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Dodgeville Hosts Major Documentary Film

Times are changing in Southwest Wisconsin. The region is undergoing major shifts in demographics, especially in the aging population. From now to the year 2030, Southwest Wisconsin will be aging like never before. The baby boomers will lead the way. Already, more older people live in rural areas than young, and the 65 and over population is the fastest growing age group. In the next 15 years, the 65 and over population will increase to perhaps as much as 1 in 4 of the population which could amount to a doubling of the overall aging population. Further, the number living independently or without external assistance will decline sharply.

With these changes come unique challenges. How to assure that quality of life for the aging remains high? How to think ahead and consider options for the health care of the aging and others in our community? How to engage in conversations with friends and loved ones, of whatever age, about their desires for the future and their values related to health care especially as they grow older?

To begin answering some of these questions, Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin in cooperation with the Dodgeville Public Library is hosting a showing of the acclaimed documentary, "Consider the Conversation" on January 24. The film will be shown in the City Council Chambers in the Dodgeville (lower level of the library) beginning at 7:00 p.m. discussion and questions/answers will follow.

The film was produced by two longtime Wisconsin friends, one a hospice worker, the other a State Teacher of the Year. It has been presented on PBS over the last year with strong positive audience response. It presents a powerful and inspiring commentary on the American struggle with communication and preparation at the end-of-life care and includes interviews with patients, family members, doctors, nurses, clergy, social workers and national experts from around the country.

This is a film about living life to its fullest up to the very end. Its goal is to jump start the conversation between patient and doctor, husband and wife, parent and child, minister and parishioner. And, it opens the door for families and individuals, older and younger, to think about what they want out of life and decisions that will be made as the end-of-life approaches.

"This is a definite must see for people in healthcare who encounter decisions regarding treatment and death on a daily basis. More importantly, it is a must see for ALL people in general," says Kent Mayfield, who has seen the film on a number of occasions. "By showing 'Consider the Conversation' Grassroots Citizens of Wisconsin and the Dodgeville Public Library hope to inspire and support many community-based conversations regarding end-of-life care planning."

Showings of the film in other locations are being scheduled. Consult the Grassroots website for further information on these events: www.grassrootswi.org. Groups wishing to schedule the film are encouraged to contact Kent Mayfield at (608)935-3540.

There is no charge for the Dodgeville showing. Light refreshments will be served.

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