness are seen in United Way, the YMCA, higher education as well as K-12 education, health services and government.

Senior centers and organizations should also make more effort to diversify their staff. Equally important, and perhaps more easily accomplished, is the “welcoming face” of senior centers -- volunteers who more accurately reflect the diversity of the community and users who represent the variety of ethnic backgrounds in Dane County.

Summary

The Program Development Team found a vast array of services, programs and resources for older adults in Dane County. The surveyed centers provide similar programming – that may be regarded as “overlap” -- yet the Team also identified highly successful and unique offerings at each site.

All centers face the challenge of funding cuts and staffing needs, and many have space limitations. All three factors impact on existing programming and a center’s ability to expand offerings. But the Team also recognizes that future programming needs may be quite different. Centers will soon be serving a much younger, active and more diverse senior population.

For senior centers to be more responsive to the emerging and changing senior population, the Team identified needs that include: more collaboration between organizations; a formalized marketing plan to reach the 50+ groups; increased use and coordination of volunteers; expanded survey methods; development of a central website; more minority representation; and a new look at aging in general.

The Team’s recommendations do not identify specific programs or the logistics for providing them, but they do address areas of change for centers to consider as they prepare to welcome the more diverse and younger seniors.

APPENDICES

SURVEY INTERVIEW PROCESS PROTOCOL

1. Site for interview will be identified by the Project team and teams will be designated to conduct the interview.
2. The Senior Center Director will send a letter of introduction to the sites. The letter to include a brief statement regarding the project, the reason for gathering this information, and proposed use for the information gathered. A copy of the survey questions along with a statement that a member of the Project team will be contacting them regarding arranging an interview time will accompany the letter.
3. Within four days from the time the Senior Center Director receives their letter, team members will contact the site for which they have responsibility. They will establish an appointment time to conduct the interview. When scheduled, the interview dates and times will be shared with D Kester. Interviews to be completed, if possible, by Sept 30, 2009.
4. Each team member will be provided with a Survey Question Interview Form. All notes will be collected on the interview forms. A one to two page summary of the findings will be compiled by the team members conducting the interview.
5. The completed interview forms and summaries will be collected and the information compiled for a report to be part of the final report of the Project team. (The process for analysis and format of the final summary report of the survey results will be defined by the Project Team during their regular meetings in August.)

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

**Inventory of Existing Senior Focused Programs in the Greater Madison Area
Project Team Interview Questionnaire**

Program Site: _____

Name of person(s) who provided information: _____

Title(s): _____

Areas of Responsibility: _____

How long with this center? _____

Names of interview team: _____

Date of interview: _____

<u>Organization</u>	Interview Notes
<p>1. Describe the structure of your organization, staffing, geographical service area and targeted user group.</p>	
<p>2. What are your major funding sources? Are there any new sources you are considering for the future?</p>	
<p>3. What physical space, equipment, funding and resources are available to increase programming?</p>	
<p><u>Programming:</u></p>	
<p>1. Describe the programming you offer and the frequency and location of offerings.</p> <p>Are any of these programs offsite or provided collaboratively with other centers or organizations?</p>	

<p>2. How do you determine service needs and programming? Do you conduct regular user survey? If so please describe.</p> <p>Have you implemented any changes as a result of your surveys?</p>	
<p>3. Describe any special or unique programming efforts your center has implemented.</p>	
<p>4. Describe your most successful programs</p>	
<p>5. Tell me about any programming that may overlap with other organizations in your service area? <i>Examples: religious or community groups, ethnic organizations, senior housing, St. Vincent de Paul, etc</i></p>	

<p>6. Tell us about the individuals who use your center.</p> <p>How many use only your center? How many also use other centers?</p>	
<p><u>Outreach and Marketing:</u></p>	
<p>1. What are you doing to attract or address the needs/interests of younger seniors, new users,</p>	
<p>2. Describe your marketing approach to reach minority groups, non-English speaking, etc</p>	
<p>3. Describe any special recruitment efforts your center has implemented</p>	

<p><u>Future plans and needs:</u></p>	
<p>1. What are your thoughts about the traditional senior center of today - particularly in regard to programming - can it continue to be successful in meeting the needs of tomorrow's seniors?</p> <p>Does the name "senior center" have a stigma attached to it that may turn off some users? (What other names have you considered?)</p>	
<p>2. Are there other special approaches that your organization has pursued that are not covered by these questions?</p>	
<p>3. What do you see as the future issues and challenges?</p>	
<p>CONCLUSION</p>	
<p>Is there anything else you wish to add to our overview?</p>	

Colonial Club Senior Activity Center

Interviewed: Patti Stockdale, Director of Programs

Melody Riedel, Director of Services

Interview Team: Mary Jo Rimkus and Jan Somerfeld

Date: September 23, 2009

The Colonial Club Senior Activity Center has operated as a private, independent organization since 1970. In 1969, a group of Sun Prairie residents decided to establish a meeting place for older adults in the community. The idea became reality through generous support from the Cremer Foundation, the business community and individuals. Today it is a multifaceted organization serving people 55 and older throughout Northeast Dane County. It now operates as an independent 501c3 organization, with an 11-member volunteer board of directors, and a staff headed by an Executive Director who oversees nine departments with a total of 48 employees (organizational chart included). There are approximately 400 community and senior volunteers.

The Colonial Club receives financial support from United Way of Dane County, Dane County Health and Human Services, the City and Town of Sun Prairie, and from the surrounding communities that make up their geographical service area: the Townships of Bristol, Burke, Cottage Grove, Deerfield, Marshall, Medina and York, and the Villages of Cottage Grove, Deerfield and Marshall.

They host various special events for fund raising and rely on individual and business donations. The Colonial Club earns about \$20,000 a year from the Super Senior program which has 365 members. It is open to anyone age 55 and over, costs \$55/year, and provides benefits, i.e., reduced rates for programs, trips, etc., and discounts from Super Senior business partners. It was noted that many people purchase this membership but do not use it. The Colonial Club is well known for other fund raising events that include: Strawberry Fest (\$38,000), BratBash (\$1,800), Spring Salad Luncheon (\$1,200), and Radio Days (\$17,000). Service fees, rental fees, catering and grants round out their funding.

Despite the large Colonial Club campus (adjacent senior housing is not affiliated with Colonial Club), space is a factor in increasing programming and services. Funding, however, remains the major concern. It should be noted, too, that the land and building is debt free.

Programs cover a spectrum of interests and needs that range from ceramics, woodworking, chorus and chimes, cards, bingo, computer lab, trips, exercise and more – 40 different programs and activities. The Colonial Club is a nutrition site and also has a home delivery program to 281 participants, and runs a catering service. They provide case management, health services that cover Supportive Home Care and Colonial Club houses an Adult Day Center (private pay). Additionally, they have intergenerational programming, often working with the Sun Prairie School District, Cub Scouts, Brownies, etc. Collaborations include Sun Prairie Park and Recreational Department, MATC, and other senior centers. They occasionally join NESCO to provide trips.

The Colonial Club has numerous business partnerships. General Casualty Insurance provides free printing for 2000 newsletters. The local newspaper, The Star, provides advertising and column space. They also have a relationship with the Community Herald in Cottage Grove.

Although the Program Director noted they do not regularly survey, they actively research what other centers are doing both locally and nationally. An Advisory Council acts as a sounding board and actively seeks ideas and comments from members to better meet the needs of seniors residing in the service areas. The Advisory Council is open to anyone 55+ and made up of representatives from the senior committees (trips, ceramics, euchre, etc.). The Advisory Council meets with the Executive Director and management team.

The Colonial Club considers their 90th Birthday Party, Spring Talent Show, Strawberry Fest and Adult Day Center as some of their unique programming. They consider their Case Management program a very successful service, and noted their Day for Seniors as very popular. They partner with The Willows to have a monthly day of entertainment, door prizes and refreshments.

Another collaborative effort is with area churches to offer a Faith and Friends Group. They have speakers from different churches, hold a biennial memorial service, have monthly performances by the Chorus and Chimes members and have an ecumenical service which the Adult Day Center also attends.

The Director of Programs noted that seniors do attend different centers and usually for specific programs or events. Colonial Club tracks users via a computer scanning program they access through Dane Net. They pay no fee for this as they were part of a pilot program for the development. It has been an educational process to get members to use the program but the results have been positive and the data accurate.

In an effort to attract younger seniors and new members, Colonial Club is open evenings and occasional weekends and has focused on recreational programming, dances and travel opportunities. They are considering a focus group comprised of 50-60 year olds to look more specifically at needs and interests of younger seniors. They may consider the availability of grant money to facilitate a focus group.

A few minorities use the Colonial Club but no active recruiting/marketing plan is in place to reach these groups. The Club's member population may also be reflective of the overall Sun Prairie population. It was noted, however, that reaching the larger rural population in their service area is an ongoing challenge for the Colonial Club, due to the characteristics of the older adults believing they can do everything on their own and do not need any help.

The Program Director does believe there is a stigma attached to being a senior center with strong references to senior services and programming. This concern has been suggested as a discussion for upcoming Strategic Planning. Some effort is also underway to expand programming with more evening educational offerings, i.e., investment group.

Another program recently offered is Aging to Saging which looks at the aging process. The Program Director does not believe they will readily attract Boomers with the current name and image!

DeForest Area Community & Senior Center

Interviewed: Sue Miller, Program Coordinator

Interview Team: Mary Jo Rimkus and Jan Somerfeld

Date of Interview: September 29, 2009

The DeForest Area Community & Senior Center is a trademarked name (2001) for the non-profit organization serving older adults and their families. Located at 505 North Main Street, it serves residents in the Village of DeForest and the Towns of Windsor and Vienna. The Center is funded by the three municipalities and individual and business contributions. Dane County funds Senior Services and United Way funds support programs and services. Revenue from rental space and the Senior Employment Program offsets operating expenses. The Center does not pay rent and has full use of the building.

