



Wisconsin's Information Network

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Message from the President

By Susan Richards, C.I.R.S., United Way Fox Cities' Information & Referral
Information & Referral

The year 2004 was a year of change and many accomplishments for our organization.

Change: We officially changed our name to WisconsinAIRS to more accurately reflect our state affiliation status with AIRS. In September, we hosted the 25th Annual WisconsinAIRS State Conference in Madison. Participants attending the conference provided an overall evaluation of excellent. A highlight of the conference was a 25 year milestone trip down memory lane provided by Larry Olness, past President. His memories truly spoke to the evolution and change of our information and referral profession. The membership voted on a new logo to promote our name change and the new board of directors was installed.

Accomplishments: WisconsinAIRS participated in the creation of 2-1-1 Wisconsin, Inc. and designated a board member to serve on the board. 2-1-1 Statewide Implementation was completed with the designation of twelve 2-1-1 call centers to be operational in the event of a public health/bioterrorism emergency. We continue to have 2 board members serve on the AIRS National Board. In addition, the WisconsinAIRS Vice President serves as the AIRS Affiliate representative for our state.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the commitment, dedication, hard work and support of the WisconsinAIRS Board members, colleagues and our collaborative part-

ners who work daily to provide information and referral services to residents of the state of Wisconsin.

What will 2005 bring? I'm pleased to share with you where we are headed with our new and challenging future.

Membership: Our first priority is to increase membership in our organization. Belonging to WisconsinAIRS will provide Information & Referral providers the best vehicle to insure that your services are keeping pace with the latest trends and developments in our professional field. As an AIRS Affiliate, our members are awarded dual membership in our statewide and national network of Information & Referral services. Our Membership reflects a rich diversity of comprehensive and specialized I&R services, including older adult service, childcare resource and referral, 2-1-1 call centers, crisis lines, libraries, military family service centers, volunteer centers, and health, disability and issues focused I&Rs. Today, more than ever, Information & Referral and Assistance programs fulfill a vital need in our local communities and throughout Wisconsin.

Professional Development: The WisconsinAIRS Board has arranged for Certification testing on April 5th (10 am -12 pm) at the Oshkosh Public Library. For information on how to register go to our website: www.wisconsinairs.org.

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Message from the President (continued)

The 26th Annual WisconsinAIRS Conference will be held in September in Wisconsin Dells at the Chula Vista Resort.

WisconsinAIRS is the official host of the 2006 AIRS National Conference to be held in Milwaukee. We will be enlisting our membership to help in developing the theme and providing professional support for nationwide attendance. This is truly an exciting time for our WisconsinAIRS Board and our membership. Information & Referral providers, who have not had the financial assistance to attend a national conference, will now have the opportunity to participate. In addition, we are being given the responsibility of "Bringing People and Services Together" and highlighting the professional expertise of our membership.

What can WisconsinAIRS do for you?

Offer reduced rates at training and conferences. Provide AIRS certification exam sites, offer networking opportunities (local, state and nationwide), provide consultation and technical assistance through professional members, opportunities to become involved with the board and committee activities, link to your agency website from the WisconsinAIRS website, email List serve offers instant access to experts and peers, provide direct input in the development of 2-1-1 in Wisconsin, a library of resource training materials and promote adherence to AIRS standards for delivery of I&R services.

A Call to Action: It is both an honor and a privilege to serve as the president of WisconsinAIRS for 2005. I'm grateful to have such a strong and dedicated board of directors whose leadership and guidance has been instrumental in getting us to where we are today. As we move forward with 2-1-1 statewide implementation, information and referral providers are as critical as ever in the provision of services to their local communities. We would like to encourage you to join our network of colleagues, so that we can support each other and continue to enhance the quality of work that we do on a daily basis – Bringing People and Services Together.

Now is the time to join the growing ranks of information and referral providers committed

to developing a professional organization. Expand your professional future. Join WisconsinAIRS.

Sincerely,
Susan Richards, CIRS
President WisconsinAIRS
Info & Referral United Way Fox Cities
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Menasha, WI 54952
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CIRS, CRS, CIRS-A Testing Site Announced

WisconsinAIRS and the Oshkosh Public Library are hosting an opportunity for I&R/A professionals to take one of the AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) certification exams. Certified Information and Referral Specialist (CIRS), Certified Resource Specialist (CRS), and the Certified Information and Referral Specialist—Aging (CIRS-A) exams will be offered.

Date: Tuesday, April 5, 2005

Time: 10 a.m. to noon

**Place: Oshkosh Public Library,
106 Washington Avenue,
Oshkosh, WI**

Local contact person: Janice Dibble
920/236-5214 or dibble@oshkoshpubliclibrary.org

Note: Applications are due in the AIRS office 30 days prior to an exam.

Next Wisconsin Certification Testing Opportunity for CIRS, CRS, CIRS-A will be at the WisconsinAIRS annual conference in September 2005.

Announcement: Seeking an Editor

WisconsinAIRS Newsletter Editor *Please consider this opportunity* **Open to all Members**

Our organization has a long tradition of providing members with a superior newsletter. At the present time, we are seeking a new newsletter editor. If you are looking for a way to contribute to your profession and to our organization as well as meet new people: this is an excellent opportunity for you!

