

Caregivers offered help for their aging parents

BY BRENDA L. HOLMES

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PLAINFIELD — Carlotta Katra has set a goal to help people with aging parents by arming them with knowledge.

Katra worked in the assisted living and nursing home healthcare industry for several years before deciding to found Aging Avenues — The Road to Aging Answers. The wealth of her expertise can now be found on her website at www.agingavenues.com.

“Primarily I have become a senior advocate,” Katra said. “I have seen families in despair after something has happened and they have to make decisions while in a panic.”

She said she is not necessarily targeting seniors and helping them with their care. Katra really wants to educate those whose parents are beginning to need their help with day to day living.

“We want to empower these families with information,” she said. “They need to know where to go and what to do.”

She said the role of decision maker often falls on females because they are the natural born caregivers.

“About 60 percent, 59 to 70 percent, of women are caring for their parents, in-laws, or other family members and friends,” Katra said.

She said this can negatively affect a woman at work.

“This is costing employers \$2,500 per employee in time off for doctors’ appointments, hospital visits, filling in for a paid caregiver, and trying to locate assistance,” she said.

They are using work time to make phone calls related to caregiving, by arriving late or leaving early, and taking time off to deal with issues, she said.

Due to this trend, Katra said she is hoping to educate businesses on how to help their employees with caregiving issues.

“I will provide seminars for companies,” she said. “I can do anything from a lunch meeting to providing a whole series of workshops for employees.”



Katra

It’s in the business’ best interest to get on board and help their employees with this issue.”

Katra resides in Plainfield and operates Aging Avenues out of her home. Offering information online, she said, seemed to be an obvious solution.

“There are some national sites that tell you some definitions but they don’t relate to what’s available in our community,” she said.

She decided to create a website for the Indianapolis area focusing on helping people in the area about what is available here. The website touches on such issues as adult day services, nutrition, respite care, and more.

“This also helps people who don’t live locally,” she said. “They might want a gift for a senior parent in the area. They can jump on our site and find a service such as a dog walking service for their parents.”

The screenshot shows the website's interface with a search bar at the top right and a list of services under the heading 'Aging Issues'. The services listed include:

- Aging In Place**
 - Adult Day Services
 - Adult Foster Care
 - Caregiver Support
 - Companionship
 - Congregate Meals
 - Driving Safely
 - Emergency Response Systems
 - Home Care Services
 - Home Delivered Meals
 - Home Healthcare
 - Home Modification
 - Keeping Up With the House
 - Medication Management
 - Monitoring
 - Moving in with You
 - Naturally Occuring Retirement Community (NORC)
 - Nutrition
 - Options to Help Stay at Home
 - Pet Companionship
 - Property Taxes
 - Respite
 - Transportation
- Independence Aids**
 - Assistive Devices
 - Emergency Response System
 - Handicapped Driving
 - Hearing
 - Medical Equipment
 - Rehabilitation
 - Therapy
 - Visual Disabilities
- Medical Assistance & Information**
 - Dental Health
 - Depression in the Elderly
 - Eye Care
 - Geriatric Assessment
 - Health Record
 - Holistic Healing
 - Medication Related Problems
 - Physician Specialists
 - Prescription Assistance
 - Research
 - Safety Tips for Buying Prescription Medicine
 - Weight Management

The Aging Avenues website has a variety of information for seniors and their caregivers. For more information, visit the website at www.agingavenues.com.

Katra said there are many services in the area that people don’t even know about. Aging Avenues is a collection site for these services and how to access them.

“There is even a way for children to be notified of their parents’ utility bills,” she said. “They would then

get notified if, for some reason, payments are not being made.”

Katra can also provide speakers to offering information on topics such as how to be prepared: legally and financially, how to pay for care, types of senior housing and care, home safety, how to tell when

someone is no longer safe living alone, how to find the right nursing home, and more.

Katra is currently working to organize a day-long seminar for people with aging parents entitled *Stuck in the Middle*. The event will be March 21, 2009, at Primo West in Plainfield.

“This will be an all-day event with multiple breakout sessions,” she said. “I even have a national speaker who wrote a book called *Stuck in the Middle*.”

For more information on Aging Avenues, call Katra at 731-3315 or visit the website at www.agingavenues.com.

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