New funding sources could be grants from the DeForest Area Foundation, individual benefactors and donations for programs. The Center has had generous community support to both build and remodel the building. There are no membership fees and user fees cover most program/class costs. Many programs are offered at no charge to participants.

The building and land is owned by the DeForest Half Century Club, a non-profit 501c3 organization established in 1984. They have a governing board comprised of eight members. The DeForest Area Joint Community Center Commission, created by an inter-municipal agreement in 1993, oversees the Center and has a nine-member Board of Directors. The Center's Executive Director sits on both boards.

Full-time staff consists of an executive director, associate director and two case managers. The nutrition coordinator, activity coordinator, volunteer coordinator (30 hours each) and a peer support coordinator (20 hours) are part-time positions. There are roughly 360 volunteers. The targeted user group is 55+ and younger users with disabilities. Users span the ages of 55-98. The Center's hours are 8AM-4:30PM, Monday-Friday, with no evening or weekend hours. There is space to increase programming but not available staff.

Regularly scheduled programming includes: Billiards, Bingo, Creations (card recycling), Cards & Games, Woodcarving, Exercise, and Computer Assistance. Additionally the Center offers a Caregiver Support Program, county-wide Peer Support Program (elder friend volunteer support) and Hospice Care visiting hours. Information, education, assistance and referral services are provided by the Case Management staff. An on-site

meal program serves 18-25 daily, and volunteers deliver an additional 24 home meals. An additional service is the Sharing Cupboard, where donations of household items and clothing are made available to people who need them.

Collaborative programming is available through the DeForest Public Library (book club and monthly educational program), DeForest Area Historical Society, and the DeForest School District (6th grade essay contest, intergenerational bingo and breakfast events). The Center also partners with RSVP of Dane County and was part of their pilot program that provides an electric vehicle. Transportation is contracted through Transit Solutions for the meal program, and regularly scheduled trips for exercise, shopping, Farmer's Market and more.

The Center has used written surveys of varied frequency to determine service/programming needs but finds direct communication with the users works best – “they aren't shy about asking for things!” Program additions/changes are made according to requests. One of their most unique programs is recycling old greeting cards into “New Creations” that the Center sells for a profit. Musical programs are among the most successful offerings – Wisconsin Old Time Fiddlers, Goose Island Ramblers and sing-along events. The Program Coordinator added that “all programs are successful or they wouldn't be offered.”

There is considerable coordination rather than “overlap” with service organizations. A Center staff member serves on the DeForest Area Needs Network (DANN) Board to coordinate the holiday giving tree with the schools and businesses. DANN provides holiday gifts for needy older adults as well as ongoing financial support to community members of all ages. A staff member also serves on the Youth Council Board. Additionally the Center works with the American Legion for the Veterans Day celebration, the Knights of Columbus for the “Brat Bust” fundraiser, and the Lions Club for the July 4th parade. The Center also houses a weekly food distribution for all ages.

The 2008 Annual Report noted that 233 events were either hosted by community organizations (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) last year, or the space was provided to have Parks and Recreation programs, private meetings and community events. An additional 1,591 programs and activities were hosted by the Center itself.

The Center uses sign-in sheets to track users and reports about 900 unduplicated users in 2008. They estimate 97 percent use only their Center although a few may attend the Waunakee Senior Center, Colonial Club or Warner Park for cards or bingo. Cards are also offered at the Arlington Center.

The Center is trying new programs, i.e., flower art, wellness, exercise and balance classes, in an effort to attract younger seniors. They have an exercise room and recently added equipment. *The Scoop*, monthly newsletter of the Center, and program flyers are used to recruit Boomers. Six hundred copies are distributed at 18 community locations (mailing fee \$6/year). The Center also has good support from the local newspaper. A web page was created earlier this year and “hits” are steadily rising.

The staff acknowledges the need to attract younger seniors, particularly through volunteer opportunities, programs and expanded hours, but they also understand the need to maintain current scheduling and program favorites. While noting the traditional “senior center” may be a “turn off” to Boomers, they are concerned that a name change could be confusing and the Center may not “be recognized for what it is.”

As noted, the Center enjoys strong community support as they continue to grow and evolve as an organization. They successfully blended the early grassroots movement of 1983 that raised funds and built the Center into the inter-municipal agency, the DeForest Area Joint Community Center Commission. This has been an important part of their strategic plan. Another focus has been to adequately staff each position. To better achieve this, several part-time positions were increased from 20 to 30 hours per week and responsibilities were re-aligned to create more efficiency.

As the Center looks to the future, they acknowledge ongoing challenges of funding and the need to make changes, but they remain strong in their mission to provide “a welcoming place to meet, participate and volunteer.” They are a multi-faceted agency with a multi-faceted mission.

EAST MADISON-MONONA COALITION ON AGING

Interviewed: Patti Holden, Director

Interview Team: D. Kester and Pat Gadow

Date of Interview: November 2, 2009

The East-Madison Monona Coalition of Aging (EMMCA) is located at 4142 Monona Drive in Madison, which is a former residence now converted into office and meeting space. EMMCA is a 501-c-3 nonprofit corporation led by a volunteer board.

The EMMCA staff is comprised of five full-time employees (director, administrative/program assistant, one case manager, and two adult day care center staff). In addition, there are seven part time staff including two case managers, two day center staff, and a volunteer coordinator (home chores program)—all of whom work between 4-20 hours per week.

The budget is primarily fee based, with a little funding from United Way. EMMCA is the fiscal agent for the county wide “caring for the caregiver” program. EMMCA also receives some case management funding from the City of Madison and the City of Monona, with occasional small grants for senior programs (education, health fair, etc.). The budget covers four main areas: Nutrition—two meal sites (includes County funding); Operations (covers salaries, benefits, etc.); Programming (includes user fees and donations); Case Management (includes County funding, donations and reimbursement from participating municipalities).

EMMCA serves a large geographical area including Monona and East Madison, as well as the Town of Burke, the Town of Cottage Grove almost to McFarland, north to the area northeast of the airport, and to Starkweather Creek at Olbrich. (See map in brochure.) EMMCA as fiscal agent for the county-wide “caring for the caregiver” program works cooperatively with the South Coalition for services through the Community Options Program; with the Northeast Coalition on diversity issues; and with the West Coalition for the Madison Home Chore program. EMMCA’s adult day care center program serves users from all parts of Dane County. It operates Monday-Friday 8 am to 4 pm, and has now added a pilot on evenings and Saturdays with sponsorship from United Way. Some exercise is done in the day center; otherwise users wishing to exercise are referred to the Goodman Center or the YMCA. EMMCA’s target user group is 60+.

EMMCA’s building has 3,000 square feet and limited parking. It is not a “center” but works cooperatively with other centers and coalitions. Because of the limited space, any added programming would have to be housed in a church or other low-cost space. In addition, EMMCA has limited resources to increase programming. They could use an intern to set up programming; they need their technology upgraded; and they need to have assistance to do upkeep and maintenance on the building, which they own.

Programs offered through EMMCA include the following:

- Case management
- Home chores daily
- Nutrition at two sites, one five days a week and the other three days a week (Monona Hills and Monona Meadows). Technically these are for all users but in practice no one goes to these sites who do not reside there. This leaves a huge gap because there is no other meal site on the East Side of Madison. The East Madison Community Center, across from Truax, has agreed to partner on an open meal site and would be a wonderful location, but this would need more dollars from Dane County to pay part for a site manager,
- Partners with Goodman for activities (exercise, classes, games)
- The day care center is unique to EMMCA and is the only full-day center in Dane County (part-day centers are available at Oregon and the Colonial Club).
- Lending equipment (walkers, shower chairs etc)—free as a result of donations
- Resource library – books (support for caregivers, referrals, dementia, and safety such as falls)
- Partners with the Monona Senior Center on events
- Newsletter to 350-400 recipients (half are mailed); also distributed at the Senior Center and in churches
- Partners with some churches

EMMCA’s most successful programs include its case management, its home chores program, and its adult day center. This is the result of outstanding staff that does amazing things to keep seniors in their homes as long as possible and provide a lifeline for seniors who may be depressed etc. The home chores program is outstanding and is

also intergenerational using volunteers from Edgewood, LaFollette, and Monona Grove High Schools as well as some from the University of Wisconsin.

EMMCA is in the process of developing surveys to help in developing assessment of senior needs in its service area. The case managers do a survey every year and one goes out in the EMMCA newsletter, but better surveys would be helpful. A survey from the day care center has been helpful in that it has led to the addition of evening and Saturday hours to better serve clients. This is a pilot which will continue if funding remains available.

Ethnicity and diversity have not been major issues because of the lack of diversity in its service area (none are Hmong, none are Hispanic, 2% or less are African American). Younger residents of the service area are more diverse and work with the Northeast Coalition's bilingual agents. This will increase the need to recruit new users within the next ten years as the demographic changes.

To attract new users, younger seniors, etc. EMMCA does hands-on presentations at service organizations such as the county social workers, Independent Living, Rotary, and Kiwanis, Alzheimer's, and Care Wisconsin. They just got a donated projector which permits them to do more outreach. Otherwise the communications are mainly word of mouth or the newsletter. The home chores program works with high schools. EMMCA has recently beefed up its marketing committee which is working on a new marketing plan.

EMMCA agrees that the name "senior center" or other aging references in programming, activities, etc. can be an issue. One approach that has been considered is to target the 55+ population, or describe programs as "serving all ages," "intergenerational," or "community center."

One area that needs attention is that there are now more single seniors who may be interested in not just socialization but also match making or other "mixer" activities.

In general the biggest challenge is funding as government funding declines. More dollars are needed for planning, upkeep and maintenance of the building, and more competitive wages and benefits for employees. Retention is definitely an issue as a result of EMMCA's low pay scale.