You do not need to be a Board member to be the Newsletter Editor. However, Board members participate in preparing the newsletters by regularly contributing content in the form of regular columns, summaries of minutes, and feature articles.

Contact Jan Dibble, Communications Committee, dibble@oshkoshpubliclibrary.org (920.236.5214) or any other Board member (complete list at www.wisconsinairs.org) if you would like to volunteer or ask questions about the position.

WisconsinAIRS Affiliate

The AIRS Affiliate Council conference call was scheduled on Wednesday, February 9th. Affiliates discussed a variety of topics including:

Affiliate Memorandum of Understanding – agreed to extend the date to receive affiliate dues and documentation to March 15, 2005

Membership Model – Affiliates discussed the proposed membership model. Discussion revolved around local flexibility to set affiliate dues; local point of contact; and use of national materials that could be adapted with a local touch.

It was decided to continue with the proposed structure with the goal of implementation by January 1, 2006. In addition, flexibility would be

built into the use of national materials. AIRS and its Affiliates would monitor the results of the new structure throughout 2006 to ensure membership meets the needs of both the national and state organizations.

Use of AIRS logos in conjunction with Affiliate logos – Discussion revolved around meeting the AIRS logo standardization/criteria when developing Affiliate logos. Affiliates were asked to email their logos to AIRS. The AIRS logo style guide is available on the AIRS website.



AIRS Update

The **Alliance of Information and Referral Systems** has designed the AIRS 2-1-1 Toolkit to help 2-1-1 planners create cost effective, high quality, and investor friendly business plans. The AIRS 2-1-1 Toolkit is the only 2-1-1 planning process developed by experienced 2-1-1 consultants and tested by 2-1-1 planners in the field. Visit www.211toolkit.org

Nominations to become an AIRS board member were due February 18th.

The 2005 AIRS Budget has been approved. Conference planning is going well. The March Affiliate conference call will focus on additional needs for assistance at the conference.

Member News

Great Rivers 2-1-1 is now operational!

Residents of La Crosse, Monroe, Jackson, Trempealeau, Buffalo, Vernon, Richland, Crawford, and Grant counties will be a part of the new "Great Rivers 2-1-1" service area, which also includes northeast Iowa and southeastern Minnesota.

Great Rivers 2-1-1, previously known as First Call For Help, provides free, confidential community information, referral and crisis line services with 24-hour access, seven days a week. This service is sponsored by Gunderson Lutheran and Great Rivers United Way, Inc.

When callers dial 2-1-1, their call will be handled by staff who will provide them with information, referral and crisis line services on topics including food and shelter resources, alcohol and drug abuse, support groups, parental concerns, adult and child abuse and mental health concerns.

<http://www.greatrivers211.org>

MILWAUKEE 2-1-1

2-1-1 IMPACT officially accredited by AIRS

IMPACT operates the 211 information and referral line serving individuals and families throughout Milwaukee County. This 24-hour central access point for information and referral serves more than 70,000 people each year. Community Resource Specialists stand ready to assess each caller's needs and help to solve problems, providing information on and referrals to the many family, health and social service organizations available in the greater Milwaukee area.

<http://www.impactinc.org>

Board Member Update

Long time WisconsinAIRS Board member and AIRS National Board Member, Michelle Pike (formerly Michelle Lameka) has made an employment change. After 17 years of working for Milwaukee County's Dept on Aging, Michelle has made a move and now works for the Department of Senior Services in Waukesha County. Michelle continues to work in the field of Information and Assistance and continues to be actively involved in the Conference Committees for both AIRS and WisconsinAIRS.

If you need to update your address books, Michelle can be reached at:

Waukesha County Dept of Senior Services
1320 Pewaukee Road
Waukesha WI 53188
(262) 548-7835

<http://senior.waukeshacounty.gov/>

Dues are now due!!

To take advantage of the benefits of membership in WisconsinAIRS, be sure your dues are paid promptly. Renewal notices have been sent out, but if yours was lost in the mail (or misplaced or stolen or chewed up by the dog!!!), just go to www.wisconsinairs.org to print a blank membership form. The instructions for mailing are on the form.

Any questions, contact:

GingerAyres
gayres@co.ozaukee.wi.us
262-284-8120

Join us now!!!!

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Chula Vista Resort has a new look!



Schedule time for yourself at Chula Vista's new day Spa, Spa Del Sol. Soothe yourself with a luxurious body treatment, unwind with a relaxing pedicure and finally find ultimate stress relief with an hour long Swedish massage.

The many services available include manicures, pedicures, tanning, full-body treatments, facials and complete massage techniques such as deep tissue and hydro-water therapy. Enjoy the Spa's signature Spa Del Sol Sun Glow Experience on your next visit.

Brochure: http://www.chulavistaresort.com/spadelsol/sds_brochure.pdf

Indoor Waterpark

When Mother Nature sends you looking for a "drier wet", check out our extensive indoor water facility. Relax in our hot tub, or explore the water slides through "ancient" Canyon Rock Ruins. Dare to cross to Coyote Mountain using a rope bridge and floating logs. Or just sit and watch the tots in El Nino – our wading pool. Our Lost City of Gold Arcade features dozens of diversions that challenge, and reward you with prizes. And, the popular, "doing nothing".



26th Annual WisconsinAIRS Statewide Conference

**September 8 & 9, 2005
Chula Vista Resort
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin**

www.chulavistaresort.com