THE FITCHBURG SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Jill Mc Hone, Director

Interviewers: Paul Buckalew and Shirley Stennis

Date of Interview: September 30, 2009

The Fitchburg Senior Center is housed on the lower level of the Fitchburg Community Center, a red brick two story modern building that also houses the recreation programs. City Hall is connected to the community center via a joint hallway and houses the mayor's office, city government, tax collection, recreation programs and the police department. There is terraced parking behind the center and a few handicapped spaces that are on the same level as the entry. The building is handicapped accessible with an elevator and stairs to the main floor.

The staff consists of the Director, Assistant Director, two Social Workers and a Nutrition Site Manager/Volunteer Coordinator. Each position is 40 hours a week except one Social Worker is 32 hours. The director has a degree and experiential background in human services and has worked in several states. She has held prior positions at the Fitchburg Center as outreach worker, assistant Director and Associate Director. She was named the director in 2006. The center has state accreditation and plans to seek national accreditation.

Fitchburg is the major funding source for the Center with another 1% from the county. Other sources of revenue are from room fees. Ads in the Newsletter generate funding as well as fees charged for classes. Grants are always considered a source for funding.

The physical space is quite limited. One large area serves as the dining room and as rental space for external groups. There are two classrooms, one furnished with computers and a second larger room for other classes and activities. There is a third smaller den style room that has a more intimate setting. The office wing has only two offices. One office for the director and one shared by the rest of the staff. There is a volunteer's office adjacent to the dining room. In addition, the center can share two large classrooms on the first floor with the city recreation department. The rental policy states that the Center has to ask the Recreation Department if there are plans to use the Center after 4:00 P.M. for classes. An addition to the building has been planned.

“The mission of the Fitchburg Senior Center is to meet the diverse desires and needs of the 50 and over adult population. This is accomplished by providing a range of programs and meaningful volunteer opportunities that will enrich quality of life and by offering services and advocacy that will maintain and/or enhance independence.”

The Senior Center has served older adults in the Fitchburg community for over twenty years through programs and services such as outreach and case management; transportation; meals (at the Center and home delivery); educational, recreational and social options; supportive home care; health services; travel opportunities and a loan closet. The Social Work Services include two types of contacts: Case Management and

Information and Assistance. Case Management services are provided to seniors who need ongoing monitoring and services for an indefinite period of time in order to remain independent in their homes. The Information and Assistance Services are provided to seniors who are in need of one-time or sporadic information and/or assistance to remain independent without the ongoing monitoring of a social worker.

Individuals who use the Center are 50+ with the average age around 70- 75. There are over 200 volunteers. The senior citizens come for meals, exercise and computer classes. Not many of the senior citizens use other senior centers. The exercise programs and continuing education programs attract senior citizens. Many also like the travel and volunteering opportunities. The latter are especially appealing to younger seniors.

The Center collaborates with an indoor soccer facility to offer indoor walking in the winter. There is a computer program through MATC. There is plenty of parking. Special programs are aerobics exercise (two groups now) and the Summer Concerts at McKee Park. The most successful programs are the exercise and volunteer programs. Retired nurses help with hearing and vision screenings. Programming that overlaps with other organizations include foot care, which is done by churches, and senior housing. The center has its own choir that puts on musical programs throughout the year and travels to other centers when invited. The evening concerts at nearby McKee Park have very diverse programming, which attracts relatively large audiences.

The Senior Advisory Council plays a large part in securing resources for programming.

The Center has a high concentration of Baby Boomers, many of whom are coming to the Senior Center for activities and volunteering now, but who will be utilizing social work services within 10-15 years. Programs that are offered offsite are the Walking McKee Park and day trips in collaboration with the Oregon and Verona Senior Centers and the walking program at Breakaway Sports that was cited above.

Services and needs of the Center are asked about in surveys. The Center puts a yearly survey in the Newsletter. When there is a need, the Center addresses it from the survey information and from participant feedback.

The target area for the Senior Center is the City of Fitchburg. Boundaries in Fitchburg are very “jagged” which leads to Madison residents living in “pockets” of Fitchburg. County funded programs like Nutrition, Case Management and Transportation state that the Senior Center can only serve Fitchburg residents. The policy leaves a ‘gap’ in services for Madison residents living in these Fitchburg pockets. In an attempt to reach a more diversified population, the Senior Center collaborates with the North Eastside Coalition for bi-lingual case management services for residents of Fitchburg. The Center collects food for the Boys and Girls Club in south Madison.

Special recruitment efforts are to go on line. There is a website for the Center, but the city controls it. There is hope for an electronic future and the ability to sign up on line. The Fitchburg Senior Center is piloting a new ‘salads for lunch’ to meet the desires of the

population. The name Senior Center is not viewed favorably and they would like to be called a Wellness or Resource Center. A special program this past summer recruited students from Savanna Oaks Elementary School and Eagle School (ages – 13-14) to help out at the Senior Center via an intergenerational session with the senior citizens. Plans for the Center include an addition to the building in the very near future. Budget is always an issue. One problem is that the county mandates funds for nutrition, but not case management. Another problem is that after a study, the city housed recreation within the senior center, and at times, this creates difficult scheduling conflicts.

In summary, the Fitchburg Senior Center is a vibrant and interesting place that is already looking to the future of senior centers. It has a full and varied complement of programs and services. It attracts younger seniors through its volunteer and family programming. It collaborates with the city recreation program. It has made plans to increase the space for programs. The staff has a philosophy of inclusion, which is being impacted through outmoded county and boundary guidelines. Future concerns that need to be addressed are related to funding and space.

Goodman Community Center

Interviewed: Marlene Storms, Adult & Program Coordinator

Lilly Giovanni, UW Intern, Social Work

Interview Team: Mary Jo Rimkus and Jan Somerfeld

Date of Interview: September 24, 2009

The Goodman Community Center is located on the near east side of Madison, 149 Waubesa Street, with its designated service area being the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara, Eken Park, Emerson East and Worthington Park neighborhoods. The campus consists of a retrofitted, century-old factory that now houses the Community Center and a new gymnasium built on the adjacent grounds. The space was designed to support many ages and many programs with a mission that includes “providing opportunities for social activities, education, social development and nourishment for older adults.” The target user group for seniors is 60+.

Prior to the move to Waubesa Street, this organization was known as the Atwood Community Center, housed in three buildings a short way from the new campus. The mission and service has continued for 55 years.

Administration of the Goodman Center is under the direction of an Executive Director and facility staff. This includes a staff for publishing the *EastsideNews*, with 13,500 copies distributed to homes and business six times a year. Revenue from *Eastside News* ads accounts for two percent of Goodman’s annual budget. The Goodman Community Center is a “stand alone” organization with major funding provided by the City of Madison, United Way, Community Development Black Grants (CDBG) and generous support from private grants and donations. User fees cover offerings such as senior

events and programs and the nutrition site is funded by Dane County. A full list of funding sources for 2008 is attached.

Other staff includes either a program director or coordinator for each of the following: Preschool Children; School-age Children; Teens; Gym and Fitness; and Adults and Seniors. Food and Nutrition has a program chef and assistants and there is a Youth and Family advocate.

The Adult Program Coordinator oversees senior programming that includes a nutrition side. The coordinator works under the direction of the Executive Director, and is currently being assisted by an intern from the UW-Madison School of Social Work.

Four community rooms provide adequate space for senior programs and the nutrition site, but the Community Center serves everyone from toddlers to seniors with rental space for business and personal meetings, so there is competition for the space. In addition to the daily noon meal, cards, bingo, exercise, yoga and philosophy class are among current offerings. They do not have collaborative or offsite programs although seniors can participate in the Food Pantry, Fitness Center, Goodman/Rotary classes and more that is available onsite.

The intern developed a survey to determine program interests and resource needs, and is in the process of collecting data (copy of the survey is attached). It should be noted, too, that the meal program recently went from three to five days of service. They aren't currently offering organized trips although the Goodman Center does have vans available for all user groups. The coordinator indicated lack of time and staff was the main reason. Transit Solutions provides transportation for the nutrition site.

Intergenerational programming is limited although a Reading Buddies program is planned to start in October. Seniors will be matched with one or two preschoolers from the onsite daycare. The Center also has a game day once a month for all ages.

Programming is limited with the "normal" offerings, but as the coordinator noted, "the atmosphere is what makes the programs successful." The seniors interact very well, it is informal and friendly, and no reservations are needed for the nutrition site – everyone is welcome! Euchre is by far the most successful program with many participants coming just for cards and not taking advantage of the meal program. Euchre is also offered one time a month on the weekend.

Seniors do travel from one center to another with participants coming from Monona, Stoughton, Deerfield, Waunakee/Westport and the west side of Madison. They are often attracted by the card game or the menu—Goodman has a full kitchen and prepares the food on site. On Wednesdays the nutrition site serves 55-75 although the average is 15-35 on the other days. "Nickel Bingo" is also played on Wednesdays. The coordinator believes many users frequent 2-3 centers, and most travel between Warner Park (NESCO), Wilmar Neighborhood Center and Goodman. Seniors are referred to NESCO for Case Management.

Tracking users is limited to sign-in sheets completed by the nutrition site participants and new users. Users must be tracked for the grants and funding sources. There are no funds available for “swipe cards” and their use would be further complicated by duplicate doors. Goodman is considering a modification of the Kid Trax software, currently used to track the preschool and after-school program attendees, as a means of tracking the seniors.

The coordinator “has not given a lot of thought” to attracting younger seniors but did express concern that the “Boomers may be vegetarians” and the nutrition site fare is “very much meat and potatoes with dessert.”

The coordinator noted their outreach program is intended to reach all seniors, regardless of racial/ethnic status. Monthly senior information is publicized in Goodman’s own East Side News, along with the East Madison/Monona Coalition of the Aging newsletter and the Madison Times newspaper. The menu for Goodman’s nutrition site is printed in NESCO’s monthly newsletter, The Golden Times. It does not appear any additional programming can be undertaken with the current staffing or without recruiting additional volunteers. The coordinator works 30 hours a week.

The Goodman Community Center doesn’t have the same identification problem that the more traditional “senior centers” may have, but senior programming clearly attracts the 75+ age seniors. No consideration has been given to changing their image or identity for senior programming. Goodman serves many groups and purposes and the senior program is just one focus of their programming.

MADISON SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Christine Beatty

Interview Team: D. Kester and Jan Somerfeld

Date of Interview: September 2, 2009

The Madison Senior Center (MSC) is a City of Madison agency under the Department of Planning and Development. The staff is comprised of five full-time (director, volunteer coordinator, program coordinator, office manager and a custodian) , two part-time and four hourly employees with about 90% of the budget that covers salaries/benefits, building/services, supplies and operating expenses, provided by the City of Madison. The budget is offset by any rental revenue which reduces city operating expenses; it is also offset by donations, and grants, since the city is paid back for staff working on grant-related tasks. The MSC Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organizations, supports program and activity expenses through gifts, program income and special event fees. The majority of MSC’s programs are fee based, mainly due to collaborations and the prevailing attitude that fees add “value” to the programs.

MSC serves the entire city although specialized programs attract users from a larger regional area. The target user group is 50+. There are numerous collaborations for service/programs including a nutrition site administered by the South Madison Coalition. It was noted, too, that “working with others” is strength of MSC. There appear to be few space limitations and an emphasis on generating revenue through rentals. Many of the collaborations, in fact, are for rental space only. Although location – in the heart of Madison – shapes the identity of MSC, some users may not find the location to be convenient, and transportation and parking could be a deterrent.

Currently one person coordinates over 225 volunteers providing approximately 8,000 hours of service annually. It was suggested that any significant increase in programs may necessitate adding volunteers and staff to train and coordinate them. It was further noted that volunteers “need to be treated like staff.” Although MSC emphasizes recruiting Boomers as volunteers, information for a specific plan was not provided. Rather, the challenge to determine the backgrounds and availability of Boomers and to match service needs with their expertise/interest was discussed. MSC has also received a national grant (one of 12 in the country and the only senior center) to explore ways to engage 50+ professional volunteers in significant service. Although details were not available, MSC is considering different marketing strategies and “beefing up” their website. Electronic volunteer recruitment efforts also include Senior Beat (television program) to attract Boomers.

A program administered by the Bureau of Aging within the Wisconsin Department of Health is implementing ADRC’s (Adult Disabled Resource Centers) which may affect the viability of some senior centers nationwide over the next ten years.

MSC operates Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM, and averages 7 programs daily. They collaborate with about 200 entities and anticipate this increasing, although a number of their collaborations involve only rental space such as the MATC classes. Programs range from nutrition services, intergenerational activities, cultural/ethnic experiences, learning opportunities, health and wellness programs, information and referral services, senior services, recreational activities and special events such as music and entertainment programs.

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgendered (LGBT) discussion group is one of the most unique program offerings, and the intergenerational programming and advanced educational offerings were reported to be very successful. Full Speed Ahead is a collaboration of the YMCA, St Mary’s, Madison Senior Center and Monona Terrace intended to reach Boomers. MSC strives to offer unique programs that don’t duplicate the offerings of other senior service organizations and enjoys a reputation for being leaders and innovators of programming that is imitated.

MSC regularly uses a Customer Service Survey to evaluate and improve the operation of the center that includes four questions on programs to determine: variety/suitability for both men and women; appropriateness of fees; recommendations for use of MSC to friends; and suggestions for new offerings. In addition, MSC has a Participant Advisory

Council and receives classroom evaluations. Since the City of Madison doesn't require tracking of users, little is done with data management. A "self monitoring" sign-in system provides limited and rather unreliable information. Staff look at ethnicity informally, and do some informal review of age ranges. Evaluation of needed program changes is ongoing. MSC follows national trends, primarily online, participates in district meetings of the Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers, attends annual state-wide meetings, and frequently meets with local centers and groups.

MSC doesn't acknowledge any stigma attached to the name "senior center" or other aging references in programming, activities, etc. Their belief is that "quality programs at a quality price" will attract Boomers and that the name will not be a deterrent in reaching this population. MSC believes that the term "senior center" is a valued brand of 60+ years, which will increase in value and clearly represents the services and programs of the organization.

Funding reductions represent future issues/challenges for most organizations, particularly non-profits serving seniors. It was noted, however, that most agencies believe in scarcity or have the attitude "where there is a will, there is a way." Additional "fee for service" programs are another likely consideration. Of further concern will be those organizations that don't do the necessary planning and changes to respond to the emerging senior adult population. MSC noted there are excellent models across the country and "what we deliver will make the difference."

In comments not covered by survey questions, MSC acknowledges that frail elders from all areas of Madison are reluctant to attend a facility which does not offer convenient and door-through-door transportation.

McFarland Senior Outreach Services

Interviewed: Ingrid Thompson

Interview Team: Betty Thompson and Pat Gadow

Date of Interview: October 27, 2009

McFarland Senior Outreach Services is a department of the Village of McFarland. Its mission is "to identify, plan for and provide support, advocacy, resources and services to older and disabled adults within the department's service territory for the purpose of promoting self reliance, independence and enhanced quality of life in order for them to live safely and actively in their own homes and community."

They fulfill that mission through a range of direct and supportive services and programs designed to meet the needs of a wide range of senior groupings. The case management and nutrition programs are provided and managed by the agency; however additional programs have been developed to meet special age and ability groups within the target area.

The service area includes McFarland, Cambridge, the townships of Rockdale, Pleasant Springs, Christiana and a portion of the Townships of Dunn and Rutland.

Ingrid Thompson directs the agency and reports directly to the Village President. She is assisted by two part-time Outreach Case Managers, (one working 35 hrs per week and the other 24 hrs per week) and three part-time Nutrition Site Managers. Volunteers provide additional services for the Department and the clients.

The budget of \$187.56 is supported through a combination of funding sources. Contracts with Dane County provide 27%; Townships being served contribute 14%; and the Village of McFarland provides the remaining 49%. Ads in the newsletter and revenue from the loan closet assist with funding; however the Village is the major source of support. The offices and major programming areas are housed within the McFarland Village Municipal Center.

Nutrition sites are located in Cambridge and McFarland. Major programs are provided at the McFarland location... There are however educational offerings, foot care, and transportation in Cambridge. Case managers and other collaborative programs are also offered in Cambridge.

Exercise including walking and yoga are regular activities at the McFarland site. A ROMEO, (Retired Old Men Eating Out), and newly created JULIET, (Just Us Ladies Is Eatin Together) have a breakfast monthly. Regular programs for foot care, blood pressure monitoring, other health related activities are offered monthly. An Attorney also provides free consultation monthly to senior needing assistance in estate planning, wills, etc.

Transportation for individual needs and for events including buses to performances are also part of the programming. This meets the needs of senior living in the rural areas where public transportation may not be an option.

A unique addition of a Sunday Singles group has been very successful. It consists of single individuals 55 – 70 years of age who meet monthly in a restaurant in the surrounding area. Ingrid initiated this group to meet the differing needs of the younger, vital single seniors. It has proven to be quite successful and is now a self directed program.

Another creative and soon to be an active addition is Bocce Ball. Ingrid has enthusiastically found a program that is something everyone can enjoy as a participant regardless of age or limitations and that is the sport of Bocce Ball. She has enthusiastically learned more about the sport and participated in a Bocce program in Madison. Currently she is participating in an effort to establish a Bocce field in McFarland. It will be available for the community as well as the McFarland Senior Outreach Service Department to establish a regular activity for community Bocce Ball.

Challenges for the future include funding for a new Community Center building which would provide more programming are; funding for staff support; and establishing a creative connection with the senior housing locations in the area.

The McFarland Senior Outreach Services Department is providing many vital services to seniors in their service area. Through creative leadership they are also looking to the future needs of the growing senior population and integrating those services into the community in which they live.

THE MIDDLETON SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Jill Krenz, Director

Interview Team: Paul Buckalew and Shirley Stennis

Date of Interview: September 25, 2009

The Middleton Senior Center is a Department of the City of Middleton and in cooperation with the City of Middleton strives to enrich the lives of older adults. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Organization

The staff includes two full-time paid positions, plus a half-time administrative assistant and one half-time volunteer coordinator and a three fourths dining center coordinator. An added person, four mornings a week, is the volunteer receptionist coordinator. The major funding resource is eighty% from the City of Middleton. Dane County provides 20% for the dining center and case management. A new source the center is looking into is 501C.

The Center has been in the new building for eight years. Prior to that they had cramped quarters in the Railroad Depot. The Center is now housed in a modern two level building with elevator access. The large open area on the main floor is not enclosed. The lower level has several spaces for classes and meetings; however it requires that the patrons pass through a busy area to get to the other side. Consequently, holding classes there is a problem. The director is seeking grant proposals to help the situation. The parking area is easily accessible for all.

Programming

The programming at the Center is a community matrix consisting of 266 partnerships. The Center provides a variety of programs to address the needs of the 55+ crowd with an average week of 45 programs. It is a program of opportunity, but not a lot of off site connections. St. Luke's and St. Bernard's provide Chronic Disease self management care.

The Center has as kitchen and provides noon meals and "meals on two wheels" (bikes). There is a credit card type visitor pass which allows frequent updates of the client base and a daily record. Evaluations are done twice a year and changes are implemented as a result of those surveys.

A special program that the Center has implemented is the Nimble Fingers Stitching Group. Nimble Fingers is a group of volunteers who quilt, sew, crochet and knit to make items for people in need. Ten to 12 organizations receive help—Gilda’s Club, ASPCA etc. This is a self-directed program with 45 participants. A volunteer delivers the items. Programs that may overlap with other organizations in Middleton are transportation and meals. Transportation is a county issue. Banks and churches also help with driving and feeding senior citizens. The essential tremor program was a first for a Wisconsin Senior Center. Socially isolated frail senior citizens use the Center and also the local folk. Middleton has a healthy and affluent population. Consequently, some only come to the Center for certain events. There is a Men’s Group (32, many are younger men) who share activities. They plan places to visit (i.e. touring the airport etc.). Fifty per cent of the senior citizens who do programs at the Center are Middleton residents. To attract and address the needs/interests of younger citizens (55-70) a key is used that tracks activities. This reflects each program – “age in place,” Boomers, and economically disadvantaged. Younger women do the Health Fair.

Outreach and Marketing

The marketing approach to reach minority groups is to offer Spanish, and partner with the Eastside Coalition. Partnerships with other organizations provide additional services such as case management help and the meals program. A special program with case management is that a welcome gift of a bottle opener is given to the senior citizen with Middleton Senior Center’s address and phone number. The Center has a new logo on its brochures and is on line with the city. The website is up-to-date and the opportunity to get the name out “good neighbor.” There is a link with all organizations – let people know who you are! Future plans include grabbing on to opportunities—such as the swipe card and additional staff. Some changes may be hard. The director said that the mentoring by Christine was a great help to her and the Center. There is a need to change attitudes about Senior Centers as these Centers are life enhancement places for older adults.

Special approaches at the Middleton Senior Center are: partner with the municipality, library, police department etc. An added plus is great parking!

Future

Future challenges are the budget, Boomer population, senior citizens with chronic issues, and the need to provide rooms for instructional classes.

WASC lists services for 75 Senior Citizen Centers around the state.

Middleton Senior Center accreditation—4 state accreditations since 1994; National accreditation 1994 and 2009.

Summary

The Middleton Senior Center is a well run place that has a professional staff that networks with others and keeps abreast of accreditation issues and trends. The tracking system in place identifies on a daily basis that is and is not using the Center and does program corrections. The Center has no critical funding issues and is well supported by the City of Middleton.

MONONA SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Diane Mikelbank

Interview Team: Paul Buckalew and D. Kester

Date of Interview: November 24, 2009

“Meeting old friends...making new friends” is the theme of the Monona Senior Center (MSC), which is located in the Monona Community Center on Nichols Road across from the library in downtown Monona. The staff—both employees of the City of Monona-- are comprised of two permanent staff: the director and a half-time Project Assistant who has worked there for 19 years. MSC’s director answers to the Monona Senior Services Commission with the City of Monona. The director is responsible for budget, programming, fund raising, volunteer recruitment, management, coordination and training. MSC does the best job it can for the community with the resources it has, but needs more than two staff members to run the show.

Eighty-five per cent of the budget is provided by the City of Monona with support from program fees, grants, and newsletter advertising. MSC’s Friends Group and other donations fund programs beyond MSC’s budget. Rental revenue is very limited. The MSC’s space in the building is only 2,225 square feet which greatly limits the site’s program capabilities and requires that limited space serve multiple uses. One additional area called the Anderson Lounge which is also used for library/social area/craft sale/Wii gaming can be used for very small groups when necessary. Since space is limited, MSC uses the upper level of the Community Center for programming. MSC can also use library and school space with permission. MSC looked into using space in a new senior housing facility, but it did not work out.

MSC serves all comers including not quite 40.7% from Monona, 46.5% from Madison, 2.2% from Cottage Grove, 2.3% from McFarland, and 8.3% from other communities. The target user group is 50+, with programs that can be enjoyed by a wide age range of individuals. Most of the users tend to be women and the ages range up to 70-80 years of age. Many users also use other senior programs or facilities such as Warner, Goodman, McFarland, and Madison.

MSC collaborates with the East Madison Monona Coalition on Aging (EMMCA) for case management, home chores, and nutrition management, as well as the newsletter. Movies go to Frost Woods Senior Housing after shown at MSC. MSC has a strong volunteer program with over 100 participating. Volunteers do the newsletter for EMMCA. They prepare the mailings, and drop off the newsletters all over town. Many of the volunteers have been with MSC for many years and are very loyal to the facility. Volunteers may be teamed with “buddies” who work with them on MSC duties and projects.

The MSC operates Monday-Friday during the day. The space is not available on evenings and weekends because it is rented out, with all revenues going to the City of Monona rather than to MSC. The Friends Group offers some opportunities for program expansion.

MSC averages 5-7 programs daily. Programs include intergenerational activities; various learning opportunities including a creative writing class, computers and keyboarding; health and wellness programs such as Pilates, yoga, stretch and tone, and line dancing, plus chair massage. In addition, the Home Health United Visiting Nurse service provides a foot/toenail clinic, flu clinic, and blood pressure checks. Other programs include band and chorus; movies; bridge and other card games; crafts including quilting, knitting, crocheting, and woodcarving; and special programs including conversational Spanish, Wii gaming, Scrabble, book club, and day trips. The MSC site also has a gift shop with hand-crafted items and cards available for purchase. The local Hispanic community does not use the Senior Center per se but rents the space for birthdays, baptisms, etc.

Special interest entertainment is provided such as the Monona Rhythm Band. Seniors play rhythm, string, and percussion instruments and perform at various assisted living communities, senior housing, and long term care facilities in the area. One very successful special program held by the Friends Group is called Swing into Spring. Swing Into Spring is a Friends Group event held in the Monona Grove High School's Commons the day after junior prom. A live band is hired and the community gathers for an afternoon of dancing amid the beautiful decorations for which the juniors have raised the funds.

MSC has given attention to outreach and marketing by doing surveys in the monthly newsletter and in the City of Monona Newsletter, but has not been able to do many surveys of non-user needs to date. MSC, always open to new programming ideas, is willing to experiment and has increased its fitness classes as a result of surveys. MSC has also expanded day trips in cooperation with the Waunakee Senior Center and Frost Woods senior housing. MSC's Friends Group has developed a strategic plan with U. W. Extension to help identify stakeholders and support for MSC in terms of fundraising, etc.

One very successful program is called ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating Out) Breakfast—a breakfast group for men six times a year, with a speaker component. (MSC cooks this breakfast.) This program has been in existence for over ten years. A successful new program is the JetNett Computer Classes which are put on free of charge three times a semester by a company which produces a software product for browsing the internet. MSC has ten computers and one instructor laptop, although additional participants can be included if they bring their own laptops. MSC's lab also includes a projector and wireless internet. Other successful programs include the Low Vision Support Group, the exercise programs, and a Thanksgiving Dinner/Christmas Party. RSVP provides transportation for shopping.

One particularly exciting new venture is the incorporation of ads and more color and photos in the MSC newsletter in cooperation with LPI (Liturgical Professionals) which helps MSC sell the ads. In return MSC gets 750 extra free color copies. LPI provides the

software and training. MSC also gets \$1,000 a year returned to it from LPI. The newsletter is available online and copies are mailed of a tape with the newsletter for readers with vision impairment.

MSC does not believe there is such things as a “traditional senior center” since all centers have their own programs and special events. They meet the needs of today’s and tomorrow’s seniors including the Baby Boomers by incorporating new programs that work. Future challenges include lack of space, financial challenges, and finding programs for everybody, including younger populations and serving several generations at the same time. There is a strong sense of local tradition in Monona and Monona wants to maintain its own identity, both as a center and as a city. A better term for programs might be “adult programs” rather than “senior” programs.

NORTH/EASTSIDE SENIOR COALITION (NESCO)

Interviewed: Cheryl Batterman, Executive Director and Jim Krueger, Program Director

Interview Team: Betty Thompson and Pat Gadow

Date of Interview: September 24, 2009

The North/Eastside Senior Coalition (NESCO) is a non-profit organization whose mission identifies their desire “to enhance the quality of life for all senior adults by providing programs, advocacy, and resources to assist them to remain independent, active, and influential”. They fulfill that mission through a range of programs and services that address the varied needs from direct service to enrichment programs.

The Coalition’s primary funding is from Dane County, the City of Madison, and United Way. Approximately 20% of their funding is from non-governmental grants and membership. The following are a few of the sources of the grant funds; Madison Community foundation, Cultural Affairs, Madison Art Guild, Target, and Sam’s Club.

They serve a geographic area in the Northeast section of Madison that extends from the meets the borders of the three other coalitions in the City.

Cheryl Batterman, Executive Director, has been with NESCO for seven years. She brings with her several years of experience in senior care and management. With the NESCO Board, staff and volunteers they had developed an interesting and creative response to the needs of seniors.

While the public funding is provided primarily for the provision of case management, home chore services and management of meal sites, they have procured additional funding to provide educational and social programs which serve a wide range of interests. Partnerships with neighborhood associations and churches have resulted in community venues for classes and unique mentoring programs for youth.

The initiation of two creative cultural diversity programs for African Americans and the Latinos has proven to be very successful. The primary goal for the cultural diversity program is to reduce isolation, identify barriers that prevent African American or Latino seniors from accessing community services and assists in removing these obstacles. Programs center on socialization and building a sense of community. Participants increase their knowledge of community resources and become comfortable attending community events. African American and Latino adults, 55 years and older, who reside in Dane County are welcome to attend.

NESCO is the only Focal Point with Spanish speaking case workers. They have also initiated a special support program for Latino grandparents raising grandchildren.

Staff has recently begun providing informational and/or educational programming at a church sponsored senior meal gathering at St Paul's Lutheran Church. This provides another opportunity for NESCO to reach out to seniors in the area. NESCO has management responsibility for three Senior Dining locations in which lunch is served, Goodman-Atwood Community Center, Warner Park Community Recreation Center, and the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center. NESCO contracts with each site to provide the meals and group activities. This has proven to be a successful arrangement which provides good service to the recipients and frees NESCO staff to provide other programming activities.

Examples of regular programming at the center have included computer classes, book club, card making club, classes by UW professors and authors, Spanish class and genealogy classes. MSCR also provides arts and crafts events and classes collaboratively with NESCO. A Sewing Club provides valuable assistance to seniors who are unable to do routine clothing repairs with buttons hems etc.

The Warner Park polling site provided an opportunity for a survey of seniors regarding programming for the center. As a result of that survey programs such as genealogy, educational lectures, Spanish etc have been offered in the evening. This has become a welcome event for many but especially the younger seniors in the area.

NESCO has recently completed a successful assessed for accreditation by the National Institute of Senior Centers. Accreditation is pending the approval of the NISC Board of Directors.

Space and opportunities for future and continued funding are two issues for the future. Plans to pursue larger grant funding and continued creative options for space use are in their future plans. Use of computers at Vera Court may be helpful; however there is a need to seek reliable access to Warner Park Community Center space. The current demand for space often times limits significantly longer range planning for programs.

Collaboration, team work, and creativity seemed to be the themes as we interviewed Cheryl and Jim Krueger.

OREGON SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Alison Koelsch and Erica Hoke

Interview Team: D. Kester and Betty Thompson

Date of Interview: September 29, 2009

The Oregon Area Senior Center (OASC) is located in a building next to the library in downtown Oregon. The Center has been accredited by the Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC) since 1993. The staff—all employees of the Village of Oregon—is comprised of seven permanent staff, four full-time (director, assistant director, and two case managers) with three part-time (meal site manager, adult day program staff, and one contracted W.I.S.E. worker). (W.I.S.E. stands for Wisconsin Senior Employment through AgeAdvantage.) There are also ten substitute staff that fill in with kitchen help and the adult day program as needed. A Council on Aging consisting of 20 members meets bimonthly and serves as an advisory Board. The officers make up the Executive Council and meet monthly. Volunteers number close to 200.

The budget is provided from the municipality of Oregon with support from Dane County and the communities that OACS serves. (Village of Brooklyn, Towns of Dunn, Oregon and Rutland.) This covers four main areas: Nutrition, Operations (covers salaries, benefits, etc.); Senior Center Building, Adult Day Program, Case Management and Medical Assistance. Rental revenue is very limited. The OASC building is only 7,700 square feet which greatly limits the site's program capabilities. There has been talk of a new building which may possibly share space with the library, but that is at least five years in the future.

OASC serves a large geographical area of Dane County including the Villages of Oregon and Brooklyn and the Townships of Dunn, Oregon and Rutland, although there are many users from the wider metropolitan areas including Middleton, Verona, Fitchburg, Stoughton and Madison. The target user group is 50+, with programs that can be enjoyed by a wide age range of individuals. Case management and nutrition focus on those 60 and over.

The OASC operates Monday-Friday during the day and some evenings and weekends, and averages 4-6 programs daily. Programs include an Adult Day Program is a respite care program certified through the Health Department and began in 1984; nutrition services; intergenerational activities; learning opportunities; health and wellness programs such reflexology and massage; information and referral services; movies; card games; crafts and quilting; and special programs including Wii bowling, day trips and yoga. Special interest entertainment such as music and various educational speakers also takes place at the Center. The site has a marvelous gift shop with hand-crafted items available for purchase.

OASC has done surveys in its newsletter every year, but has not been able to do many surveys of non-user needs to date and is working on a mailing list so that a survey could be put in the Village bulk mail correspondence to all residents. Users have been tabulated based on sign-up sheets at each event, and these user data are systematically tracked. It is a small community including people who live in “the country,” but few if any users are non-English speaking. One African American senior participates in the OASC meal program.

OASC is always open to new programming ideas and willing to experiment. Some unique programs include retired RN’s volunteering to do blood pressure checks every Friday; legal counseling; Veterans’ assistance; and movies one Sunday a month. OASC also has a free “loan closet” with walkers, shower stools and other durable medical equipment for short-term use. The most successful new programs have been the Wii bowling, a fashion show, and the two new fundraising ventures tried this year which were a public auction and a Brat Bash. The Brat Bash took place the same time as the Village-wide garage sale which was very successful. Massage therapy, scrap booking class and reminiscence writing have also been offered.

OASC has a wonderful computer lab that was initiated in 1999 and computer classes are offered in conjunction with MATC. A raised garden was started in 2001 and has been maintained by members of the Adult Day Program and other volunteers and is enjoyed by the entire community.

OASC has a “matrix of collaborations” or partnering, and does participate in meetings with local centers and groups including the library, Optimists, Rotary, some churches, and a group called Silver Threads Club. Other collaboration efforts include day trips with Verona and Fitchburg and intergenerational activities with local schools.

OASC gets several calls a week asking if they have bed space, from citizens who wrongly believe they are a nursing home, or calls from kids at the high school who want to do community service on weekends. If a new building were created combining senior services with the library, it might have a different name such as “Community/Senior Center—serving all ages.”

OASC has a goal of increasing boomer participation. Future challenges include lack of space, thus having to cap programs for fire safety reasons; financial challenges; and finding programs for everybody, including younger populations and serving several generations at the same time.

SOUTH MADISON COALITION OF THE ELDERLY

Interviewed: Ginny Evenson, Co-Director

Interview Team: Betty Thompson and Pat Gadow

Date of Interview: September 23, 2009

The South Madison Coalition of the Elderly (SMCE) is a non-profit organization whose mission identifies their desire “to bring together people who care about the older adults of our community”. They fulfill that mission through programs and services that “preserve the independence, dignity and life satisfaction of older adults and provide support for families and caregivers.”

The Coalition primary funding is from Dane County, and the City of Madison, Additional funding is provided by United Way and through private donations. Recently there has been an increase in private case management clients resulting in fee for service clientele. These clients are primarily individuals between the ages of 50-60.

They serve a geographic area that extends from Randall Ave to Martin Luther King Blvd and from Mendota to the City limits and the town of Madison. The Community options program is provided on a city wide basis.

A staff of approximately 25 FTE’s provides programming out of administrative offices at 128 Olin Ave. Services and programs are provided primarily in home and at principle sites at Romnes Apartments and Quaker Housing. A core of volunteers provided additional staffing and support for many of the programs and services.

Two major program areas are common program foci for the four Coalitions in Madison. Specifically they are the Management of Senior dining centers, and Case management. SMCE provides management for 5 Senior Dining programs in the community and offer extensive case management for seniors in their service area.

The home chores program is another joint program activity. It included individual client assistance with needed personal and home chores and also assistance for care givers. This is a full service program ranges across the supportive and direct service spectrum.

A unique program entitled the Volunteer Guardian Program enabling program also provides a much needed and enabling services. The primary focus is ensuring that individuals with physical, mental and/or disabling limitations are protected and supported in their attempts to remain independent is. Results of this program show a creative and caring motivation and are truly heartwarming.

An annual services satisfaction survey provides valuable information for program planning and evaluation. A sample of clients in all programs provides feedback through with the use of phone and mail surveys.

Special programming is provided at the Romnes Apartments and Quaker Housing which serve as Neighborhood Senior Centers. These centers represent the highest concentration

in the service area and have been successful program locations. Special service programs, such as blood pressure screening and foot care in addition to such programs as gentle exercise, healthy cooking etc are examples of featured events.

Volunteers play an important part in services. Key roles are in the home chore program, office assistance and the volunteer guardian program. Examples of seniors serving in volunteer roles and gaining new independence is also an impressive part of the volunteer program.

The unique role this organization plays in the support network for seniors in the community is impressive. Case management and the volunteer guardianship program are major evidence of that role. The long term commitment of staff and the team of nurses, social workers and support staff provide a valuable support network for very vulnerable and high risk population.

Marketing has been somewhat limited primarily because of funding constraints. The cost of ads in Mature Life Styles has been shared with the other coalitions. However that is costly and may be discontinued. Distributions of brochures, the website and word of mouth have been the main marketing effort.

STOUGHTON SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Cindy McGlynn and Hollee Camacho

Interview Team: D. Kester and Betty Thompson

Date of Interview: October 7, 2009

The Stoughton Area Senior Center (SSC) is a nonprofit agency located in a multistory building on Main Street in downtown Stoughton. The staff is comprised of ten permanent staff--five full-time (director, assistant director, nutrition manager, and two case managers) and four part-time (one case manager and one receptionist). (Two positions were recently lost as a result of budget cuts.) The SSC has a Commission on Aging consisting of 13 members meets monthly and serves as a sounding board. Though Stoughton is a small community, it puts us in mind of the Shakespeare play: "Though she be little, yet she be fierce."

SSC receives funding for operations as a city department and is grateful for its supportive municipality. SSC also receives federal, state, and county support for nutrition and case management. Its programming is mainly funded from fundraising and donations, with some reimbursement from participating municipalities listed below. Rental revenues reduce operating expenses to a very limited extent. As an example, renters may be families hosting family events, etc. Its building is only 15,000 square feet in size, and future programming if space were available might include a gym and a dance studio. Planning initiatives may include moving into the community more for some classes or other programming should funding be available.

SSC serves a large geographical area of Dane County including the City of Stoughton, and the Townships of Albion, Dunkirk, Pleasant Springs, Dunn, and Rutland, although there are some users from the wider metropolitan areas including Middleton, Verona, and Madison, particularly for card groups and sheephead groups. The target user group is 50+, with programs that pull in users from a wide age range. SSC's oldest user is 104 years of age and just moved into assisted living. There are many volunteers.

The SSC operates Monday-Friday during the day and some evenings and weekends, and averages 6-10 programs daily. Programs include nutrition services; intergenerational activities; learning opportunities; health and wellness programs including Tai Chi; computer help; information and referral services; movies; card games, chess, and bingo; rosemaking; woodshop; and special programs including Wii bowling, flu shots, and support groups including grief counseling and AA.

SSC is using an impressive marketing approach with input from a marketing consultant that will include focus groups of users and non-users. "Word of mouth" by current users and their families seems a good way to encourage the community to take advantage of the SSC and its possibilities. SSC's Commission on Aging is putting together a strategic plan for future programming and operations, with recommended changes from staff, users, the Commission on Aging group, and others in the community. Strategic planning for the future is usually reviewed every five years as SSC strives to address and implement benefits for all interested parties.

SSC stands out among the other senior sites interviewed in that it is in its first year of implementing a computerized system of check-in using a card system. This new system replaces the old system where users signed in on paper, but they wanted to keep a better track of users and are now fine-tuning the system to improve its tabulation of use by users who make use of multiple programs, as opposed to users who may only come for one program such as nutrition. For example: SSC has multiple exercise programs (yoga, beginning and intermediate tai chi, ping pong, walking, golf) and is tweaking the coding of the new system to provide better clarification of exactly who uses what programs.

SSC tries to be sensitive to community needs. There are confidentiality issues involving some of the programs such as the support groups that need to be addressed to respect the users' privacy. The newsletter provides lists of resources on subjects such as Alzheimer's, Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues, or sex in older adulthood which the community may not be ready to attend group sessions about.

SSC has a free "loan closet" with walkers, shower stools, etc., available for community residents' short-term use. The most successful new programs have been sheephead, yoga, and tai chi; an upcoming Senior Expo and a Health and Wellness Fair in cooperation with the local medical and fitness community; or anything involving food or entertainment such as the Old Time Fiddlers or its "lunch bunch" which includes going out somewhere for lunch. SSC is now cooperating with the hospital, city, and schools to put together a Med Drop including one in the apartment buildings.

SSC has sought intergenerational input into its programs including the Norwegian dancers; elementary students who do singing on Veterans Day; a Syttende Mai program; string and jazz programs; cooking activities at the Youth Center; annual pool tournaments with the varsity football players working with younger guys; madrigal singers in costume from the High School doing a program at the midday meal; and a 6th grade essay contest writing about their favorite adult (usually a grandparent), to choose winners to go into a state contest.

SSC acknowledges a stigma attached to being called a “senior center.” Some older or younger citizens perceive seniors as very frail or demented, and do not want to come to the building--a particular struggle for the newly retired. This is challenging for staff that need to be ready to address such perceptions in planning how to address them. They are striving to increase their volunteers, and looking at who they need to serve and who can serve, with a view toward getting boomers to get engaged and involved in SSC activities. It was noted that currently the Stoughton School District is declining in enrollment and by the year 2010 the over 65 population is projected to increase to about 30% of the total area population.

SSC has an explicit goal of increasing boomer participation. A recent discussion by one of SSC’s committee’s suggested changing the name to “Services for the Third Age.” One challenge is that many in the population from 55-65 years of age are still working and don’t come into the center, so it is looking at some ways to reach out to these seniors, including case managers going to the apartments of individuals needing services. They have put together a marvelous multipage resource called the Stoughton Area Guide for Senior Services, comparable to Dane County’s Over 60 resource book. However, the Stoughton Guide, unlike Dane County’s, is also available online.

SSC is now working with some local religious organizations (example: caregiver groups) and have done joint fundraisers. There are a few non-English speakers in the community include Hmong, people from Kosovo, and Cambodians, which present big language challenges. SSC does have a popular Norwegian class to try to bring that language back. SSC also includes ads in its newsletter for other county wide programs, such as NESCO’s bilingual case managers, in case community members would like to take advantage of those resources. Other future challenges include lack of space; financial challenges; and finding programs for everybody, including younger populations. Budget constraints for 2010 and most likely 2011 will pose some hard choices, not only losing positions and space, but obviously affecting programming and services.

VERONA SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Diane Lanaville, Director

Interview Team Paul Buckalew and Shirley Stennis

Date of Interview: September 10, 2009

The Verona Senior Center is housed in 10,500 square feet of a building that was constructed by the City of Verona for senior programming in 2001. The center is a one level building that is centrally located. It is land locked so any expansion would have to be up. There is a drive-up portico for easy access during bad weather and it has a large parking lot with handicapped spaces at the front. The building is attractive and beautifully decorated. Dedicated spaces include the director's office, the nurse's area and meeting rooms.

The staff includes a full-time director, a 20 hours a week nutrition coordinator, a six hours a week nurse and a four hours a day driver. A case manager covers Belleville, Mt. Horeb and Verona. The director has been with the center for 18 years. She holds a professional degree in a related discipline and the center has state accreditation. The center is a department of the city administration and is partially funded by the City of Verona. A 3-member Committee made up of City Alders appointed by the Mayor governs the Center. The Senior Center staffs that Committee which includes a representative of the Seniors Board. The Seniors Board is a 7-member independent 501-3-C that supports the activities of the Verona Senior Center.

The Dane County AAA provides Older Americans Act funds for the Nutrition Site and Transportation. The nurse position was established by a grant. The Center has also sought grants from Home Depot and the Chamber of Commerce.

The Center doesn't have enough classroom space. In addition, the walking program and the exercise program are limited because of insufficient space for activities. The target group of seniors does not have an age limit. However, the individuals who use the Center are one of the oldest populations in Dane County with an average age at one time of 86 years. The Verona area has an older- than- average old population and the Verona Senior Center is committed to meeting the needs of these frail elders. Sixty percent of these elders are not native to Verona. For the latest 90+ Club celebration of those 90 years of age and older, invitations were sent to (35) 90 year olds who are active in the Verona Senior Center.

The important service programs are nutrition, transportation and health services. The nurse helps both the younger seniors and the frail elders. Seniors may come to the center for the noon meal or have a meal delivered to their homes. Those who can no longer drive may use the transportation services for shopping or medical visits, or to come to the center.

A full range of recreational programming is offered by the Center. Wii bowling is one of the newest activities and has a very large following. The Verona Senior Center led the formation of a traveling bowling league among county senior centers. In 2009, Verona

constructed (2) fully accessible bocce ball courts on their campus. Bocce ball is a very popular game in Europe and the courts have attracted a large number of both young and older adults for daytime and evening play. There is a walking group that uses off-site venues. A day-trip program is conducted with the Fitchburg and Oregon Senior Centers. Computer classes appeal to a wide range of participants. Birthday/anniversary/holiday parties are held monthly. The 2009 Veterans Day celebration drew 130 people. The programming does not overlap that of other organizations. However, they do collaborate with the Verona Library and the Fitchburg and Oregon Centers and work with the local food bank.

Regarding outreach and marketing, the director stated that the older population in Verona does have financial resources. The younger seniors raised money for the Bocce Court and two large televisions. The center has an electric car that was fully funded by the Center's Seniors Board and is a source of tremendous pride. Now they have "meals on electric wheels." The local press has a good relationship with the Center and there is a local cable access station. They hope to get Wii bowling on the sports page of the local weekly paper. They plan to continue their use of University of Wisconsin student nurse volunteers.

A monthly Center Newsletter is a primary source of contact with clientele. Surveys for the Center are put in the Newsletter twice per year. A community-wide survey mailing was done in 2009. Programming improvements that can be attributed to these surveys have been expanded evening programs, additional time for transportation and the limiting of entertainment to one hour performances. The Verona Center clientele is not ethnically diverse. However, the director feels that this will eventually change since the public schools are becoming increasingly diverse. Verona still sees itself as farming community or a bedroom community outside of Madison. Special efforts for recruitment have been made to look at the zip codes of people who answered the mailing, as there was a high rate of return from the McKee Road area. There are over 1,600 people over 60 in Verona. If only fifty percent of these at one time or another use the senior center, they would form a core group of 800 potential users. In addition, the ratio of men and women visitors to the Center is now trending closer to the norm.

The Center's staff is limited and doesn't want to reach beyond their means. There is continual review of whether to drop programs or change them. More programs have been added on health and wellness and the staff monitors existing conditions to identify emerging needs. The objective is to see what seniors are looking for in the Center and to give attention to those and ways to make the Center serve people of all ages. A name change that they have considered is "Adult Activities Center" as it refers to activities and not age. There is some feeling that a senior center needs a name that suggests more variety and a different menu, but the current consensus is to retain the name "senior center."

In the future, the Verona Senior Center wants to expand both the transportation program and the nutrition program. The Center sees the need to expand its staff and the budget as problems. The staff would be very willing to seek national accreditation. Overall, they are

convinced that they have a quality program that is well received by its clientele and a bright future of service to new senior demographics.

In summary, the Verona Senior Center has tremendous public support, a client base that is undergoing change to become younger, and a facility in which they take justifiable pride, but are out-growing. They have a self-purchased electric car that enhances their nutrition program and a Bocce Ball Program that is cherished. They are resourceful in getting grants and donations for health services, nutrition and recreation, but see funding as a major concern for future efforts.

WAUNAKEE AREA SENIOR CENTER

Interviewed: Cindy Mosiman

Interview Team: Jan Somerfeld and D. Kester

Date of Interview: September 21, 2009

The Waunakee Area Senior Services Department is located in the Waunakee Senior Center (WASC) housed at the Village Center which is shared by both WASC and the Community Center, whose staff run the community center/ Park and Recreation staff also share this building. All are part of the municipal government of Waunakee. There is a separate Village Hall where the Village Adm., Finance Dept., Village Clerk, and Village Engineer/Public Works Dir. are located.

The WASC staff is comprised of four full-time employees (director, program coordinator, and two case managers), with a 25 hour per week nutrition site coordinator and 20 hour per week project assistant. The half-time LTE project assistant position allows more activities to be scheduled on Saturdays and evenings. This position was transitioned to a permanent position in the 2010 budget. The director reports to the Village Administrator, but a Senior Services Committee (two village trustees, four citizens-at-large and the director) meets bimonthly and serves as a sounding board.

The budget is primarily paid for by the Village of Waunakee. It covers four main areas: Nutrition (includes County funding and fees for services provided to the surrounding municipalities that have signed a contract with WASC); Operations (covers salaries, benefits, etc.); Programming (includes user fees); and Case Management (includes County funding). Rental revenue reduces some operating expenses. WASC is not assessed rent for their space but does pay an allocation of shared costs for the building (utilities, maintenance, etc). In 2010 the Senior Center share of the building cost is budgeted at \$53,000. Total Senior Center/Services budget for 2010 is \$432,229.

There is no membership fee to join WASC. There is a \$6.00/year charge for the WASC newsletter. Fundraising and donations are not really part of WASC's budget. WASC has a separate fundraising and donation account which is used to purchase items for fundraising events and for special events or purchases during the year.

WASC serves a large geographical area including the Village of Waunakee, the Village and Township of Dane, the Townships of Springfield, Westport and a slice of Vienna, although specialized programs attract users from the larger regional area including Middleton and Madison. The target user group is 50+, with new programs that pull users in the 55-70 age range. There are 130 volunteers.

WASC's programs include a nutrition site serving about 25 members daily. Beginning December 2009 WASC was chosen as one of two pilot sites for a weekly salad option for lunch which would include a modified menu with lighter foods such as wraps and a soup/salad bar to promote alternative choice to the usual heavier fare. WASC is fortunate to be able to obtain catering from the local high school which permits delivery of the meals at 11 AM rather than earlier in the morning, allowing for almost immediate serving of the food.

The WASC operates Monday-Friday hours 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. and some evenings and weekends, and averages 5-8 programs daily. Programs include nutrition services, intergenerational activities, learning opportunities, health and wellness programs, information and referral services, new movies (with popcorn), card games, Mahjong, quilting and programs including four support groups, a painting group and book club.

A special advantage enjoyed by WASC is that it occupies 20-25% of the space in the Village Center and was, in fact, the impetus for the new building. The building has 45,000 square feet (WASC shares some of the space with housing programs, offices for the Village of Waunakee, and a fitness center with a walking track, gymnasium). The space also includes class rooms, computers, and arts and crafts space. WASC shares the computer lab, a classroom and studio with the Community Center. The Center is adjacent to a large senior housing complex, Cannery Row.

WASC uses an annual customer Service Survey to evaluate and improve the operation of the center. WASC has done its program surveys both by placing them into the Village wide newsletter and also into the Senior Center newsletter. This year WASC is sending the October newsletter out to the entire mailing list (not just those who subscribed). In the future that is the newsletter where the survey would appear to reach the greatest number of older adults, since WASC's service area extends beyond Waunakee.

A copy of the newsletter is attached. Programming is flexible and new programs are implemented to the extent the budget permits to meet user interests and requests, such as shopping and other trips, book clubs, wine tasting, euchre, quilting and stamping. Evaluation of program changes is ongoing. WASC also participates in meetings with local centers and groups.

Ethnicity and diversity have been issues only in regard to the challenge of serving the needs of rural farmers. Rural residents are reluctant to use services despite needs, i.e., case management and nutrition, and have strong feelings of pride and independence.

Some special programs developed recently include a variety of trips – local, regional and international; food programs such as the autumn harvest featuring local food and farm animals; musical programs provided by the Waunakee Municipal Band and the Wisconsin Old Time Fiddlers; and ice cream socials. WASC also has a free “lending closet” with walkers, shower stools, etc., available for short-term use. Many of their programs are intergenerational including making ice cream, storytelling, computer buddies, trips to Brewer games and having developmentally delayed high school students volunteer to help with serving lunch. The Old Time Fiddlers provide the most successful program as they draw the largest audience!

WASC doesn’t acknowledge any stigma attached to the name “senior center” or other aging references in programming, activities, etc. Their belief is that quality programs will attract Boomers and that the name will not be a deterrent in reaching this population. The position of WASC is that a senior center provides senior programming. The design of the new building is open, well lighted, welcoming and colorful with quilts prominently displayed. The building conveys a feeling of inviting activity.

WASC is in the process of communicating with area groups to coordinate services to better serve senior and community needs. Several were noted: Food Pantry at St John’s Catholic Church, Neighborhood Connections and Joining Forces with Families. WASC also is working with a county-wide Elderly Services Network to enhance the opportunities for collaboration.

THE WEST MADISON SENIOR COALITION

Interviewed: Ingrid A. Kunding, Director

Interview Team: Paul Buckalew and Shirley Stennis

Date of Interview: September 28, 2009

The West Madison Senior Coalition, Inc. is a non-profit organization governed by a local, volunteer Board of Directors. Incorporated in 1975, the mission of the Coalition is to enhance the quality of life for older adults by providing programs and resources to allow older adults to remain active and independent members of the community.

Organization

The structure of the West Madison Senior Coalition (WMSC) is unique from the other Madison Senior Coalitions in that there is a Senior Center that is also a part of this organization. There are approximately seven staff employed by the WMSC, four full-time and three part-time.

The Coalition is funded by the City of Madison, Dane County, the United Way of Dane County, individual donations, fundraising events and grants.

Case Management services are designed to provide older adults, age 50 and over, the support they need to live independently in the community by identifying resources and coordinating supportive services. Case Management services include assessment of need, coordination of services in response to those needs, monitoring of an individual's plan of care, and advocacy.

There are currently 500 older adults on Madison's west side who have some sort of relationship with one of three case managers on staff.

Senior Dining: Food, fun and fellowship are offered to older adults at an affordable cost. The WMSC offers meals at the following locations as a part of the Dane County Area Agency on Aging Nutrition Program: the West Madison Senior Center, Beth Israel Center and the Lussier Community Education Center.

Volunteer Home Chore Program: In this program, community volunteers assist older adults with a variety of housekeeping tasks and yard work, including raking, lawn care and snow shoveling.

West Madison Senior Center: Located at 602 Sawyer Terrace, the West Madison Senior Center offers a broad range of opportunities for learning, socializing, volunteer work and community involvement. The Center is a focal point for community services from resources such as Home Health United, MATC, MSCR, the Madison Public Library and others.

Space is extremely limited at the West Madison Senior Center, with only 1800 square feet of space and is operated as a "one room school house," allowing only one class or activity to take place at a time. Another struggle is to attract younger older adults to become involved in the organization and the activities of the Senior Center. It is felt that the term "senior center" has a negative stigma attached to it to the younger older adults and that this will need to be addressed in the future.

Programs offered at the West Madison Senior Center include: Exercise Classes, Reminiscence Writing Classes/Workshops, PLATO discussion groups, Line Dancing Classes, Art Classes of various mediums and Tai Chi classes, to name a few. In 2008, over 10,000 unduplicated participants participated in at least one activity offered at the West Madison Senior Center.

The Senior Center space is also used by a number of other community groups, including the Hill Farms Neighborhood Association, Madison Area Singles Club, the Unitarian Folk Dance Group and others. Collaborative efforts continue with the Meadowood Community Center, MSCR and the Lussier Community Education Center to offer meaningful activities for older adults.

Educational programming is also provided through the Coalition and topics have included: financial planning, identity theft and how to protect yourself, funeral planning, stress management and long-term care insurance planning.

Evaluation of programs: the Senior Center class participants are asked to complete surveys two times per year. MATC and MSCR also provide surveys to their participants and share that feedback with the Center staff.

Additional surveys and focus groups were conducted in early 2001 to determine need for additional and/or new Senior Center space. The organization has been through many phases of planning in the last almost decade, to build a new Senior Center space. At the moment, there are currently no plans being pursued.

Outreach and Marketing

The Coalition does not do much in the marketing area to reach minorities. There is a partnership with the North/Eastside Coalition and the South Madison Coalition of the Elderly for culturally diverse case management for Spanish-speaking individuals, African Americans and people of Southeast Asian ancestry. ESL classes have been offered at the Senior Center as the apartment complex that is attached to the Senior Center facility has a large population of Russian-speaking individuals.

Challenges

The impact of the County and City budgets will be immense for the Coalition in these difficult economic times.

There is confusion with the organization and the relationship between the Coalition and the Senior Center. And having two locations adds to the confusion. Strides are being made to educate senior center participants about the work of the coalition and the relationship to the coalition and vice versa. This work will continue in future outreach and marketing materials that are created.

Parking is a challenge at both locations, more so at the Senior Center, as there is no dedicated space, leaving people to park on the street, in two-hour parking spaces.

LINKS TO RELEVANT RESOURCES

Census Projections <http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/index.html>

Florida Department of Elder Affairs, Senior Center Evaluation Toolkit, 2008.
elderaffairs.state.fl.us/english/seniorcenter/toolkit.pdf

Maricopa County, Arizona - Next Chapter Final Report
http://www.civicventures.org/nextchapter/Next_Chapter_Final_Report_July_2008-1.pdf

<http://www.pipertrust.org/Common/Files/Blueprint%20for%20the%20Next%20Chapter.pdf>
<http://www.pipertrust.org/Common/Files/Blueprint%20for%20the%20Next%20Chapter.pdf>

Metlife job study <http://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/mmi/publications/studies/mmi-buddy-can-you-spare-job.pdf>

National Council on Aging
www.ncoa.org

United Way of Dane County, WI
www.unitedwaydanecounty.org

Area Agency on Aging of Dane County
(See Over 60 Resource Directory and Aging Task Force Report to Dane County Executive Falk)
www.countyofdane.com/aging/